



NEW MEXICO LIBERTY

“Let Freedom Ring”

Editor / Publisher
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Ron Bjornstad / Bill Koehler

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THE UNANIMOUS CONSENT CHALLENGE

CASH Ø10,000 PRIZE

To the first person to write a logical and documented essay showing one of the following to be compatible with the Declaration of Independence:

- Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890
- Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906
- Federal Communications Act of 1934
- National Firearms Act of 1934
- Banking Act of 1935
- The Internal Revenue Code
- Controlled Substances Act of 1970
- RICO Act of 1970
- Federal Elections Act of 1970
- Endangered Species Act of 1973
- National Organ Transplant Act of 1984
- Plumbing Products Efficiency Act of 1992
- Anti-Money Laundering Act of 1992
- USA PATRIOT Act of 2001
- Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002

To claim your prize, contact
Mike Blessing at 505-710-5197
or gunssavelives@comcast.net.

The Unanimous Consent Challenge is available online at the KCUF Media site – www.tinyurl.com/hn982

Notes from the Editor

by Mike Blessing [gunssavelives@comcast.net]

Convention Comments

Truth be told, this year's state convention went off better than I had expected. A three-venue event in one of the state's outlying regions, after two of the listed speakers (L. Neil Smith, followed by Steve Kubby) had cancelled on an almost last-minute basis – all I can say is Joseph Knight, Bob Ziesmer and the rest of the San Juan County LP deserve a round of applause and/or drinks.

For next year's convention, L. Neil Smith is interested in speaking at that one (family medical problems precluded his speaking at this one, as was agreed upon). I'd like to see Victor Milán or Gary Johnson on the speakers' list, as well. As for venue, I'd like to see the 2008 con here in Albuquerque.

While the consensus about the Friday night debate seems to be that Christine Smith was the overall winner, George Phillies would do a good job as a presidential candidate. Take a look at the video clips he has on his website and see for yourself.

Cruel & Unusual Politics

Speaking of presidential candidates, it is my sad duty to inform you that stand-up comedian Doug Stanhope has officially dropped out of the race, citing FEC regulations as the reason. See this post on his campaign Myspace blog for more – www.tinyurl.com/ysy47j. Because of this, the Myspace group that I had set up for his campaign has been renamed “Cruel & Unusual Politics” – see groups.myspace.com/cruelandunusualpolitics for more information. The title was from a campaign announcement that Stanhope posted in March 2007 containing the line “Cruel and unusual politics are about to begin.”

The Future of the Libertarian Party

The panel at this year's state convention concerned the future of the Libertarian Party. Past state chairs Frank Clinard, Ron Bjornstad, Richard Obergfell and Joseph Knight comprised the panel, commenting on what worked in the past.

What I see as the best thing for the LPNM's fortunes is **more members becoming activists**. I'm told that the LP has a higher percentage than the Republicans and Democrats of activists over total members. But as with money, you can never really have enough. In fact, activist members may be more important than a pile of FRNs – if you have active members, some will give til it hurts a bit, and partially make up for that shortage of cash.

So you're interested in being an activist, but not sure how to get started. Lucky for you, I wrote an article in the December issue of *New Mexico Liberty* addressing this very “problem” – it's titled, appropriately enough, “Getting Started,” and I reposted it to the Bernalillo County LP's site – <http://www.lpnm.org/bernalillo/gettingstarted.html>.

As long as you're not initiating force or fraud against others, advocating, threatening or delegating that initiation, I most likely won't have a problem with **how** you spread the libertarian message. A good way to sum it up is on the Administrivia page of every issue of *New Mexico Liberty* – “Libertarian candidates, officeholders or appointed spokespersons at all levels of government or the Party should refrain from advocating new or more restrictive laws, new or more expensive spending programs, or new or higher taxes. To paraphrase from the medical profession, “First, do no harm.””

Field Reports

From County / Campus Chairs

Bernalillo – The BCLP is hosting two meetings per month, as well as a bi-weekly hour-long TV show (*New Mexico's Consumer Advocate*) on Albuquerque Comcast Ch.27. Show times are second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 8PM. For more information, see the BCLP website – www.lpnm.org/bernalillo. *The Weekly Sediton* resumes in July, 2007. *The Weekly Sediton* and *New Mexico's Consumer Advocate* are now available in webcast format. For the viewing links, see the Channel 27 site [www.quote-unquote.org].

The Bernalillo County LP is currently seeking one or more persons to represent the BCLP in front of the Albuquerque City Council and / or Bernalillo County Commission in the public-comment sections of those bodies' meeting agendas.

Jay Vandersloot has been active in staffing tables at gun shows at the State Fairgrounds in Albuquerque, and could use some help at those shows. The next Blade and Gun show will be on the weekend of May 5th and 6th and any assistance would be welcome, even if it is only for a couple of hours. Anyone interested in either helping at the table at the show, or providing literature to handout or an LP banner for us to use should contact Jay Vandersloot at either jayvandersloot@yahoo.com or call 505-362-1733.

Paul Gessing and the staff of the Rio Grande Foundation, has been getting columns and letters to the editor printed in the *Albuquerque Journal* on a regular basis. Some of those have been printed here in *New Mexico Liberty*. Others are available at the RGF's website – www.riograndefoundation.org.

Dona Ana – The LPDAC Central Committee has been having monthly meetings, as well as an information table at the Las Cruces Farmer's Market. See the LPDAC website – www.lpnm.org/dona-ana – for details.

LPDAC Chair Siebert Ickler has started writing op-ed pieces for the Rio Grande Foundation – see page 4 of last month's edition for an example.

The LPDAC held a tax protest this year in front of the Main Post Office in Las Cruces on 17 April 2007 – see this page on the LPDAC site for more – www.lpnm.org/dona-ana/taxprotest07.html

Santa Fe – Former Vice-Chair and Grant County Chair Frank Martin has started a social group in the Santa Fe area that focuses on small-I libertarianism. For more information, contact Frank Martin – frank@fundimensions.com or phone 505-989-3670 or 505-310-5971.

