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Liberty Pledge

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Browne beats Perot in race to 50 states

But Perot and Hagelin "stretch the truth" to claim a share of the 50-state glory

It's official: Libertarian presidential candidate Harry Browne is on the ballot in all 50 states — and he did it first, despite what other third-party contenders are claiming.

The Browne campaign crossed the 50-state finish line (plus the District of Columbia) on Thursday, September 12, when Rhode Island election officials confirmed that Browne had officially qualified.

But within hours of Browne's press release announcing his accomplishment, Reform Party candidate Ross Perot and Natural Law candidate John Hagelin issued press releases claiming that they, too, were on the ballot in all 50 states.

But the facts suggested otherwise, said Kris Williams, who coordinated the ballot access drive for Browne.

"As of Friday, September 13th, election officials in Delaware had not certified Perot, and officials in New York said Perot had not filed a single piece of paperwork to get on the ballot," said Williams. "I confirmed this information by phone. And even if Perot did manage to complete those two states, we still beat him by at least 24 hours."

Hagelin is another story, said Williams. "According to *Ballot Access News*, Hagelin was on the ballot in only 43 states. Apparently, they're claiming '50-state ballot status' by running lower level candidates in all 50 states — but even that is in doubt. Our friends in the Natural Law Party seem to be stretching the truth quite a bit."

Harry Browne greeted the 50-state news with delight.

"For 25 years, the Libertarian Party has had to overcome state laws that work to keep any third party off the ballot — as well as campaign-finance laws that bestow millions of taxpayer dollars on the two old parties while restricting what we can raise voluntarily," he said. "But we've overcome all that, we're on the ballot in all 50 states, and we're bringing our message to the American people: Don't waste your vote on Dole or Clinton."

The ballot drive took two years of effort, 481,000 signatures, 24 petition drives, three lawsuits, and more than half a million dollars, said Williams.



Browne: First on 50

Debates Commission indifferent to 28,000 'Include Browne' signatures

The American public tried to deliver a message to the Commission on Presidential Debates — but the Commission wasn't particularly interested.

Representatives from the Stop the Browne Out (STBO) organization and the Harry Browne for President campaign got a chilly reception when they delivered petitions calling for Browne's inclusion in the presidential debates — signed by more than 28,000 voters — to the Commission's office in Washington, DC, on September 13th.

[Editor's note: This issue of Liberty Pledge News went to press before the Commission announced its decision.]

"Their arrogance was unbelievable," said Sharon Ayres, national director of the Browne campaign. "They wouldn't even accept the petitions. We were instructed by a staffer to leave the box on the floor outside their office."

Ayres was accompanied to the petition turn-in by local STBO coordinator Thomas Edwards, LP Director of Communications Bill Winter, and several local Libertarians.

The petitions had been collected by STBO, a volunteer effort organized by Gene Trosper of Wildomar, California.

"My concern was that a serious, credible candidate like Harry Browne would be shut out of a process he was vastly qualified to participate in," said Trosper, explaining why he started STBO. "These petitions show that American voters are fed up with the fixed game of politics-as-usual, and want to hear some alternatives who will actually discuss the issues."

The petitions were collected by more than 200 volunteers in all 50 states.

Before submitting the stacks of petitions to the Commission, Winter read a statement from LP National Chair Steve Dasbach.

In his comments, Dasbach noted that the Commission was "strongly hinting that even major, credible candidates like Libertarian Harry Browne — who is on the ballot in all 50 states — do not deserve to present their ideas to the American public on the debate stage.

"Respectfully, the American public disagrees. At least 28,000 Americans took time to sign a petition demanding that Browne be included in the debates. We urge the Commission to make the debates a forum for an expansive, spirited discussion of America's future — and to invite all presidential candidates who are running serious, credible, and viable campaigns. We are here to urge the Commission to listen to the wishes of the American people."

Libertarian Says '2 Doles' Gave Speech

Not everyone was excited by Bob Dole's speech at the Republican National Convention Thursday night.

Libertarian presidential candidate Harry Browne said that the speech revealed the "two faces of Dole ... one Dole who says he's in favor of limited government and less taxes, and another Dole who passionately defends all the government programs he's supported for 30 years."

Mr. Browne said, "It was a politically schizophrenic speech. There seem to be two Bob Doles — the good Dole who makes libertarian-sounding speeches, and the bad Dole who spent 30 years voting for tax increases and new federal programs."

