

# The INDIVIDUALIST

JUNE, 1977 VOL. 1; No. 1

**A VOICE OF REASON IN THE STATIST WILDERNESS**

## **NEW ENGLAND LP CONFERENCE SLATED FOR JUNE 24-26**

On the weekend of June 24th to 26th, the New Hampshire Libertarian Party will host a New England Regional Conference in Bedford, New Hampshire (just outside of Manchester). There will be speakers, workshops, and seminars on a variety of issues of interest to libertarians (gun control, medicine, nuclear energy, etc); also an address by Roger MacBride, appearances by other national LP figures, and films such as "The Incredible Bread Machine", "Adam Smith", and "Interview with Ayn Rand."

Full details of the conference can be found on the insert accompanying this newsletter. In all, it seems like a great opportunity for R.I. libertarians to meet and socialize with other like-minded individuals from the New England area, in addition to participating in the formal activities. The distance is not far to travel, and it would be worth considering attending even for one day. For those wishing to stay overnight, we are

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## **NATIONAL LP CONVENTION TO BE HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO JULY 14-17**

The 6th annual national convention of the Libertarian Party will be held in San Francisco, Cal. from the 14th to the 17th of July. Anyone who thinks he will be able to attend the convention, and would like to go as a R.I. delegate, please contact the LPRI at our PO Box, or by phoning party chairman Stew Engel at 846 - 6045. We can give full details on the convention schedule, accommodations, costs, and special economy rate air fares to San Francisco.

If you are interested in being a delegate to this convention, please contact us as soon as possible, as time is of the essence.

## **EXECOM MEETS; SETS PARTY RULES**

Since the Organizing Conference of March 12th, the newly elected Executive Committee of the LPRI has held two meetings and acted to set up details of the party organization and functions. Financial considerations were of paramount importance: it was determined that all party expenditures would be budgeted over a four month period, and, most important, that no party member or officer would be empowered to commit the party to any debt beyond funds budgeted and available. (This last proviso to prevent any possibility of the party going "into hock" and requiring a crash fundraising program to pay up old bills.) The present budget adopted by the Execom allocates our limited funds primarily for a membership drive, for newsletter expense, and a contingency fund available to the chairman for unexpected and incidental expenses that may arise during the summer.

In a separate action, the committee set up membership requirements, principally that prospective members file an application containing a pledge disavowing the initiation of the use of force, and that they pay a membership fee of \$10.00 annually (\$5.00 for students). A subscription to the newsletter will be included in the membership fee.

The mechanics of publishing and distributing the newsletter were set up and an editor and staff appointed. Subscription cost of The Individualist was set at \$5.00 per year for non-members.

The next regular meeting of the Execom will be in September.

## **DEBATE: ROTHBARD TROUNCES SOCIALIST**

By Todd Becker

Socialism was given a bad name in Providence last March 22nd. In

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## **LPRI CONVENES, ORGANIZES, ELECTS**

### **ENGEL ELECTED CHAIRMAN**

On Saturday, March 12th, the Libertarian Party of Rhode Island became an official entity as fourteen local libertarians met at Asquino's Restaurant in East Providence, and in an all-day session, formally organized the party, adopted a party constitution, and elected officers.

Stewart Engel, 39, of Newport was unanimously chosen to be the party's first official chairman.

The first order of business for the party activists at the conference was the point-by-point discussion and adoption of the articles of a party constitution, which will serve as the instrument regulating the activities and operation of the Libertarian Party of R.I. The bulk of the day's work went into discussion of the charter, and it was late in the afternoon before the final articles had been voted on and the constitution adopted.

The salient points of the instrument provide for:

Annual party conventions, designated "Regular Convention" in odd numbered years, and "Non-regular Convention" in even years; Non-regular Conventions to be concerned primarily with nomination of candidates to run for local and national office; Regular Conventions to conduct party business and to elect party officers and delegates to the national LP convention;

An Executive Committee to run the party between conventions, this committee to consist of the four party officers (Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer) plus a fifth At-large member.

Following adoption of the party constitution, the Organizing Confer-

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**EDITORIAL CORNER****VOTE "NO" ON JUNE 28th**

Last November in the general election, with over 400 thousand voters turning out, the citizens of R.I. defeated a number of bond issues that would have entailed the spending of millions of tax dollars. This, of course, did not please the local politicians and the various interest groups who would have benefitted from the expenditure of your money. So, now the politicians in the State House have once again resorted to the same old sleazy political dirty trick that has by now become all too familiar to all tax-paying citizens of this state; they have resurrected some of the defeated bond issues and called for a "special election" to vote on them again. Naturally, they know that at the special election only a handful of voters will show up, and that this handful will be composed mostly of political hacks, members of the vested interest groups concerned, and state and city employees either under pressure or with their own financial interests at heart; and, of course, the bond issues will be approved, and the will of the bulk of the taxpayers will once again have been frustrated.