San Juan – The San Juan County affiliate hosted this year's State Convention on the weekend of 13-15 April, the weekend closest to Thomas Jefferson's birthday. See pages 4-5 for the report with pictures.

The 2007 Annual Convention of the Libertarian Party of San Juan County was Sunday, 15 April, 1:00 PM, at the Aztec Civic Center, 101 S. Park Avenue in Aztec. Business included election of officers and Central Committee for the 2007-2009 term. A community meeting on private property rights followed the county convention.

Sandoval – The LPSC is having its monthly meetings at the J.B.'s on 528, north of Intel, recently having changed from Wednesdays to Tuesdays.

Calendar

Special Events

Central Committee Meeting

10 June 2007 at Fiesta's Restaurant & Lounge (Carlisle & Montgomery NE). Lunch at 12:00 PM, meeting at 1:00 PM. **County Chairs / Contacts encouraged to attend!** Contact Jay Vandersloot or Mike Blessing for details.

Regular Events

Thursday, 3 May and 17 May – Bernalillo County Liberty Forum meets in Albuquerque, 6 PM at Fiesta's Restaurant & Lounge (Carlisle & Montgomery NE). Contact Mike Blessing, 505-710-5197, for details.

Wednesday, 9 May – Dona Ana County Libertarians will meet. Those Interested are invited to attend and to contact Siebert Ickler, 505-541-9079, for information on location and time.

Sunday, 12 May – San Juan County LP meets at 6 PM – contact Bob Ziesmer, 505-327-6681, for details. The San Juan County LP's Central Committee meets at 5 PM

Tuesday, 22 May – The Sandoval County LP meets at JB's restaurant on 528 near Intel. Contact Ron Bjornstad, 505-288-4228, for details.

TV Shows – Channel 27 in Albuquerque (not necessarily endorsed by LPNM)

New Mexico's Consumer Advocate
2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 8PM
www.myspace.com/kcufmedia

Hemp TV – Tuesdays at 7PM
www.myspace.com/nmhemptv

Reefthead – Saturdays at 6PM
Contact Brian Bakri at hippiegypsy@webtv.net for details



San Juan County LP Chair Siebert Ickler, left, stands on the corner of Las Cruces Avenue in front of the Post Office on Tuesday with Siebert Ickler and Donna Venersky as they wave to people who honk as they drive by. This was the second year the Libertarian party members have protested against taxes on tax day. "You're working almost half the year just to pay taxes," said Siebert Ickler.

LPDAC Tax Protest

From the Las Cruces Sun-News
www.lpnm.org/dona-ana/taxprotest07.html

"Democracy is based on the conviction that man has the moral and intellectual capacity . . . to govern himself with reason and justice." – Harry Truman, 33rd U.S. president

The Wasted Vote Question!
(This is an update of my May 2006 letter)

Election time is fast approaching for many local elections, and is only a year and a half away for the presidential elections.

While there are numerous questions our candidates will be asked, there is one question that is almost always asked of Libertarian candidates. The person asking the question states the belief that there is no chance the Libertarian candidate will be elected, and asks why they should "waste" their votes on candidates they do not believe have any chance of being elected, when they can make their vote count by voting for one of the two major party candidates. Usually it is also stated that they are planning to cast their vote based on the "**lesser of two evils**" concept. Usually, the Libertarian answers that if you vote for the lesser of two evils, you are still left with evil. Both the voter's view and the Libertarian's reply ignore a very important element of what happens in elections – something that I refer to as the "**Mandate From the People Syndrome.**"

Even though voters cast their ballots based on which candidates they believe will be less harmful, the candidates who are elected do not know, and do not care, how many voters voted for them, and how many actually voted against their opponents. All they see is the percentage of the vote they received and say, "**I have a MANDATE from the people.**"

In effect, the voice of the person voting for the "lesser of two evils" is not heard. The elected candidate does not know that you are unhappy with his or her political positions. **In actuality, the vote for the "lesser of two evils" is the TRUE wasted vote.**

Instead of voting for the "lesser of two evils" the voter should vote for the candidate who has the principles and political views in which the voter believes. By doing so, even though that candidate may not be elected, the voice of the voter is heard, **because the candidates who are elected see that they do not have the "mandate from the people"** that they would otherwise have thought they had. They will see that that part of their constituency is dissatisfied with their politics, and that they must change if they want to have any hope of gaining those votes in the future.

Our 40th US President, Ronald Reagan (I know many Libertarians are not happy with his presidency, but the quote applies), is credited with having said, "**I do not care who gets the credit for doing something, so long as it gets done.**" Well, I do not care what political party name the elected officials wears (for example, Ron Paul of Texas is elected as a Republican, but his votes in Congress are based on Libertarian principles), so long as they enact needed laws that are in compliance with the US Constitution and our rights therein delineated, and **more importantly**, get rid of laws that violate the US Constitution and are an affront to us and our rights and diminish liberty.

In reality, though, we see over and over that we cannot depend on the Republican or Democrat party elected officials to do what is right and needs to be done, as we see that they both perpetuate Big government and continually pass laws that violate the US Constitution and our rights, and hinder the cause of liberty. **If we are to advance the cause of liberty, we will have to do it ourselves, by getting Libertarians elected to office.**

Therefore, we find that it is incumbent upon all of us to expose fallacy of the common wasted-vote syndrome beliefs by showing our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and anyone else with whom we come into contact that **their vote for the Libertarian candidate is the only vote that really counts. Only by voting for the Libertarian candidate will their voice truly be heard by whoever is elected.**

LP Platform Undergoes Major Change

There were major changes to the LP National Platform passed at the Convention last July. Mainly, it eliminated the majority of the planks. I envision a flurry of efforts between now and the next LP Convention in May 2008 to reinstitute as many of the planks as possible.

Let's take a look at the next of the remaining planks from our LP National Platform.

