

The Connecticut Libertarian

November 2001

The Official Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut

www.lpct.org

State Convention Held

by James Madison

MERIDEN – The Libertarian Party of Connecticut held its 2001 convention on October 6th, featuring speakers from all parts of the libertarian movement and electing members to serve in internal party positions.

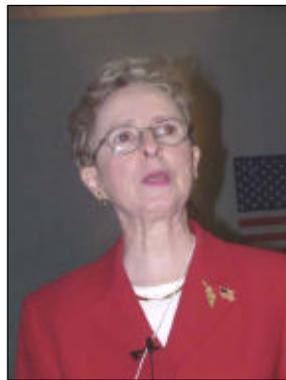
The keynote speaker was Sharon Harris of Advocates for Self-Government, an educational libertarian organization that publishes the World's Smallest Political Quiz. Sharon not only gave the keynote address, but also held a workshop on libertarian communications.

"We may be the first Libertarian someone meets, and how we speak to them and act toward them is the way they will think all Libertarians are," noted Sharon during the workshop, emphasizing the importance of being a good messenger as well as having a good message.

During her keynote address, "The Case for Libertarian Optimism," Sharon commented that Libertarians should take comfort in the fact that they are on the winning side. She pointed out that socialism is dead, libertarian ideas are beginning to permeate society, and despite the short-term boost in people's faith in government caused by the WTC attacks, people's long-term faith in government is on a steady decline.

Taking a view more related to internal party activities and party direction was Elias Israel who is a candidate for national chairman in 2002. Elias talked about what he refers to as the "New Libertarian Party," and how it will succeed in the coming years through constant outreach, more officeholders, better organization, and teamwork. Those interested in supporting Elias or any candidate for national LP office can do so by serving as a delegate to the 2002 national convention – watch future newsletters for more information on becoming a delegate.

Mike Costanza talked about libertarianism on the electoral front. He joked several times about the convention promotional literature that listed him as "the most successful Libertarian for state office in Connecticut History," a title he earned by getting 26% of the vote in a three-way race for state representative. He expressed concern about being able to live up to that billing, but then made it clear that he had earned the title through a lot of hard work including quitting his job three months before the election so he could campaign door-to-door every day. He did so much walking around his district that he actually wore



Sharon Harris addresses the 2001 LPCT Convention.

Libertarian Party of Connecticut Members Join Peace Rally

by James Madison

HARTFORD – Members of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut attended a peace rally held at the state Capitol on October 13 to show their support for alternatives to the ongoing militarism of U.S. foreign policy, the latest incarnation of which is the bombing and eventual invasion of Afghanistan.

About 450 people attended. The event started at 1:00 p.m. with about eight speakers from various organizations and institutions discussing various alternatives. The speeches were followed by a march through the streets of downtown Hartford, eventually leading to the federal building where a few more speeches were given, and protesters sang songs and danced in the streets.

The event was organized by about a dozen organizations, most with a fairly heavy liberal bent, so naturally, most of their solutions were only half-right. For example, one speaker favored ending military interventionism – but then advocated replacing it with massive economic and "charitable" government intervention. Another observed that bombing, invading, and occupying the world for decades creates enemies who eventually come back for revenge – but then said the solution is to instead sign on to international treaties like the Kyoto Accord (which the U.S. refused to sign because it would destroy American industry and do nothing for the environment) and support events like the U.N. conference on racism (which would have institutionalized racism the way hate crime laws already have in the U.S.).

Regardless, somewhere among the liberal fantasy of government being the solution – just not in its current form – was a thread of non-interventionist foreign policy that libertarians support and that the Libertarian Party of Connecticut members hoped to address and promote. The theory was that while the organizers were clearly hard-core liberals, perhaps those in attendance were simply looking for an alternative to the war and were open to new ideas.

Arline Dunlop, Darlene Nicholas, Rich Connelly, and James Madison were in attendance, literature in hand, working the crowd. We hoped to reach those who want to end military interventionism, as well as every other form of government interventionism, so that one day the world will be able to solve its own problems without our government making it worse, and without those problems finding their way back to our homeland.

Further peace activities will no doubt be planned as the war against Afghanistan degenerates. If you would like to receive announcements for such activities, get on the Libertarian Party of Connecticut Activists e-mail list. Visit www.LPCT.org for instructions.

