

The Liberty Pledge News

The Liberty Pledge News is produced monthly for members of the National Libertarian Party's Pledge Program, Independence '88 and the Torch Club. It is also distributed to National Committee Members and State Party Chairs, in appreciation of their contributions and to make available information on activities at Headquarters and on libertarians in the news.

Clippings and other items of interest are appreciated.

Libertarian Party Headquarters

301 W. 21st St. Houston, TX 77008

713-880-1776

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September 1987

Third party tries a 5th campaign

By S.A. Paolantonio
Inquirer Staff Writer

The Philadelphia Inquirer/Philadelphia, PA

Ron Paul, born in Pittsburgh in 1935, once a flight surgeon in the Air Force and a former member of Congress from Texas, has given up on the Republican Party and its most recent contribution to the presidency — Ronald Reagan — and decided to run for the White House himself.

But voters looking for Paul will not find him elbow-to-elbow with the presidential aspirants of the two major political parties. He does need money, and sure, he would take a few photo opportunities. But Paul does not want delegates. For him, there are no primaries. He has already been nominated.

At a convention last weekend in Seattle, the Libertarian Party, a relatively new third party, handed Paul its fifth presidential nomination. It began putting candidates on the national ballot in 1972.

In 1980, Clark collected 920,859 votes — three times the votes collected by presidential candidate Barry Commoner of the Citizens Party and more than 20 times the total of Communist Gus Hall. After the election, the Libertarians proclaimed themselves the third-party alternative.

A costly split

In 1984, the party split over the nomination of a presidential candidate. David Bergland of California finally won the nomination. But it was expensive. Koch and his money pulled out of the party's presidential effort. In 1984, Bergland got 228,000 votes, about a fourth of Clark's total.

A year later, fewer than 300 people attended the Libertarian Party national convention in Phoenix. Nationwide, just 55 Libertarians currently hold elective office, none higher than the county level, Turney said.

But Poole and others say that Clark's campaign in 1980, by depending on Koch's wealth, may have "artificially inflated" the appeal of the Libertarian Party. Now, they say, the party is back on a growth path set during the late 1970s.

Henry Haller, a financial consultant from Pittsburgh who chairs the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party, said there were plenty of local issues to pursue. Libertarians advocate abolishing the state Liquor Control Board and oppose the tax-subsidized construction of the Philadelphia convention center.

And with Paul as its presidential candidate, the Libertarians say they can depend on a new infusion of supporters and money. As founder of the Council for Monetary Reform, chairman of the Committee to Abolish the Fed, Paul publishes the Ron Paul Investment Letter and is counting on a network of his associates in investment circles to donate to the Libertarian effort for 1988.

His goal: Raise at least \$5 million and eclipse Clark's totals in the 1980 election. But he also is working to build an organization that can win on the local level and is always preaching the Libertarian message with a current twist: Get Navy ships out of the Persian Gulf. "I am sick of U.S. lives and taxes being expended unconstitutionally on a foreign war," Paul says.

Get back the gold standard for the dollar. "Create a sound money system, define the dollar," he says.

And get rid of big government. "Some people say I want to take a chainsaw to the federal budget," Paul says. "How right they are. Big government is running away with our freedom and our money."

Voters who want to know about Ron Paul need to look no further than what he said on the floor of the House, Sept. 19, 1984, in his farewell address after four terms as a representative from Houston...

"Government is literally out of control," said Paul. "Spending, taxes, regulations, monetary inflation, invasion of our privacy, welfareism to both the rich and the poor, military spending, foreign adventurism around the world will one day precipitate a crisis that will truly test our will to live in a free society."

Paul sounds like Ronald Reagan until he talks about Ronald Reagan.

"Ronald Reagan," says Ron Paul, "has assumed a role like Caesar's in the Roman Empire, ignoring the wishes of Congress and resurrecting what our Founding Fathers feared most: the imperial presidency. ... Reagan's record is disgraceful. He starts wars, breaks the law, supplies terrorists with guns made at taxpayers' expense and lies about it to the American people."

For years, the Libertarian Party has struggled to become the voice of those disenchanted with mainstream political thinking. It developed a consistent set of political principles, a blend of conservative fiscal policy and strict adherence to constitutional protections of privacy, no government intervention at home and less foreign intervention abroad.