I. 9 – Sexuality and Gender

The Issue – Politicians use popular fears and taboos to legally impose a particular code of moral and social values. Government regularly denies rights and privileges on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Principle – Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships. Government does not have legitimate authority to define or license personal relationships. Sexuality or gender should have no impact on the rights of individuals.

Solutions – Culture wars, social friction and prejudice will fade when marriage and other personal relationships are treated as private contracts, solely defined by the individuals involved, and government discrimination is not allowed.

Transitional Action – Repeal the federal Defense of Marriage Act and state laws and amendments defining marriage. Oppose any new laws or Constitutional amendments defining terms for personal, private relationships. Repeal any state or federal law assigning special benefits to people based on marital status, family structure, sexual orientation or gender identification. Repeal any state or federal laws denying same-sex partners rights enjoyed by others, such as adoption of children and spousal immigration. End the Defense Department practice of discharging armed forces personnel for sexual orientation. Upgrade all less-than-honorable discharges previously assigned solely for such reasons to honorable status, and delete related information from military personnel files. Repeal all laws discriminating by gender, such as protective labor laws and marriage, divorce, and custody laws which deny the full rights of each individual.

"Posterity: you will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it."

– John Quincy Adams, 6th U. S. president

"The work of the individual still remains the spark that moves mankind forward."

– Igor Sikorsky, aeronautical engineer



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Call Jay Vandersloot, Independent Associate, at 505-362-1733

2007 State Convention Report

by Mike Blessing [gunssavelives@comcast.net]

This year, we held our annual state convention in Farmington, new Mexico. Departing from the tradition of past conventions, this year's was in *three* locations – K.B. Dillon's Steakhouse, the Farmington Civic Center, and the Golden Corral on Main Street.

We started off Friday night (*Friday the 13th!*) at K.B. Dillon's with the debate between three of the LP's presidential contenders – George Phillies [www.phillies2008.org], Christine Smith [www.libertarianforpresident.com], and newcomer to the LP, Daniel Imperato [www.imperato2008.com]. The general feeling that I received from the assembled LPNM members was that Smith was the winner that night.

Starting things off on Saturday morning was Penni Adrian, who in 2006 ran for a judgeship in the 2nd Judicial District. Penni's speech about the problems created by straight-ticket voting was titled *The Dum-Dum Button*.



Penni Adrian, *The Dum-Dum Button*

Following Penni was San Juan County LP founder and life member Margaret Mathers commenting on public officials who refuse to follow their oaths of office.



Margaret Mathers, *Upon My Oath*

After Margaret, we had a panel comprised of former state chairs Frank Clinard, Ron Bjornstad, Richard Obergfell and Joseph Knight concerning the future of the Libertarian Party. Each was given a few minutes to talk about what worked and didn't work in the past in promoting the party and cause.

Upon the completion of the state chairs' panel, we broke for lunch at a local coffeehouse. After lunch, we returned to the Civic Center for the Annual Business Session and more speakers.

State Chair Jay Vandersloot opened the business session at 1 PM with the annual State of the Party address. In short, the LP isn't doing good of late, and has been an ongoing trend in recent years, partially due to the events of 11 Sept 2001 ("9-11") and a recent downturn in the economy. According to Jay, the National Headquarters at the Watergate Building in Washington DC hasn't been much help, either.

Jay went on to say that while running candidates and getting them elected to office is the LP's primary mission, the LP's larger goal is to cause a change in public affairs and governance for the better in a libertarian direction, and that in the end, it really doesn't matter which party ends up actually making that change happen, so long as it happens. Jay then went on to thank various LPNM activists from around the state – the San Juan and Dona Ana affiliates, Ron Bjornstad, Richard Obergfell, Bill Koehler and myself, among others. [Any omissions here are my fault – MWB]

Richard Obergfell gave his Treasurer's Report, noting that the LPNM isn't spending much at present, and that we needed to revamp our systems for accepting donations via credit card.

Jay Vandersloot reported that our ballot access lawsuit (carried by the ACLU-NM) has been refiled with the 10th District (federal) Court in Denver, Colorado, and we are hoping for it to be on the docket for the next session (October 2007), but that right now, the LPNM is in limbo.

Moving on to new business, Jay mentioned the possibility that delegates to next year's National Convention (Adams Mark Hotel in Denver, 23-26 May 2008) may be charged a "floor fee" of some kind to participate in the business sessions, if they don't pay for any of the package deals that the convention organizers are offering. Jay noted that is similar to the LPNM's rule that Caucus membership is required to vote on candidates for public office. As the LPNM charged \$25 for a Caucus membership, this amounted to a poll tax and is therefore illegal. As such the 3400 LPNM Affiliate members (who simply registered with the Secretary of State or County Clerk as "Libertarian") were disenfranchised.

At this point, Joseph Knight introduced a proposal to allow members to substitute a form of activism as dues in lieu of putting up \$25 for an annual Caucus membership. After much debate, a modified version of the proposal passed. Along with that, Affiliate members who sign the Pledge can now vote on candidates for public office at State Conventions. In order to vote on the LPNM's internal workings (officers, changes in the Constitution and Bylaws), Caucus membership is still required.

Joseph Knight stated that he would work on a proposal where the LPNM would run its own primary, using a mailing of pre-printed ballots listing the available candidates, similar to the State's absentee ballot system using two envelopes. [The LPNM should have done this years ago. – MWB]

Next up were our Party elections, for the 2007-2009 Central Committee. As usual, some of the Old Guard stuck around, along with some new faces joining the fray.

The New Central Committee

Chair – Jay Vandersloot
Vice-Chair – Ron Bjornstad
Secretary – Mike Blessing
Treasurer – Richard Obergfell
At-Large Members – Joseph Knight and Allen Cogbill
1st District Members – John Pfersich and Mark Curtis
2nd District Members – NOTA and NOTA
3rd District Members – Bob Ziesmer and Mike Moss

The Business Session adjourned at 3:15 PM.