The nature of the particular bond issues involved is almost incidental; in this case they entail spending on transportation facilities and on the state prison. The former issue is spiced with the promise of "free" matching federal funds (the old Manna-from-Heaven routine); the latter proposal looks like just more money down the ACI rathole. At any event, it would seem that virtually all libertarians would agree that neither of these bond issues has any merit, and that they should be defeated.

So, what can we as libertarians, voters, and taxpayers do about it? If the LPRI had the same easy and free access to the various communications media as do the major parties, or if we had the money to spend that the vested interest groups have, we could wage an advertising campaign and get people out to vote against these proposals in the special election. Since we have none of these resources, one thing we can do is "talk it up" among friends and family (maybe letters to the editor and calls to radio talk shows), and generally try to call the election to the attention of the general public. Above all, we have to get to the polls ourselves on election day and make our own voices heard.

In last November's general election, the Libertarian candidates on the R.I. ballot received up to over 700 votes. That many votes for a candidate for state or national office may not mean much, but the same number in a special election just could have a significant impact on the end result. At any rate, as active libertarians, we must get out on June 28th and vote a resounding NO on these bond issues.

AAF

**FROM THE CHAIR****PARTY NEEDS MEMBERS, FUNDS**

Top priority for the next year is going to be placed on recruiting new members, especially high-school and college students residing in R.I. The reason for this emphasis is that we will need people available in the summer of 1978 to petition signatures to get LP candidates on the ballot for the 1978 general election.

Although the MacBride-Bergland ticket was on the ballot in 32 states, only two were in New England. In terms of votes, New Hampshire placed 14th and R.I. 23rd of the 32. Because of our state's small size and population, R.I. is logically the easiest state in New England in which to promote the Libertarian philosophy of individual freedom. The publicity we can generate for our philosophy by running candidates far exceeds any publicity we could generate with advertising dollars. It is critical that we field at least one (preferably two) statewide candidate in 1978, as well as a few local candidates, if the news media are going to take us seriously. We cannot run candidates if we can't get them on the ballot; thus the necessity for recruiting members who will have at least part of the summer free.

Todd Becker is in charge of our membership drive. If you know of any high-school or college students

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**MEMBERSHIP - SUBSCRIPTION - CONTRIBUTION FORM**  
LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF RHODE ISLAND, Box 431, Middletown, R.I. 02840

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I wish to become a Regular Member of the LPRI. \$10.00 dues enclosed.☐ I wish to become a Student Member of the LPRI. \$5.00 dues enclosed.☐ I wish to subscribe to the newsletter. \$5.00 enclosed. (Free to members.)☐ I am enclosing a contribution of \_\_\_\_\_ to help promote the cause of economic freedom and civil liberties.☐ I cannot at this time contribute financially but want to work for the LPRI.☐ I have not made up my mind; keep me on your mailing list a while longer.

"I endorse the statement of principles of the Libertarian Party. I hereby certify that I do not believe in the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

Signed (members only) \_\_\_\_\_



(Cont. 'd from page 1)

ence was adjourned, then, after a short break, the conferees assembled again, and the first Regular Convention of the LPRI was called to order by acting party chairman, Tony Fiocca. The convention delegates then voted for party officers to serve until the next Regular Convention in 1979.

In addition to Engel, the officers chosen were: Tony Fiocca, vice-chairman; Todd Becker, secretary; Elizabeth Behrman, treasurer; and Karen Howard, at-large member of the Executive Committee.

Engel, a computer analyst and engineer now residing in Newport, has been active in R.I. libertarian politics virtually since the first day he arrived in the state in the fall of 1975. A native of Pennsylvania, Engel brought with him a background of LP activism, having served as the Pennsylvania party's treasurer before moving to R.I. He was instrumental in recruiting members for the LPRI and chaired the committee that drew up the constitution adopted by the party conference.

In the fall of 1976, Engel became the Libertarian candidate for governor of R.I., ran a very active campaign on an extremely limited budget, brought the message of libertarianism to voters throughout the state via numerous television and radio appearances and articles in the local press. As the new party chairman, Mr. Engel stressed the need for active recruiting to bring in more party members before the next general election.

During the luncheon break, the conferees were treated to an address by Mr. Andrew Melechinsky of Enfield, Conn., head of an organization called "Constitutional Revival". In his remarks, the conference guest stressed his belief that the U.S. constitution is a very powerful weapon in the struggle against statism and that it is, indeed, possible for a private individual to "fight city hall" and win court cases against the government on constitutional grounds. (Melechinsky is currently involved in the latest test of his thesis right here in R.I. After spending the better part of a week recently in our own infamous ACI,

he was finally ordered released by the R.I. Supreme Court, and is now free to continue his legal battle over the right of state tax officials to subpoena a firm's financial records.)

In summary, Melechinsky sounded an optimistic note, though admitting that the fight against encroaching statism was by no means an easy one.