But in its 16 years, the Libertarian Party has been unable to develop support outside a solid corps of followers.

The party was spawned out of the living-room meetings of New York City economist and historian Murray Rothbard, who since the early 1960s had preached the objectivist philosophy of author Ayn Rand.

Three-tenet approach

Objectivism has three basic tenets: reason, individualism and capitalism. And Rand wrote about those principles in several detailed works of nonfiction and fiction, including the romantic novel *Atlas Shrugged*, in which the hero, John Galt, fights against the injustices of a welfare state run amok.

In 1971, the party was formed in Denver and the next year ran a presidential and a vice presidential candidate. They got one electoral-college vote in 1972. It was cast by Roger MacBride, a Republican from Virginia "who could not bring himself to vote for Richard Nixon," said James Turney, a Virginia businessman who is chairman of the national Libertarian Party. MacBride ran for president in 1976.

The Libertarian movement grew in the West in the late 1970s with the taxpayer revolt in California and the Libertarian presidential candidacy of Ed Clark in 1980.

Clark's running mate was David Koch, an oilman and rancher from Kansas who brought his considerable wealth to the campaign. They spent \$3 million, most of it Koch's money, and the Libertarian Party was on the ballot in all 50 states.

"It was the right idea at the right time," said Robert Poole, the editor of Reason magazine, a nonprofit publication dedicated to free-market thinking. Unfortunately, Poole said, the spotlight of Clark's third-party candidacy was stolen by another third-party candidate, John Anderson, of Illinois. And, Poole said, Clark's appeal was "siphoned off by Reagan himself."

"At one point," Poole said, "the Reagan campaign used the same anti-government slogan created for the Libertarian Party in 1980: 'A New Beginning.'"

By Larry Peterson
Freedom News Service

Jack Dean of Fullerton, former state Libertarian Party chairman and veteran political organizer and strategist for the party, will seek its U.S. Senate nomination next year.

Dean, who announced his bid at the party's executive board meeting in Redwood City this past weekend, became the first announced candidate for the party's nomination for the seat now held by Republican Pete Wilson.

Although others may enter the Libertarian Party's June 1988 Senate primary, Dean begins as the favorite because of the recognition and friendships he has developed during more than a decade as a party activist.

Dean, 39, spearheaded the 1979 voter-registration drive that qualified the party for a permanent position on the state ballot, along with Republicans, Democrats and two other minor parties.

Since then, he has run the campaigns of two Libertarian Party candidates for state treasurer, one for U.S. Senate and one for Assembly, and served two-year stints as chairman of the party in Orange County and later as state chairman. He also was a leader in the campaign of Costa Mesa attorney David Bergland, the party's 1984 presidential standard-bearer.

"I've decided that now is the time for me to step up to the front line and put the knowledge I've gained into a campaign of my own," Dean said.

Typically, Libertarian candidates for state office get 2 to 3 percent of the vote and view their campaigns primarily as vehicles to spread their movement's philosophy of maximizing individual freedom by minimizing government and taxes.

Dean said his campaign will oppose U.S. intervention in the affairs of other countries, immigration restrictions, tariffs and other trade barriers, mandatory testing for drugs or AIDS, and the minimum wage.

Tacoma News Tribune/Tacoma, WA

Libertarians plotting nation's course for next 15 years

The Libertarian Party nominated its candidate for president Saturday at its national convention in Seattle. If you don't already know who they chose, you probably don't care.

I don't care either. But I figured the convention offered a chance to find out what Libertarianism is all about. So I went up there and asked.

I wound up talking with Dave Nolan, who helped found the party in the early '70s. I asked him what led him to start a third party.

"In the Republican Party, the key words are Get Elected. In the Democratic party, too, for that matter. If you're going to advance in the party, you've got to be willing to go along — to ring doorbells and drum up support for a candidate even if you think he's a two-faced, lying bastard.

"When it comes time that you want to be a candidate yourself, if you take a stand on principle and the party thinks it dooms you as a candidate, you get no support. So you are constantly asked to think

only of the short term, only to get elected."