[See CONVENTION on page 6]

[CONVENTION from page 5]

We were late in ending the business session, and we started with our next speaker at around 3:30 PM. That was Leslie Cumiford of the Center for Family Justice [CFJ – <http://www.family-justice.org>]. Leslie's talk, titled *State-Run Families: The Systematic Disintegration of the Right to Parent in America*, concerned the anti-Constitutional doings of the Children, Youth and Families Department of New Mexico State government [CYFD]. Leslie told us about various cases that CFJ has been and is involved with, and how the judges are complicit with the CYFD in destroying families.



Leslie Cumiford – *State-Run Families: The Systematic Disintegration of the Right to Parent in America*

Following Leslie was Albuquerque attorney Dennis Montoya, whose speech, *The Saga of Juan Mata*, covered recent events in the Farmington area. Juan Mata was being harassed by the Farmington Police Department, particularly by officer Mike Briseno. After picketing the FPD's headquarters building and filing a lawsuit, Mata was charged and **convicted** of "criminal libel." Although the conviction was thrown out on appeal, Mata is still under more-than-usual surveillance by the FPD. [Fellow fans of *The Shield* on the FX channel take note – I'm wondering who on the FPD is the analog of Vic Mackey and the Strike Team – MWB]

At 7:00 PM, we reconvened at K.B. Dillons for the banquet and keynote speech by Jon Roland of the Constitution Society [<http://www.constitution.org>]. Jon's presentation was titled *Common Constitutional Errors*, and the outline is available at this page on his site – www.constitution.org/col/jdr/gml2007.ppt. This is the same speech that Jon gave to the We The People conference on 31 March 2007. Basically, the rights we as libertarians think of as having been taken away are still around, as well as the remedies for infringements against those rights. What we've lost is *access to those remedies* in cases where those rights have been infringed.

After Jon's presentation, we had our annual fundraising auction. Concurrent with the auction were presidential candidates Christine Smith singing and George Phillies reciting a poem he wrote for the occasion.

On Sunday morning, we had our Die Hard Breakfast at the Golden Corral on Main Street. Following breakfast, Paul Gessing of the Rio Grande Foundation [www.riograndefoundation.org] gave his talk, *Liberty: on the March or Retreating?* Paul said that while federal, state, and local government are passing laws and spending like there's no tomorrow, people in general are much freer than they were in centuries past. Paul cited the examples of the American black population (enslaved to a large degree until 1865) and women (who weren't given equal access to their rights until 1919), and talked about how best to spread the libertarian message (find the issues where our stand resonates best with what people are thinking), as well as the Rio Grande Foundation's activities.



Christine Smith singing, Saturday night



Fundraising auction, Saturday night



Joseph Knight and Christine Smith

Real World Politics and Radical Libertarianism

by Anthony Gregory [anthony1791@yahoo.com]

24 April 2007 – www.lewrockwell.com/gregory/gregory136.html

This talk, "Real World Politics and Success for the Principles of Liberty," was given at the Libertarian Party of California Convention in San Ramon, CA, on April 22, 2007.

In considering the actual political reality we confront and the realistic potential for libertarian reform, we often hear that radical principle will just not do, for only through gradualism and electoral compromise can we expect to see liberty advance. Becoming too devoted to the non-aggression principle or the most radical applications of free-market reasoning is seen as making the perfect the enemy of the good. Here and there, we must give the state an inch, we are even told, or else we will actually move further from our common goals.

One important point is that America remains one of the freest civilizations in world history. We're told not to forget this and become doomsdayers. Certainly, we have more secure property rights than have been enjoyed by most human beings, either now or in the past. This had led to a marvelous explosion of productivity in the United States and has continued to be one of the best real-world examples of freedom in action. Capitalism in America has produced a prosperity that the socialists of a century ago claimed was impossible. Their criticism has accordingly shifted from a critique that markets could never provide the most basic needs of the common man to a complaint that markets produce too much, offer us too many choices, result in decadent consumerism and other such nonsense.

Furthermore, there have also been advances in American liberty in recent times. The most fundamental, I would say, is the elimination of military conscription. We have also seen a reduction of income taxes, some liberalization of state gun laws, a lowering of some trade barriers, and various instances of deregulation in such sectors as telecommunications and transportation. We don't have the price controls we once did. There are ways that America is freer than it was only 20 or 30 years ago, and surely, for huge segments of the population, 60 years ago, 160 years ago, or 200 years ago. Worldwide, there have also been huge advances that should not be understated. Stalinism is dead. China is moving toward freer markets with Constitutional guarantees of private property rights – not airtight guarantees, of course, but still a definitive mark of improvement since Mao. Much of the world has followed the classical-liberal trend toward freer trade. Central planning is not as popular as it was in the interwar years. Looking at the situation over the last several centuries, slavery in the purest sense is not as officially and openly defended as it once was universally worldwide.

To ignore such developments completely is, I believe, a huge error in understanding where we are and how we can move closer to the libertarian ideal.

And yet, surely America is not freer than it once was in all ways. Surely it is not nearly as free as it could be. If it were there would be no need for libertarian activism. So what energizes us? A vision for an even freer tomorrow, one without the oppressive structures of today.

Some policies today are frankly so destructive and authoritarian that it is easy to sympathize with those who laugh at the idea that America is a free country. Consider the war on drugs. Some think that the Libertarian Party has become too obsessed with this issue, but I strongly disagree. There is no shame in calling this program what it is: a moral monstrosity and a human-rights catastrophe. It is, in fact, one of the clearest embodiments of modern political evil in domestic policy. It would be hard to imagine any libertarian being too concerned with an issue of such importance.

Before 9/11, the drug war was the state's favorite excuse to militarize and nationalize police forces, equipping them with battle rifles and rubberstamped warrants with which they can invade any home, any business, any bank account and, to be quite direct, get away with murder when push comes to shove.

Hundreds of thousands of peaceful people are being subjected to treatment that a more humane culture would probably hesitate to force animals to endure. Indeed, this speaks to the entire prison system, an obscenity that should concern anyone who loves liberty and thinks overbearing government is a bad idea. Within these holding cells is a dystopian totalitarianism, where outcasts, criminals, and a million people who committed no real crime are caged, monitored and controlled by an unspoken code of police brutality and inter-prisoner rape and violence. The whole institution must be rethought, and in the meantime there is absolutely no excuse for not immediately freeing every last prisoner who was sent there only for drugs or any other victimless crime.