He attacked Sen. Dole's tax proposals (calling a 15 percent income tax reduction a "token"), his defense of Medicare and Social Security funding ("a blank check for thirty more years of collective excuses"), and his vow to end violent crime. Mr. Browne said it is "victimless" crimes that chip away at the Bill of Rights, and eventually free violent criminals in a move to avoid prison overcrowding.

"Will the real Dole please stand up?" Mr. Browne asked.

Libertarians Want Place In National Spotlight

The Reform Party may be getting the headlines around the nation, but Associated Press noted recently that there is another party that wants to challenge the Democrats and Republicans.

They were on the presidential ballots long before the Reform Party was united to stand for anything. They want to eliminate taxes and legalize gay marriages. They oppose Internet censorship and support a repeal of the "assault-weapons" ban.

They are the other third party.

Libertarians, an eclectic mix of economic conservatives and social liberals, recently nominated for their presidential candidate a best-selling author whose works include *Why Government Doesn't Work*.

"I wouldn't be running if I thought there were no chance of winning," said Libertarian nominee Harry Browne of Franklin, TN. "Most people are on our side. The challenge isn't so much to persuade them that our alternative is right as it is to let them know our alternative exists."

Browne gained added notoriety among gun rights activists when he addressed the 1994 Gun Rights Policy Conference in San Francisco.

The Libertarian Party, operating in the shadows of American politics for a quarter century, is hoping to muscle its way into the national spotlight this year—a perennial wish that hasn't yet been fulfilled. The party was even snubbed at the 1992 debates. The difference this time around is that the rival Reform Party boosted the profile of alternative parties to the majority Republican and Democratic organizations.

"We owe Ross Perot a debt of thanks by legitimizing voting for a third-party candidate," Libertarian spokesman William Winter said of the billionaire Reform Party founder who ran a strong campaign for President in 1992. "But he did take away from us the anti-establishment vote."

One of the largest third parties in American history, the Libertarian Party was founded in Colorado in 1971. Presidential candidate John Hospers was on the ticket in two states in 1972. He got 3,671 votes.



Harry Browne

By 1992,

Libertarian presidential hopeful Andre Marrou was on the ballot in all 50 states with a budget of \$1 million. He got more than 291,000 votes. In contrast, Perot spent about \$60 million of his own money and got about 20 million votes—19% of those cast nationwide.

Browne, calling his bid a "longshot," said he needs name recognition to be considered a legitimate candidate. He hopes to further the party's message by participating in presidential debates this fall.

"Everything in our campaign now is directed at this end, to getting into the public-opinion polls, so that we can muscle our way into the debates in the fall," Browne said in a convention speech.

Another attempt by the Libertarians to overpower the Reform Party—which plans to field only top-of-the-ticket candidates—is running candidates for many other offices as well, more than 1,000 overall.

The Libertarians boast more than 218 candidates for the US House, almost triple the number that ran in the 1994 elections. More than 800 candidates will run for other state and local offices, Winter said.

▲ *The Chattanooga Free Press*

Chattanooga, Tennessee, August 18, 1996

▲ *The New Gun Week*, (national newspaper), August 10, 1996

▼ *The Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colorado, August 5, 1996

Libertarians celebrate 25th anniversary

Party sees opportunity despite gains made by Perot organization

By Alisha Jeter

Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

BOULDER — Some Libertarians say this could be a landmark political year for the 25-year-old party.

"I think this is going to be our big breakthrough year," the party's state treasurer, Cooper Jager, said Sunday at a celebration of the party's 25th anniversary.

The Libertarian Party proclaims itself the third-largest political party in the country — even with the Reform Party's growing presence in American politics.

"The Reform Party is just tearing itself apart," Jager said.

In contrast, he said, "we're a very plodding, stable grass-roots group."

One-time Libertarian gubernatorial candidate David Aitken said the Reform Party is not getting at the heart of true reform.

"All the current parties are picking around the edges of real

reform," he said. "We're the only party seriously committed to political change."

Some Libertarians describe the Reform Party as a personal project of its founder, Ross Perot, rather than a long-term threat to the Libertarian movement.

"The Reform Party doesn't have a philosophical plank," state chairwoman Sandra Johnson said. "What Ross Perot thinks equals the Reform Party."

Johnson, who drove five hours from southern Colorado to attend the celebration, said she hoped

the movement out of frustration with the 1992 presidential election.