#### MEMBERS, ACTIVISTS, CONTRIBUTORS - PLEASE STAND UP!

Our mailing list has grown considerably in the past year, and we can no longer afford to continue mailing to those of you who have at one time or other requested information about the Libertarian Party, but have not shown any continuing interest in the party by becoming a member, activist, or contributor. At this time, we are primarily interested in party memberships; however, we realize that many people, for one reason or another, cannot join the party officially, but are still in agreement with our principles and goals and would like to help the cause of libertarianism in some other way. Contributions, of course, are always welcome, as are paid subscriptions to the newsletter, which help defray printing and mailing costs. We also want to hear from people who may not be in a position to contribute financially, but would like to perform some other service for the party.

In any event, please let us know of your interest in the LPRI by filling in the form on page 2 and mailing it to our PO box. Membership applications and newsletter subscriptions must be accompanied by a check or money order made payable to "Libertarian Party of R.I."

Please act now so that we can have a better idea of just how many of you are really interested in the party and its work.

(LP REGIONAL - from page 1) getting a list of alternate hotel and motel accommodations other than those at the conference hotel.

Anyone planning to attend and interested in more information on the conference, on accommodations, and/or ride-sharing, contact Stew Engel at 846-6045.

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who may be interested in joining the party and/or organizing a Libertarian Club in their school, please contact Todd at Box 449, Brown University, Providence, 02912 (863-4488).

Second priority is the establishment of a statewide Libertarian Speaker's Bureau. Karen Howard will be responsible for organizing this activity and expects it to be in operation by September. If you are interested in speaking out for the cause of liberty, or know where we might get some speaking engagements, please contact Karen at 201A Washington Road, Barrington 02806 (246-0835). Participation in the Speaker's Bureau should be considered a "must" requirement for anyone who wants to be a candidate in 1978.

Money will be required to support the above activities, especially for ads in school papers to recruit students. It takes about \$5.00 per member per year just to pay for the newsletter, so very little money is left over from dues to pay for special activities. Your contributions, which may be designated for some specific purpose if you desire, will be most instrumental in helping us to spread the word. Don't forget, one-half of your contribution, up to \$50.00 (100 dollars on a joint return) may be used as a tax credit; or up to \$100.00 (200 joint) may be claimed as a deduction.

If you have any ideas regarding fund-raising, please contact me at 846-6045.

Stew Engel

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summing up by insisting that "the question is not whether we are to have politics, but whether we are to have just politics."

In the question period both debaters were able to develop their views more fully. (McGrath finally attempted to define "democratic socialism" pointing to Yugoslavian workers councils as the model for his system.) The questions from the floor ranged from the problems of energy and pollution to a discussion of monopoly and civil liberties.



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a debate that was both scholarly and humorous. Dr. Murray Rothbard upset the reputation of Brown University professor Michael McGrath in front of an overflow audience that braved the blasts and torrents of an old-fashioned New England Northeaster to attend the debate held at Brown's List Auditorium.

"Socialism vs. the Free Market" was the topic of the two and one half hour event, which included a question and answer period in addition to the formal argumentation.

Speaking first, Rothbard contrasted the "harmonious order" of the free market with the "hegemonic system" which has been dominant throughout history. His caustic offensive against socialism concentrated on the practical consequences that have characterized socialist regimes. Venturing into the field of political science (which he called a "beknighted profession") the plump anarchist proclaimed "Rothbard's first law: Power will be used." Historically, after socialist revolutions, he said, the most despotic leaders beat out competing factions and gain control

of the political apparatus. In discussing the nature of a totally planned economy, Rothbard asked students about to enter the job market to consider what it would be like to have the state as the only employer. Closing his first speech, he pointed out that the free market is especially important in a complex, interdependent, industrial society, contrary to the popular impression that modern technology has somehow made the free market unnecessary or inefficient.

McGrath responded with a string of ad hoc objections to libertarian philosophy, forgetting that the debate was about the free market. Without answering the points raised by his opponent, or attempting to define his own position, McGrath began by issuing three complaints: 1) Libertarianism provides "no theory of a just war", like WWII; 2) Without the state "consumer protection" would no longer exist; 3) Rothbard is a sexist, according to an essay he once wrote. Taking another tack, he claimed that any major institutional source, not just the state, is bound to violate people's rights,

asserting that corporations control consumption through advertising. He noted that many corporations today exist only because "the state insures demand" with subsidies, charters, and contracts (as if Rothbard didn't know!). The "Democratic Socialist" from Brown concluded his first speech by challenging the injustices of inheritance, slavery, and the oppression of Indians and housewives, which he somehow managed to associate with the free market.

In his rebuttal, Rothbard corrected McGrath's misrepresentations of the free market, giving an enlightened analysis of war, consumerism, and the corporate state, and the just basis of property rights. He surprised the audience by showing how statism was at the root of slavery and the violation of the rights of women and Indians. He defended advertising, contrasting its "acid reality test" with "political advertising" which has no such test.

McGrath reiterated his doubts about the justice of the marketplace, (Concl. page 3)

L P R I

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