There are peaceful people trapped in the so-called justice system for violating immoral gun laws, tax laws, economic regulations and even laws that dictate what people can do voluntarily in their sexual relations. Is there any greater tyranny? I happen to think the war on prostitution deserves more libertarian attention, as well.

For each caged victim of the political system, his or her humanity is being held on hold by the state. It is a moral necessity that we call for immediate release of the peaceful.

The prison guard union lobbies for more and more laws and ever more prisons. Every year, these factories of brutality continue to pop up all over the map. We must stand up to this pressure.

Some might think I am going too far. I have even heard some people in libertarian circles say that if you broke the law, even an unjust law, you should do the time. This is incorrect. Such an attitude simply buys into the central tenet of statist morality: That the state has the right to violate people's rights. No state has this right. Indeed, no individual or group of any kind has the right to violate the rights of another. Or are we going to start believing A doesn't equal A, after all?

There are other ways in which America has lost liberty. Eminent domain was always a favorite way for corporate-government partnerships to seize property from rightful owners and enrich politically connected businesses and local governments with higher tax revenues. But the practice has become much more widespread recently. Social Security has grown from a meager 1 or 2 percent tax at its beginning into a government in itself, a system of massive intergenerational plunder. Licensure has crept into ever more sectors in the economy, destroying livelihoods by stripping people of their human right to make a living by offering goods and services to anyone willing to buy.

There's a creeping move toward health care fascism, most clearly seen in Bush's prescription drug leviathan, whereby costs are socialized but profits privatized. Public schools gobble up more tax dollars than ever and have become instruments of social engineering, whether to inculcate PC leftist influences or hierarchical rightwing ones. Environmental laws have wrecked private property rights, including the right to build a porch in your own backyard without having to call a federal agency and pay a fee first. The freedom of association has been battered by laws regulating who people can hire or fire. Meanwhile, the freedom to hire illegal aliens – as in, the right to engage in capitalistic acts between consenting parties – is under more danger than ever. It has become so absurd that you could probably get in trouble for hiring an undocumented Mexican immigrant, or for not hiring him and breaking a Civil Rights law.

How come our country is such a paradox? So free yet so not free? We have the biggest government in world history yet the most robust economy ever. We have the freedom to speak our mind that many people around the world would die for, yet we have the highest per-capita prison population on the planet, half of which, again, are people who shouldn't have even had their wrists slapped.

By the time of the Mexican War, the United States had started to become an imperial power. It was growing into that which the colonists had struggled against. Slavery was as entrenched as ever, and protected by a federal constitution years after the British abandoned it.

[See REAL WORLD on page 7]

[REAL WORLD from page 6]

An abolitionist movement had emerged that saw slavery as an evil to be abolished as soon as humanly possible. They were seen as too idealistic, but their radical ideas echoed throughout the world and culminated in the eventual abolition of chattel slavery. William Lloyd Garrison had said that gradualism in theory was perpetuity in practice: He recognized that compromising the least bit on the principle of self-ownership would mean you'd lose your moral standing and could easily be discredited or absorbed into a practice of defending evil. He recognized that slavery would not end as soon as it should, but that only by calling for its end immediately would it end as soon as it could.

Despite the many problems of Antebellum America, there remained the wonderful principle of decentralism, of secession, of local self-determination, that had energized the colonists. But this was destroyed by Abraham Lincoln.

Gloriously, chattel slavery ended, but war was not necessary for it, any more than it was in the rest of the Western Hemisphere where it was done away with peacefully in the 19th century.

Meanwhile, the federal government came to have despotic powers the Jeffersonians would have never tolerated: Conscription, income taxation, national bureaucracies of corporate privilege, gun control, massive inflation, total war, the executive power to suspend habeas corpus, censorship, and the use of the military in domestic policing. In a very real way, the modern American government was created in the 1860s by the Hamiltonians who had first hijacked the American Revolution with their reactionary Constitution and later formed the Republican Party as an engine for creating a nationalist corporate state. They succeeded.

The end of slavery coincided with the beginning of the current regime. This is a difficult issue for many libertarians to confront, but I think it is important to understand America's early legacy as one that was tainted by both the sins of slavery and belligerent, corporate nationalism.

Ludwig von Mises had a great insight into economics that one government intervention into the economy, which disrupts the free market order, invariably creates problems that people typically attempt to solve with yet more government intervention. My way of thinking of this might seem a little more New Age, but it is also distinctly libertarian: I think of it in terms of reverberations of aggression.

The aggressive way that the US Constitution was foisted upon the colonies, along with the steady social crime of slavery, combined with the aggressive impulse to consolidate power in the national center, as well as the aggressive looting of some interests by others in the form of tariffs, culminated in the American system that developed in the 19th century. So slavery never went away fully, it was only nationalized and reconstituted in such forms as conscription and in more subtle ways. Aspects of its legacy as racial oppression also lived on in the Black Codes, Jim Crow, forced segregation and forced integration, and they continue today in the form of drug laws, gun laws, the welfare state and the criminal justice system.

In short, the problem was the principled abolitionists and other radicals were too few in number, and what existed throughout the 19th century was a confused political dynamic in which no major faction appeared to favor liberty above all. The Antebellum Democrats were great on trade but not so good on war and slavery. The Hamiltonians were cautious of some wars but bad on everything else. This continues to this day, when we have one party that speaks of economic freedom (but doesn't come through) and another that speaks of personal choice but neither that embraces the full program and philosophy of freedom.