Needless to say, very few Libertarians get elected. That doesn't bother Nolan, however. Getting elected isn't the point, though he doesn't complain when a Libertarian makes it into a state legislature, as happened in Alaska. "The only time people listen to political news is during the political process, the elections. It's our ideas we want to inject into the process, as much as our people."

And have they been successful? You bet. At least according to Nolan. "If you look at some of our early platforms, you'll find that they were considered too extreme in their day, but they've become accepted wisdom."

He rambled off these examples: Ending the draft. Allowing Americans to own gold. Decriminalizing drugs. ("We've seen some backsliding on this one," he admitted.) Repeal of the Fairness Doctrine. "Even then, we were questioning the idea of America as world cop. That was almost heretical 15 years ago, but it's now seriously discussed in mainstream politics as is the idea of dropping out of the U.N."

Also, the Libertarians are in favor of deregulating private enterprise and privatizing many — even most — of the government's functions. "We've certainly seen a lot of both of those," Nolan added.

I decided to play devil's advocate for a while. "Let's talk about deregulation," I said. "Under the old

rules, the airlines had to provide services to small towns in order to be able to fly on more profitable routes. What's wrong with that?"

"It creates unrealistic expectations. What's wrong with making a decision to live in the country and knowing it's going to mean a drive to the city to catch an airliner? Why should people who live in cities subsidize air service to rural areas? The whole government system has become how to grab the most for yourself and put the cost off on someone else."

I turned to a different tack. "You say that 15 years ago you advocated changes that have since come about. Fifteen years from now, what changes will have come about that you're advocating now?"

Unlike the way he responded to my previous questions, he actually had to pause and think about that one. He made these predictions:

"We're going to see an increasing collapse of government-run schools, which will be replaced by private schools — church, community, industry-sponsored. The failure of public schools is becoming glaringly evident, both in content and effectiveness."

He insists that "the marketplace" will provide schools for the disadvantaged. I suspect that if you get government "off our backs" the way the Libertarians want, greedy capitalism will result in children in sweat shops, not schools. He disagrees.

"Quite possibly, we're going to see the whole

monetary system collapse. All that debt will have to be repudiated; we simply don't have the assets to pay it off. The new money will be backed by something of real value."

"There's very little doubt that we're entering a new war era, though it's a tossup whether the war will be in Central America or the Middle East. Libertarians will be in the forefront of both prevention and the anti-war movement of the 1990s, because we're against all the major instrumentalities that permit war: taxation, conscription and the issuing of unbacked currency to finance the war."

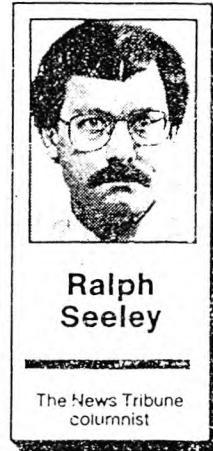
"The income tax may well be repealed in the next 15 to 20 years. It's a very unpopular tax. It doesn't tax wealth, it taxes productivity; it keeps the poor from getting rich, and lets the rich get richer."

I suspect some of Nolan's predictions are right on; I won't be a bit surprised if these come to pass. But I'm both amazed and exasperated at the way they have simply banished greed and avarice by ignoring it.

I'm not sure it's fair to judge Libertarians against any sort of ideal. After all, the Republicans gave us Nixon, who couldn't tell the truth, and Reagan, who can't tell the truth from peanut butter.

The Libertarians couldn't do much worse.

Ralph Seeley's column appears Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.



Ralph Seeley

The News Tribune
columnist

Appointee proud of libertarian tag

By DANICA KIRKA
Free Press Staff Writer

During a recent hearing in which he rejected a plea agreement, Frank Mahady summed up a philosophy that has characterized much of his career as a Vermont District Court judge.

"I'm a civil libertarian," he said, "and proud of it."

Following his appointment to the Vermont Supreme Court Thursday, Mahady said he would retain his commitment to these beliefs and use his experiences in the criminal courts in his next position on the high court.

Mahady's open devotion to the state and federal constitutions has been a key element in his conduct in some of the most controversial cases in the state.

In what is probably the most celebrated case of his five-year career as a District Court judge, Mahady ruled that the civil rights of members of the Northeast Kingdom Community Church, now called the Church at Island Pond, were violated when the state raided the sect three years ago, rounded up juveniles and

took them to Newport in an attempt to examine them for signs of child abuse.