Radio Callers Concerned about “War”

by James Madison

BRIDGEPORT – As a result of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut’s participation in the Peace Rally of October 13th (see previous article), I was invited, as the Communications Director for the LPCT, to spend an hour on WICC AM 610 discussing the Libertarian Party’s point of view on the current conflict and taking questions from callers.

Having been a Libertarian for years now, I’m used to enduring the hostility that comes from offering a view that is different from the mainstream, but I was expecting the fury against me on this issue to be greater than I had ever experienced before.

Judging by the opening remarks of the host, Chris Conley, I believe he was expecting the same thing. “Washington Post/ABC News says that President Bush has a 92% job approval rating,” he said. “Eighty-two percent of us in a Newsweek survey...support the way the military conflict is being carried out.” The numbers certainly did seem aligned against me.

Popularity notwithstanding, I expressed the LP’s constitutional/non-interventionist philosophy. A full discussion is beyond the scope of this article, but the short version follows. The Constitution gives only Congress the power to declare war. War has not been declared in half a century. If we hadn’t been engaged in unconstitutional militarism for half a century, we wouldn’t have made the kinds of enemies that want to kill us. The long-term solution is therefore to end our militaristic foreign policy and embrace our founders’ vision of “entangling alliances with none”. Because innocent people were killed, some response is justified, but that response must be governed by rule of law, limited in scope, and have a clear end; it must not become the perpetual war for perpetual peace, since that just makes more enemies.

The switchboard lit up. But something strange happened. They were mostly calls of support. One expressed a concern about our massive military presence in Saudi Arabia. Another, about our military backing of Israel in its assaults against Arabs. Another, who had lost a son in Vietnam and didn’t want this war to go the same way. In all, we were only able to take six calls (Chris likes to let people talk rather than going for quantity), but of those, four were in support, one was opposed, and one was unclear in his position.

The one call of opposition was from a gentleman who thought I was saying we should essentially “do nothing” in response to the WTC attacks. I noted that while in the *long-term* “do nothing” is a fairly accurate summary – since our military should “do nothing” in terms of initiating offensive military actions – in the *short-term*, some level of action is morally justified, but must be properly focused and strictly limited, just like all governmental actions. Then when it’s done, our global militarism absolutely must stop.

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holes in the bottom of his shoes – which he brought with him and threw to the crowd during his speech so they could see the evidence for themselves.

Dawn Barry, homeschooler of three daughters, addressed alternatives to the current government-run educational monopoly and shared stories of how she got involved with homeschooling. She discussed the many benefits for those who choose to homeschool their children.

Larry Cohen, who describes himself as “*the* libertarian journalist” at the Hartford Courant, addressed an array of issues with a flair of wit and wisdom that made government incompetence seem as laughable as it is pathetic.

In addition to the great speakers, and accented by the cash bar, great catering, and live band, party business was taken care of as well. The bylaws require that a convention include the election/re-election of the 12-member State Central Committee (SCC) and two of six members of the Judicial Committee (JC).

Elected to the SCC were Dawn Barry, Rich Connelly, Ken Gordon, Andrew Holl, Ken Mosher, James Madison (Secretary), Al Neves, Lenny Rasch (Chairman), Carl Richardson (Treasurer), Andrew Rule, Ned Vare (Vice-Chair), and Steve Weitzman. Elected to the JC were Paul Cimino and Avery Grayson.

Doing Something? Write about it!

The Connecticut Libertarian welcomes submissions from members. Articles of 300 to 500 words with photographs are ideal. Send submissions or inquiries to TCL@lpct.org.

Meeting Notice: The SCC will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 20th, at the Wethersfield Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway (Route 99) in Wethersfield. All members welcome. Agenda:

- Minutes of last meeting
- Treasurer’s Report
- Chairman’s Report
- Current Business
 - Location for December Strategy Session
 - Candidate Committee
- New Business
 - Determine “official” party position on war.
 - 2002 plans

Directions: From North: I-91 South to Exit 28 (See Rt. 5 & 15 South). From South: I-91 North to Exit 28 (See Rt. 5 & 15 South). From East, I-84 West to Exit 57 (See Rt. 5 & 15 South). From West, I-84 East to I-91 South, to Exit 28 (See Rt. 5 & 15 South). *Route 5 & 15 South:* Take Exit 85 (Route 99/Silas Deane Hwy) South. At the 4th traffic light, turn right onto Church St. Turn into first driveway on left.