The reason America is not as free as it should be is there hasn't been enough principled libertarian thought in American history, and there's where we come in. To the extent we do have freedom, it is because of the radicals of the past. To the extent we have oppression, socialism and imperialism, it is because of insufficient radicalism of the past, an attempt to mix the libertarian instincts of the American Revolution with the statist values of corporate

conservatism, centralized statism, mixed economics, policed morality and continual foreign war. Some say we have lost liberty gradually so we should seize it back gradually. Well, we should reclaim it in any amounts we can, but this understanding fails to note the stark degree to which libertarian gradualism in theory has been statist perpetuity in practice.

In the late 19th century, liberals stood for industrialization, progress, liberation and material abundance for the masses, free trade, personal liberty and much of our modern platform. But they were led astray first by utilitarianism and then by the temptation of socialism – the attempt to achieve liberal ends with statist means. They came to see the state as the worker's potential savior, rather than co-conspirator with the corporate interests. In the early 20th century, the Democratic Party, which had, at least under the Grover Cleveland presidency of the late 1800s, made its mark as the more libertarian of the two parties, became wholly corrupted during the Woodrow Wilson administration and especially the advent of World War I.

The US, by getting involved in that war, not only failed to make the world safe for much of anything except maybe Communism and fascism, but it also became an authoritarian regime with income tax rates in the high 70s, conscription, and the imprisonment of people merely for criticizing the draft, the war, or even the British government and other allies. Five thousand new federal bureaus came with the war. As all too usual in American history, pro-freedom rhetoric was used to defend the opposite of freedom.

But the Democrats still seemed the more libertarian party, which would explain why, in 1932, after the Stock Market crash and several years of typically extensive government growth under Republican Herbert Hoover, Ayn Rand cast her vote for Franklin Roosevelt. Libertarian heroine Isabel Paterson also supported FDR. Why? Well, his platform was overall much better than Hoover's. He vowed to cut government by 25%, protect sound money with a gold standard, lower trade barriers, cut taxes, balance the budget and end alcohol prohibition. Indeed, what Franklin Roosevelt offered would pass today as a moderate libertarian agenda. Some in this room might even have considered it too radical, given the economic calamity and real world politics the Democrats seemed to be ignoring.

But the real problem was that there wasn't a strong enough movement to decry him when he moved in the opposite direction, instituted the ghastly New Deal, played big businesses against each other, and destroyed crops in a twisted socialist scheme to improve the economy.

Not enough people understood why every single thing he did to expand the state was a disaster. There weren't enough radicals. Now, he moved so far toward collectivism that many previous supporters abandoned him and joined other forces in the informal opposition movement known today as the Old Right, which was an important stepping-stone to modern libertarianism. But the real lesson here is that no moderate political program of restoring normalcy and retracting the state can serve as a substitute for the radical libertarian ideology, which will also inform us of what's a real libertarian reform and what's a move toward statism. Like Wilson, FDR had also defended all his despotism with a rhetoric of freedom – the Four Freedoms, as he called it.

Fast forward a few generations and consider the supposed Reagan revolution. Now, Ayn Rand refused to vote for him, because of what she saw as his unacceptable position on abortion. This was ironic, since as California governor he liberalized abortion law. But his rhetoric never lined up to his actual governance, and Rand was right when she thought she smelled a rat. Under Reagan, government spending skyrocketed, just as it did when he was governor. Indeed, when in charge of California, he gave this state its first major modern gun control law and the biggest tax increase in state history. He erected bureaucracies faster than the Democratic gubernatorial father and son before and after him. And as president, he was similarly a nightmare. A protectionist, a compromiser on the welfare state, a man who only cut some taxes by raising others and inflating the money

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supply, a warmonger with an insatiable appetite for defense spending, Ronald Reagan was no free enterpriser, despite his rhetoric, and he left behind many ugly legacies, including the modern war on drugs. Rand was right not to vote for him, for this man, despite his pro-freedom language, was responsible in many ways for one of the greatest assaults on personal liberty in our time. Or are we going to forget about that innocent 20-year-old being raped and treated like a slave in a federal dungeon right now so we can pay homage to this supposed hero of freedom?

To this day, the reverberations of aggression from past government policies are seen all around us. Each intervention has led to human suffering, which is why a holistic approach to thinking of real world of politics is so crucial. Gun laws render victims less safe against madmen. FDA regulations have caused tens of thousands of Americans to die prematurely and in senseless pain. Every single tax, every single regulation, every single act of government intruding into the natural order of free and voluntary human action leads to the destruction of wealth and diminution of freedom. The violence of the state – that privileged organization that monopolizes legal force – always injures someone somewhere, no matter the well-intentioned ends to which it may be directed. To be an individualist and libertarian is to understand that no one, anywhere, should ever be aggressed against by anyone, and that the state is the principal form of institutionalized aggression in our world. But its effects and its causes are sewn throughout culture. The state is a reflection of prevailing ideology. We must change that ideology. First we must understand it, which requires a deep appreciation of history, economics, and the dynamics of interpersonal affairs.

In our time and country, the greatest threat to liberty is the warfare state and the ideology of warmongering. On this issue, many libertarians wish to embrace utilitarianism and shun moral principle, trust the state to bring down and rebuild whole nations abroad when they wouldn't even trust it to build a public park down the block. Like the confused liberals of a 120 years ago who came to adopt socialism, today's pro-war libertarian seeks to use statist means to achieve liberation. He also often ignores the degree to which the modern state is a creation of all the wars of the past – the fact that almost everything about today's government can be traced back to the Civil War, World War I, World War II or the Cold War.

What has today's warfare regime done for freedom? At home and at overseas bases, the Bush administration's attack on civil liberties has been staggering. Habeas corpus and the Fourth Amendment are gone. And Iraq is, if anything, worse off than before.

The US government has an imperial presence worldwide that is reviled and resented by most peoples, though their governments have often been intimidated, bribed or coerced into going along with the empire. Furthermore, the same government that has long banned guns in its own capital, and assisted in rounding up personal weapons in Baghdad after the invasion of Iraq and in New Orleans after Katrina, has the largest arsenal of devices for slaughter ever consolidated in one place. Indeed, the destructive capacity of our government – the largest government of all time – is unspeakably evil. No institution should have the power to wipe out human life the way our supposedly free system does.