"The civil liberties issues were so starkly delineated," Mahady said of the scheme.

In an opinion written July 2, 1984, Mahady — who earned nicknames such as "Freedom Frank" and "Your Leniency" following the decision — said the state violated the First and Fifth amendments when it failed to prove that everyone rounded up in the raid was a member of an organization with illegal practices and that each person carried out those practices.

He said the decision also reaffirmed the independence of the judiciary.

"I think it showed the judiciary is willing — even in difficult situations — to enforce constitutional guarantees," he said.

Mahady also invoked the U.S. Constitution in January 1984 when he ruled that roadblocks set up by police to snare drunken drivers were illegal because they turned motorists into "sociological guinea pigs" and violated privacy rights.

The state Supreme Court ultimately overturned the decision, however, saying

that the constitutional rights against unreasonable search and seizure were not necessarily violated by the temporary roadblocks. Each case must be reviewed individually, the high court said.

Six months after his roadblock ruling, Mahady received national attention when he sentenced James Bushway, a Burlington rapist with a tragic background, to between 18 and 20 years in prison. The grocery store tabloids criticized him for reportedly agonizing to the point of tears over the decision.

During the same year, the former prosecutor again rose to prominence when he permitted the use of the "necessity defense" in the trial of the so-called "Winooski 44," a group of anti-war protesters who staged a sit-in in the Winooski office of Sen. Robert Stafford, R-Vt.

Using this tactic, the defense was permitted to argue that the protesters committed an act of civil disobedience in order to avert the greater evil of U.S. intervention in Central America.

The protesters were acquitted of the charges.

Free Press
Burlington, VT



RNC Axes 40 Staff Members

Campaign Industry News

The last place one would have expected to see "belt tightening" is the Republican National Committee, but the impossible has happened. A combination of factors has led to a decrease in contributions from members of the party, and the results manifested themselves in the form of pink slips, and more than a few letters saying, "Your services are no longer needed."

At the summer meeting of the Republican National Committee, the membership overwhelmingly approved a revised budget reflecting a projected eight percent decrease in revenues. The RNC originally intended to raise \$35 million in 1987, but at the current rate of receipt, revenues will only total \$32 million.

The missing \$3 million translated into the loss of 40 jobs, and the severance of several RNC consulting contracts. In addition to the 40 employees laid off, 10 consultants were informed that their services were no longer required, and as many as 20 other consulting contracts were reduced.

Explaining the cutbacks, RNC press secretary, Bob Schmermund said that, "It is not as if the RNC will cease to offer vital services to our members... Obviously, our efforts have to be concentrated on our num-

ber one priority, the 1988 presidential election." According to Schmermund, the party still has 235 talented people to support the eventual Republican presidential ticket, and "relative to the Democrats, we are still much better off."

Schmermund went on to say that the overall

Direct mail fundraising is down from last year, but, "The overall quality of our support for Republicans will not be diminished."

quality of services offered by the RNC will not be adversely effected, and that no major services are going to be eliminated all together. "For example, if we had a monthly publication, under the new budget it might only come out six or seven times year, research services might take two days instead of one, but the overall quality of our support for Republicans will not be diminished."

The RNC cited competition in direct mail fundraising and the political crisis of the Reagan presidency as the two major causes for declining revenue. With seven declared presidential candidates competing for the same political contributions, it was to be expected that their efforts would overlap. The projected loss in revenue, \$5.4 million less than 1985's total of \$22.5 million, was brought about by the simple fact that the RNC is competing with George Bush, Pierre DuPont, Jack Kemp, Bob Dole, Paul Laxalt, and even Pat Robertson, for a limited number of donors.

We couldn't resist running this one!

Register-Guard
Eugene, OR

Means accepts Libertarian post

SEATTLE — American Indian activist Russell Means, who lost the Libertarian Party nomination for president, on Sunday accepted the post of honorary chairman for the party's vice presidential nominee. Former Republican Rep. Ron Paul, who had spent about \$230,000 campaigning for the nomination, got the nod Saturday as the party's presidential nominee in balloting at the national Libertarian convention, which concluded Sunday. Andre Marrou, a former Alaska legislator, will share the ticket as the vice presidential nominee.