"I couldn't stomach either Clinton or Bush," she said. "The more I learned, the more I felt that the Libertarians were on the right track."

Party member Max Winkler described the fundamental concept as "you leave me alone, I leave you alone."

"The only thing that really matters is individual and human freedom," he said.

Are Republicans closet Libertarians?

"Restoring the American Dream." Is that a great title for the Republican Party platform, or what?

Oops. One astute reader called to point out that the nifty title was lifted, word for word, from the title of one of Robert J. Ringer's books.

Perhaps you can more easily recall Ringer's precedent book, *Looking out for Number One*. Note that a combination of the titles prompts two interesting questions:

■ Should the full GOP platform title be "Restoring the American Dream by Looking Out for Number One"?

■ Is the Dole-Kemp ticket subliminally Libertarian?

One could hope. Alas, 'tis not to be — not soon, at any rate.

Case in point: If the GOP were truly dedicated to reducing government coercion, the platform wouldn't call for a 15 percent cut in income taxes.

Instead, it would demand an abrupt end to the IRS we've come to know and love. The promise would be to:

- Eliminate the income tax.
- Cease and desist from direct taxation on wealth.
- Institute a national sales tax.
- Abolish all tax-funded social engineering.

Furthermore, the platform wouldn't call for halving the capital gains tax. Real capitalists would



DAN WARRENSFORD
FLORIDA TODAY COLUMNIST

demand elimination of the tax.

And why, in conjunction with taxes, has the GOP offered a \$500 credit for children — in any income group? Why should government subsidize parenthood?

We all know what's created by subsidizing any activity: More of it. The subsidies are compensation for families' financial difficulties, caused by government meddling in the economy. So why didn't the GOP wizards simply promise to stop government meddling? Go figure.

The GOP's platform isn't all bad. The authors recognized our right to: sovereignty, freedom from illegal immigration, civil rights without racism (affirmative action); severe punishment of criminal predators; private property and compensation for government theft, er, acquisition; and work from welfare recipients.

Those authors even took a stab at educational freedom by endorsing vouchers. However, government educationists and statist union leaders would still be in control. Some freedom.

But there's still excessive me-tooism in the platform. Its purpose, one can suppose, is to convert people who are determined to force the rest of us into slavery on a federal — or global — plantation.

The GOP leadership just doesn't get it: Our would-be herders cannot be co-opted or rehabilitated. They are political podiatrists. They only understand the agony of defeat.

In the July issue of *Freedom Daily*, Jacob C. Hornberger observed that after caving in to FDR's New Deal and LBJ's Great Society, "Republicans sought office with proposals on how to make the welfare state more efficient. Their campaign slogan became: 'We believe in free enterprise, welfare reform and regulatory reform. We'll reduce the waste, fraud and abuse of government programs, but we promise you that we'll never dismantle them.'"

It has taken decades for me-tooism to become ingrained in the GOP. You can hope this year's platform signals an attempt to return to its fundamentally Libertarian roots. If not, call the real Libertarian Party at 1-800-682-1776.

Warrensford, a retired electrical engineer, lives on Merritt Island.

Wild About Harry?

And the resounding leader in four new Presidential opinion polls is ... Harry Browne!

Who?

The Libertarian Party says Mr. Browne, its Presidential candidate, trounced President Clinton, Bob Dole and Ross Perot in four August polls — not of registered voters, but of Internet surfers.

Mr. Browne collected at least a third of the vote in each survey, including 40.2 percent in a poll conducted on the popular "Politics Now" Web site managed by several leading newspapers, a news magazine, a network and the analytic weekly magazine *National Journal*. Mr. Clinton was second in two polls; Mr. Dole in the other two.

There is a caveat: the polls were not scientifically conducted. Rather, they measured the sentiments of Web-cruisers who visited the sites and chose to register their sentiments with a mouse click or two, or perhaps three. Still, the surveys may reflect the decidedly free spirit among many Internet users, who

Libertarian invited to Senate debates

The League of Women Voters' debates will no longer be a one-on-one competition.

Libertarian Senate nominee Robin Miller has been invited to participate this year along with Republican Al Salvi and Democratic candidate Dick Durbin. At least one debate is tentatively planned for the week of October 21, and will be aired on WLS Channel 7 in Chicago and on other television and radio stations across the state.