None of this is sustainable. The taxation, the welfare statism, the drug war, the gun control, the treating of human beings not as individuals with dreams and wants of their own but as national resources – this is all an affront to human rights and the spontaneous orders of human interaction that spur progress, innovation, and wealth creation and allow for the precious flowering of scientific, artistic, emotional and spiritual discovery of each and every individual soul.

Libertarian principle helps explain the world, why some things seem to go so wrong, and why so much has nevertheless gone right. It has also been libertarian principle that has led to the improvements I've talked of earlier. And there are others. As terrible as the current war on terror is, it is much milder than it would have been when people had less libertarian instincts on war. They did not immediately institute the draft and throw all Arabs into camps.

They have not strategically bombed the Middle East the way they did Japan. They didn't abolish freedom the way they likely would have had Manhattan been attacked in the 1910s or 1940s. There has been a resistance to government that we only have because of previous generations who dared to take on the Woodrow Wilsons and Lyndon Johnsons. At the time, they were seen as hopeless idealists, kooks, or even traitors. Yet we owe much of our freedom to them as we do to the abolitionists and radicals of the past.

Libertarianism is forward-looking. We don't want the America of 200 years ago, or 100 years ago, or 50 years ago or even 10 years ago. We seek a world where every individual can pursue happiness in the context of voluntary community and free markets. Will we ever get there? Perhaps not, but only by aiming for the ideal, by holding fast to our principles and constantly re-examining them and challenging ourselves always to appreciate the lessons of liberty as much as we possibly can – only by being principled can we hope to move toward our goals. Only by principles can we even define ours goals in the first place, and know if we're moving the right way.

Until people are more favorable toward freedom, no election of one person or another can bring about a massive retrenchment of the state that everyone here wants. Indeed, voting for what seems to be a good step between what we have and what we want will likely get us another Reagan or FDR, another drug war or another New Deal.

We need to change minds and touch hearts. We must be forward looking and never lose sight of the massive oppression in our time. We must jump for joy at all triumphs of freedom, no matter how small, and condemn any and all attacks on freedom. It might seem like a matter of academic frivolity, but any small change can mean the difference of freedom or imprisonment for one priceless and irreplaceable human being somewhere. In economic terms, a single small change can mean a family well fed or a child going hungry.

The Libertarian Party is what brought me into libertarianism and it changed my life for the better. My love of liberty is something I feel blessed to have and without the LP, I might have never discovered how exciting it can be to look at the world through the eyes of someone who believes in liberty.

But I have wondered sometimes about what the LP really thinks its mission is on earth. If it wins elections with an FDR-style platform, it could potentially – given how much power corrupts – lead to the discrediting of many of the ideals we all hold dear. One reason so many people hate capitalism is because they associate it with corporatism. One reason people hate tax opposition is because it's associated with the slaveholders who applied the principles so inconsistently 200 years ago. One reason people hate privatization is because they think of huge contracts to corporate cronies and Wall Street or the contracting out of prisons to private enterprise – as if a company making money off of people being treated worse than animals is somehow a move toward the libertarian vision.

And one reason people hate economic freedom is because it is espoused by a hypocritical US empire that has imposed some of the most comprehensive trade restrictions in world history and continues to conflate liberation with military occupation, freedom with social engineering and peacemaking with the bombing of civilians.

Freedom is most often stolen by the state in the name of freedom. Let us not contribute to these misconceptions. We do not believe in a slightly cheaper version of the US police state, or a more smoothly running welfare state or private companies doing the bidding of politicians abroad on our dime. We do not need the mercantilism our Founding Fathers revolted against. And we also don't need the gradualism in theory that led them to tolerate slavery, tariffs and inequality between the sexes under the law, as well as the horrible crimes against the American Indians.

The LP used to be called radical on the drug war, and yet it now runs candidates who have softened their rhetoric against it even as the prisons grow and public opinion turns against prohibition. The LP used to be seen as reflexively antiwar, but now it almost seems at times to be more pro-war than

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the American population, which now realizes that there are limits to power even when politicians are well-intentioned, but also that politicians frequently aren't well-intentioned, and that all this applies to war at least as much as domestic policy.

Retreating from principle is a horrible strategy for effecting positive change. A watered-down message is not going to get you votes, either, since such rhetoric can be found in the Republican Party.

I ask you all to recommit yourself to our principles daily. It will seem futile only if you look at things very short term. As an analogy, we might never get rid of murder completely, but there is no reason not to oppose it outright. One day, moral principles pay off, if gradually, as more and more people question the fundamental ethical assumptions that allow the status quo to persist. But only fundamental challenges can lead to such changes in society – that, and economic law, which dictates that no socialist structure can maintain beyond a certain point.

The limits of government power and the wonders of human nature are on our side in the long term. Let's speed the process along by telling the truth, by opposing all statism, all socialism and all aggressive warfare – by constantly rededicating ourselves to the principles of individual rights in life, liberty and property. Insofar as we have the blessings of liberty, it is because these ideas have caught on. Insofar as we don't, it is because they haven't.

Now, spreading the message does require an understanding of activism. We do need to be willing to work with others, to explain our ideas with different arguments for different audiences, to reach out to elements of the so-called left as well as the so-called right. Libertarians like to take sides in the culture war, and it is indeed crucial to recognize the importance of culture and social opinion, which are what allow the state to persist in the first place. But as it concerns activist outreach, we need to work harder to reach all potentially persuaded segments of the population. We indeed should reach people of the so-called cultural fringe. We also need to do a much better job addressing mainstream America. I believe it very possible for Libertarian candidates to spread the message of freedom in a highly persuasive manner for different audiences, all without watering down their principles.

The time is ripe for a change in social awareness about the benefits of freedom and follies of the state. The left isn't as anti-market as it once was. The right is not as bad in some ways, either. Most Americans are fed up with the war and want some answers. Young people don't trust Social Security and aren't as blind to police brutality as previous generations. Central planning for its own sake is less blindly accepted. There's a lot of reason to be hopeful of getting more people to listen to what we have to say. Now is not the time to tone down our inspiring and beautiful message of liberty and the hope it brings for all of humanity.