Libertarians Look to Restart the Engine

By TIM W. FERGUSON

Candidates are still getting in and out of the presidential races of the major parties—in Gary Hart's case maybe getting out and in—but by the end of next week the Libertarian Party will already have its nominee chosen. First will come a rather colorful showdown within the biggest of the nation's third parties.

Former Republican Rep. Ron Paul of Texas and American Indian nationalist Russell Means are the prime contenders for the party's bid at its convention in Seattle beginning Wednesday.

Registration totals aren't a very helpful indicator because of the vagaries of state election laws, but the Libertarians haven't been growing of late. For a while, the party's 1971 laissez-faire founders heard Liberty Bells ringing: Its nominees won a fluke Electoral College vote, in 1972, got nearly 6% in the California gubernatorial race in 1978 and had momentum going into the 1980 presidential campaign.

That year, a recent high-water mark for big-government-bashing, the national ticket eventually made the ballot in every state. The party spent \$3.7 million, a lot of it for network television ads, to promote an Arco attorney, Ed Clark, for the White House. Mr. Clark got more than 920,000 votes, but not the three million to five million some enthusiasts were shooting for.

Libertarians blame the media fascination with John Anderson's candidacy that year for siphoning off the discontented. Ronald Reagan helped do them in, too. The man who has played many roles for many audiences over his political career appeared enough of a small-L libertarian (he once called himself that in a Reason magazine interview) to draw wavering foes of Washington back to the GOP.

Its blood letted in adolescence, the Libertarian Party never fully matured. Disputes worsened among the faithful after the 1980 race. Money from the energy-wealthy Koch family of Wichita, Kan., which had sustained the big drive, was concentrated on other endeavors such as the Cato Institute. Several activities and publications associated with the broader political movement withered or died.

The party has been static since, a few members winning minor offices, but the diehards remain as fractious a lot as you'll see in any ideological grouping. Alleged deviationists are constantly getting read out of the circle by their opponents. Another split took place even during the sleepy 1984 campaign, when Georgetown Prof. Earl Ravenal, a respectable critic of interventionist U.S. foreign policy, lost the party's nomination after he was criticized for maintaining ties to the Eastern Establishment, including an incriminating membership in the Council on Foreign Relations. An affable Orange County, Calif., lawyer, David Bergland, got the nod (and 228,000 votes on 39 states' ballots).

This year poses an opportunity for a comeback of sorts. The Libertarians don't have the money they had in 1980, but they do enjoy the prospect of a Washington insider atop the Republican ticket and a name of sorts heading their own.

Russell Means, once known more for his Indian militancy at Wounded Knee and elsewhere, is signaling a hybrid agrarian-ethnic populism that plays on fears of centralized, technocratic authority. His candidacy carries with it a hope of branching out from the white and generally comfortable Libertarian core, but some party blue bloods question the sincerity of his conversion to their cause.

Ron Paul, the former Houston-area congressman, sports some of the trappings (e.g., money) of major-party politics. In this race he is considered the right-winger, which he was not when Phil Gramm trounced him in the 1984 GOP Senate primary in Texas. The characterization stems more from the flavor of his rhetoric (pro-hard money, anti-State Department) than from the substance—he opposes U.S. government involvement in Nicaragua (and elsewhere) and limits on social liberties, and he favors unsubsidized trade with communist countries. Dr. Paul believes abortion is killing, however, and once voted against "gay rights" for the District of Columbia, so this ob-gyn is not every Libertarian's brand of medicine.

Some party activists, to whom suits and ties are not daily attire, are sympathetic to the natural rebelliousness that Mr. Means symbolizes, according to Mike Holmes, editor of the newsletter American Libertarian. But Libertarians "doesn't want to go through another nonexistent campaign," he says, and Dr. Paul's more professional operation appeals. The view in the Paul camp, he adds, is that "Libertarians have enough trouble getting people to take us seriously without having a guy show up in turquoise and braids."

Success magazine published some survey data this spring showing a remarkable number of young business people in the U.S. identifying themselves as libertarian. To date, such sentiment has not had a definable impact on American politics. After the squabbling in Seattle is over, the philosophy's ostensible political arm will be due for another market test.

Mr. Ferguson is features editor of the Journal's editorial page.