"I am excited by the unprecedented opportunity to meet my opponents head on," stated Robin Miller. "The overriding question this year is smaller government. The voters will see the difference offered by Libertarians on one side, who want huge spending and tax cuts, and the representatives of the older parties, both of whom

want to increase the size of the government."

The debate is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Illinois Education Fund, who determines which candidates may participate. Qualification is based on constitutional eligibility, evidence of a formal campaign, and voter interest. Miller's campaign demonstrated significant voter interest by besting Bloomington attorney David Hoscheidt in the state's first third-party primary in over one hundred years.

Miller, 37, an East Peoria small business owner and computer professional, was a 1994 candidate for University of Illinois Trustee, garnering a record-setting 200,000 votes and obtaining major-party ballot status for the Libertarian Party of Illinois.

Two faces

Harry Browne, the Libertarian Party's choice for president, may be outdoing the Clinton campaign in criticism of Bob Dole.

Mr. Browne, in a press release, said the Republican's nomination acceptance speech demonstrated "the two faces of Dole" — one who says he favors limited government and lower taxes and another who passionately defends all the government programs he supported in the past.

"It was a politically schizophrenic speech," Mr. Browne said. "There seems to be two Bob Doles — the good Dole who makes libertarian-sounding speeches, and the bad Dole who spent 30 years voting for tax increases and new federal programs. Will the real Dole please stand up?"

◀ *The Washington Times*, Washington, DC, August 20, 1996

▲ *The Auburn Citizen*, Auburn, Illinois, August 8, 1996

▶ *The New York Times*, New York, NY, September 9, 1996



Associated Press

Harry Browne, the Libertarian Party's candidate, with his wife, Pamela, was nominated in July.

have campaigned hard against Government controls on cyberspace.

No word on how Mr. Browne's running mate, a software company owner named Jo Jorgensen, fares against Al Gore and Jack Kemp.

CAROLE SCOTT

There is a presidential alternative

► *The Times-Georgian*
Carrollton, Georgia
July 26, 1996

▼ *The Odessa American*
Odessa, Texas
August 29, 1996

If Bill Clinton and Robert Dole are the best candidates the Democrats and Republicans can come up with, it's time these parties folded their tents and disappear like the Whig Party did in the 1850s.

Clinton is the kind of guy you expect to see peddling used cars on television. To unhorse this slick political con man the Republicans offer us a mean-spirited, not much more principled pol, who has about as much charisma as a used sweat sock.

An alternative candidate to these guys is Harry Browne, the Libertarian Party's candidate. I hope he can muster enough support in the polls to get included in the presidential debates, as I think it will be interesting to see how Clinton and Dole handle him (will Clinton, viewing his leftist voters as in the bag, as he has with Dole, jerk Browne's issues right out from under him?).

Government, claims Browne, isn't the solution to our problems. Instead, it is responsible for many of them (Clinton, of course, now says, as he proposes increasing its scope, that the day of big government is past).

Crime, he observes, was not our number one social problem until the federal government got into fighting crime in a big way. Likewise, immigra-

tion wasn't a big problem until the federal government began offering aliens welfare, free schooling and various privileges.

Lobbyists became a problem only after the government became big enough to provide attractive rewards for effective lobbying.

"Family values haven't," he claims, "declined because government is too lax, but for precisely the opposite reason — because government has grabbed responsibility for everything, leaving many individuals no reason to exercise self-responsibility, and because government taxes away our ability to care for our own, teach our children our own values, or live our lives in the ways that make sense to us."

Problems in many areas: crime, education and welfare, he says, were not big problems when they were handled on the local level. We should, he believes, return dealing with these things to local government.

The men who wrote our Constitution did not give the federal government the power to deal with common crimes, regulate individual behavior, or take care of people in need; not because they trusted state politicians more than federal officials, but because they knew that any "state that went too far could lose population (and tax sources) to its neighbors." They knew "it was better to let one or two states go too far than to

give the national government the power to go too far."

Do we want, he asks, a "country in which everyone is responsible for everyone else but no one is responsible for himself, where groups dislike each other because each gains only at the expense of others, and where we are dependent upon the favors of politicians to survive? Do we want a society, in which government takes half our income from us and then doles it back to us as though we were children on an allowance?"

"We are no longer as proud, self-reliant Americans. Government has turned too many of us into whiners, dependents, people clamoring for favors from the state."