The radical libertarian Murray Rothbard knew that a real step in the right direction was always a blessing in itself, but that the full program of liberty was necessary for the long-run battle for freedom. He knew the pitfalls of moderation in theory and with compromises that gave an inch to the state. I'd like to close by commenting on something he said at the 1977 Libertarian Party National Convention, where he gave the keynote address. In discussing the true differentia between us and the two major political parties, Rothbard said,

"I don't think that the crucial difference is that we're smart and the others are dumb; after all, if we may let this secret out to the world, we're not all that smart! We are a glorious movement to be sure, but we have hardly achieved perfection. The difference between us and the Democrats and Republicans is not that we are so much smarter than they are, but that we are deeply concerned with ideas, with principles, whereas they are simply concerned with getting their places at the public trough. We are interested in principles, they in power; and, gloriously enough, our principle is that their power be dismantled."

We might never see it dismantled altogether. But as I look at the political reality around us, the lasting Lincolnianism, Rooseveltianism and Reaganism – the remnants of old oppressions mostly vanquished but reborn in different forms, the continuation of statist policies that were supposed to be temporary for a crisis but never went away, the ripples of state aggression all around – I will say this: Until there are more of us who want to see that power dismantled, there will be little hope in seeing it in steady retreat.

So spread the word. Embrace your principles. If you believe in liberty, don't be afraid of confronting its implications and condemning aggression wherever you see it. In a world as torn asunder by the state as ours is, where the benefits of freedom wherever it is allowed to flower are nevertheless as beautifully clear as ever, I do contend that holding tight onto principle is the only sensible strategy.

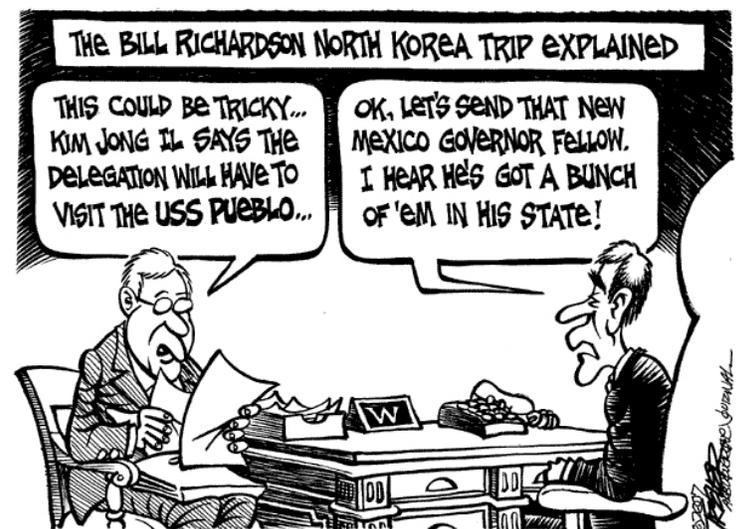
Thank you.

Anthony Gregory is a writer and musician who lives in Berkeley, California. He is a research analyst at the Independent Institute [www.independent.org]. See his webpage [www.anthonygregory.com] for more articles and personal information.

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interested in filling a slot.**

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ADMINISTRIVIA

Mike Blessing, Editor [gunssavelives@comcast.net]

If you have news, interesting stories, op-ed pieces, a letter to the editor, or timely information that you think belongs in the newsletter, please send it along. I can be contacted at 505-710-5197, or just send it to email address gunssavelives@comcast.net.

When sending your submission as an MS Word (or Open Office Text) file, send it single-spaced in 9-pt Arial – like this is. Margins should be half-inch (0.5") around, with no headers or footers. If you send it in a text-only format, make it clear to me if you want anything in **bold type**, underlined, *in italics*, ~~struck-through~~, **different colors**, etc. I'm not telepathic here, so help me out. And **NO** Wordperfect files – I can't open those.

Graphics (pictures, cartoons, etc.) – send the highest quality graphics you can – email them to me at the address above, and I'll do what I can to get them in the next issue. In particular, what I want are pictures of YOU the LPNM members, either at LPNM-sponsored events or at other peoples' events.

Submission deadline for each issue – midnight, third Tuesday of the month.

Articles

As for writing your article, It should be concise (no longer than a full page) and topical. A bit of humor helps, especially for op-ed pieces.

What I'm really looking for in the way of articles is what's going on in the LPNM – what YOU the membership are up to in spreading the message. For example, an article about the stupidity, insanity and evil of the UN might get put in, depending on available space and the quality of the article. A group of LPNM members counter-protesting the raising of a UN flag by the city council WILL get put in, and probably will get first priority.

Editorial Viewpoint

The basis for libertarian thought is the Zero Aggression Principle [ZAP] –

A libertarian is someone who believes that *no* human being has the right – under *any* circumstances – to *initiate* force against *another* human being, nor to threaten, incite or delegate its initiation.

New Mexico Liberty holds that Libertarian candidates, officeholders or appointed spokespersons at all levels of government or the Party should refrain from advocating new or more restrictive laws, new or more expensive spending programs, or new or higher taxes. To paraphrase from the medical profession, "First, do no harm."

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Finally, *New Mexico Liberty* will be posted to the web, in PDF format, both to the Archives section of the page on lpnm.org, and to the Files section of the Yahoo group I've set up for it:

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Inserts – For an insert into the PDF version that goes out over the internet, contact the editor at email address nmliberty-owner@yahoogroups.com. For an insert into the print edition, contact Ron Bjornstad at email address rbjornstad@earthlink.net or phone number 505-288-4228.

Ø – The symbol for Federal Reserve Note(s), as used by Boston T. Party in his books. In plain-text message traffic (such as email), the acronym "FRN" will be used by the editor. See www.javelinpress.com for more information. Also see the Wikipedia page for "Federal Reserve Note" – en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Reserve_Note.

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