Politicians do not want to reduce government, he says, and it "isn't because they think the spending cuts, would hurt too many people. It's because they know it would hurt them. No matter what they say, neither Democrats nor Republicans want to give up the power that allows them to bestow favors and exemptions on friends."

What we need, he says, is "people who will go to Washington not to reform government programs or to reduce them, but to get rid of them. We need leaders who don't want to run the country, but who want to restore our right to run our own lives."



Libertarians have a plan

By Tibor Machan

The Libertarian Party of America had its national convention on the Fourth of July weekend in Washington, D.C., and C-Span covered nearly all of it.

It was an inspiring affair even while one knew that the LPA has little chance to do the country the good it certainly could well do by gaining the leadership role in Washington.

Compared to the LPA weekend, the GOP convention in early August was a really boring affair, packed with nothing but platitudes and bromides, fudging every issue at hand and aiming to keep everyone guessing what Republicans really stand for in our time.

Sadly the Libertarians will be dismissed as a group of ideologues. They will be written off as politically marginal, unable to garner the kind of grassroots and monetary support needed to mount a winning campaign in these United States in our day.

They will be derided as being a historical, unable to appreciate how times have changed and how the ideals that have had some validity for 1776 no longer apply. Unless a big fuss is made about it, their candidate will probably be left out of the presidential debates — which is curious, since it is the media gurus who are complaining most about how boring these events tend to be. The Libertarians would sure make a debate come alive.

The Libertarian Party of America will not be taken seriously by the press because, well, the press finds talk about individual liberty passe — except when it comes to the freedom of the press itself. And the press will make sure, by way of benign neglect, that the Libertarian Party's presidential candidate, Harry Browne — a very bright, low key, charming, sensible, affable and well-educated individual who could mount a viable intellectual and political challenge to the two

current major party candidates if only the press didn't decide ahead of time to marginalize him — gets no play.

There is a problem with third parties in the U.S. This is that they have no successful history. And history is written by the winner, not necessarily by those who are correct, whose assessment of things is closer to the truth. The press is mostly interested in winners, in who made the bigger splash, not in those who are actually more important. Despite all the blabber about the independence and objectivity of reportage, the press is usually following the crowd, including the ideological leadership of its college teachers.

Were there some measure of conscientiousness in political reportage, the issue would be whose ideas make the best sense, not just in politics but in economics, science, religion and everywhere else where ideas have consequences. If people in the press decided to heed this point of journalistic ethics, they would much more likely pay attention to Harry Browne and his line of reasoning on America's federal government.

The bottom line of Browne's political thinking is that government does not work for purposes it is now mostly being used — solving all the problems of the country. Instead government could function well enough if it stuck to its proper function which is to protect the basic rights of all citizens. There would be no budget crisis if government got out of the business of trying to fund all the special interest groups. There would be no competence crisis if government stuck to national defense rather than being, as a really scary bumper sticker says about the U.S. Marines, the '911 of the world.'

In short, government would maintain its integrity, as a profession, were it in the hands of the Libertarians. They view it as having a specific purpose, not as one of these indeterminate forces that ought to stick its fingers into everything

people are fussing about. They see government as a profession with the task of giving a society needed protection against criminals, foreign aggressors and its own awesome powers.

And a crime has to involve violating someone's rights, not simply doing what some folks with political clout don't want you to do. (Libertarians consider a victimless crime a contradiction in terms, like square circle.)

If you think about it, this idea the Libertarians will attempt to bring home to the American people is what underlies the unique politics of the United States, namely, its focus on government being not to master but be the professional partner of the people.

It is in America that most people stopped being subjects of government and became citizens. Unfortunately not all were granted full citizenship, not until a long history of injustice had been perpetrated. Nevertheless, it is the U.S. that became the leader of the free world, meaning the leader of a global anti-tyranny movement.

It is the Libertarian Party of America that has been attempting for the last 25 years, when philosopher John Hospers ran as its first presidential nominee, that aims at redirecting the country and perhaps the world toward trusting human individuals and their voluntary associations. The LPA proposes to solve problems without the use of coercion, without imposing anything but mutual respect for voluntary conduct.

If only the LPA had the press that is given to *Filegate*, *Whitewater* and the daily crime statistics, it might even reach the American public with its message, one that actually holds out hope for meeting the challenges of our time. But this is a bit much to hope for, given the ideological orientation of most of those who like to cover national politics.

Machan is a professor of philosophy and business ethics at Auburn University in Alabama.