

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL LIBERTARIAN PARTY

Comes 'the Restoration,' they'll be the 'guvment'

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Jackson, Michigan, May 23, 2009

Home to the Libertarian Party of Michigan (LPM) state convention, this year only a business convention... where candidates for public office are not selected. So, for that, a rather subdued event, attended by 50-100 of the true believers (I used to count myself among the TBs, but lately some discoveries have led to a change of perspective, which I'll mention below). Putting my objective journalistic observer hat on, what jumps out at me from the gitgo? Geez, these guys are old, well not everyone—I do see a handful of near-40-somethings demonstrating their mettle, and even a TB offspring or two who seem refreshingly respectful for 20-somethings.

But as I commented in New Pilgrim Chronicles about the peace people, the freedom people are starting to show some gray... considerably beyond the remedial powers of Grecian Formula. Not that there's anything wrong with that. Except if we're going to be this 'mature'—and presumably partisans of the Libertarian cause for a few decades—it would be nice if an off-year convention sported rock-concert-level attendance, rather than merely fill a small fourth-floor meeting room in the Commonwealth Commerce Center in beautiful downtown Jackson, Michigan.[1]

The business day

The meeting was primarily to elect party officers, but we had a couple of speakers at the meals: Pat Clawson at lunch, and Professor Harry Veryser at dinner; I came in toward the end of Pat's talk, and caught the entire gamut of great ideas he forcefully and entertainingly set forth. It's hard not to agree with his main points:

1. The LPM needs to have paid staff and an office in Lansing—staff who attend political briefings and meetings, who report on what's happening legislatively in the capital (and lobby somewhat), who generate a political and media presence.
2. The number one issue in Michigan now is jobs; any outreach to the people needs to present clearly our solutions to that immense problem.
3. The best legislative initiative we could lead would be an "open and accountable government" petition.
4. We absolutely need a business plan before we do any membership or fundraising drives.

He made other brilliant points. What's more, he has the sort of personality to motivate people. He's absolutely right. Yet I look around at the attendance, which has that tired-approaching-burned-out look—during nominations for officers, the Declines came up in the frequency of Bingo squares being called out at a church social (Pat was a Decline, too)—and even the modest, professional political presence we've established in Michigan lately has been achieved by true grit above and beyond the call. Plus, it's Michigan! If you have a job, you're spending every waking moment figuring out how to support your family when you lose it. Michigan is dying[2], just as the country, only more so.

No time, no money.

So until someone with a little of both, or a person with the leadership and street credit of Mr. Clawson, comes along to get the ball rolling, my guess is we keep the lights on and farm out anything big... to people who have the fire in their belly to lead a "specific big cause" that will benefit the party, e.g. an open-

government petition. And then we'll try to be clever, such as leveraging local-government Libertarian political heroes... the wonderful ones of which we have several.

A small gesture of defiance

During the Pat Clawson talk, and afterward during the breaks for nominating and electing officers, I'm able to sell a few books—my holy triumvirate now available on Amazon: *The Sacred Nonaggression Principle*, *New Pilgrim Chronicles*, and *There Must Be Some Mistake*—and wander around the room. I see through the window across the street in front of the police station, this awful banner advertising how the state insists of taking care of us in our cars... or else. The words are hard to read from the image, but they say, "Enforcement Zones in Effect: Buckle Up or Pay Up: Click It or Ticket." I'm sure you've seen these sorts of propaganda campaigns and enforcement zones in communities all across America. [The federalization and militarization of local law enforcement sends "beaucoup dollars" to all our Barney Fifes in exchange for them abandoning their self respect.]

Anyway, the business session lets out, and before the dinner with Harry Veryser I have some time to drop stuff off at my car and take a little cultural tour of the area. Lo and behold, someone left a "Enough is Enough: Vote Libertarian" sign out where the throngs of Jacksonians walking to afternoon services at yonder big ol' church will see it. I continue walking, then in front of the Community Center where we've been meeting, it looks as if someone stuck the same basic sign where you can see the classic lettering on the People's National Bank in the background. Nowadays, with the ripoff by some key banking players, the title of this apparently long-dead bank in Jackson seems more appropriate. But back in the day, we Libertarians would make fun of the socialists for "the people's this" and "the people's that." We even referred to the state back then as the People's State of Michigan.

So all right, what's going on here? First I see the Libertarian sign in front of an old church. Maybe whoever planted it had a separation-of-church-and-state beef with the padre of the cathedral. Then maybe another 50 feet away from the original sign, someone has set things up to slam some commie Jackson financial institution. While I appreciate the artistic concept, I still think it's missing something. You can hardly see the bank for one thing.

Well, as I continue on my walk around the community center, I recall the obnoxious 'Clickit or Ticket' banner across the street from our meeting room. It's unfurled in front of the Jackson Police Department. Our defiant 'Enough is Enough' guy has finally found a perfect message to lampoon. No doubt the seat belt enforcement zones are enough to drive your normal libertarian radical to drink, or at least to throw up his hands in disgust: 'Enough is definitely enough! Whose life is it, anyway?'

Well, if I ever run into the criminal who posted these 'Enough is Enough' signs, I will buy him a drink... and of course warn him he's probably violating some major felony ordinances in the city of Jackson. Defacing government property? Maybe one count per every motorist that drives by to see it, which fortunately for the perp is maybe three cars today.

Professor Harry

The banquet—I think the convention committee went on a cost-cutting frenzy this year, which is fine with me, but no salt, no butter, no coffee (I sweet talked the poor perspiring, overworked solo girl to at least rounding these up and putting them on the buffet table), and no vegetarian option? —features accomplished Austrian economist, scholar, and former businessman Harry Veryser as speaker. Harry and I go back to the late 1960s Michigan Young Republicans that preceded the Libertarian Party. My Randian-revolutionary[3] friends and I at Wayne State University, Detroit, were fond of inviting him to talk capitalist economics... despite the fact he remained a staunch Roman Catholic. (Rand and we were atheists.)

Harry is a fine person despite believing in the Great Pumpkin, and quite entertaining in how he skewers Keynesians and other advocates of Statist Economics Brand <x>. Tonight he gets down to our dire world-economic situation. There may be a real prospect for return to the gold standard! Questions are lively. Naturally, he sees a benefit from restoring the Republic... ending the Federal Reserve central bank for starters. "Time for the separation of money and state," Harry tells us in the Q&A period.

Preaching to the choir, for sure. But due to his elevated academic status, some questions were from the "kids" in the audience who must be planning to take up economics as a profession. I regard Harry as a clever, humane, classy promoter of free-market economics enlightenment—the perfect cure for the sickness that afflicts many younger minds who gravitate toward science in normative subjects (such as econ)... yet have been confused by sophisticated nonsense in classrooms of the Oligarchy.

So, very good day. Good to see 40 years have not dulled the wit or the optimism of the good professor... though I believe he sees the "shining city on the hill" to be materializing a few decades later than I see it materializing. He says on a couple of occasions, "I won't live to see it." Geez, I'm hoping he doesn't have a terminal illness. I fully expect the republic to be restored within the next five years... mainly, I feel, because we're approaching a critical mass of humans who know the Oligarchy—the Ollies, or what I call the Kleptocons—and our knowing is like Kryptonite to Superman.

I expect the Oligarchy to die fast. But Harry's view of political-econ does not embrace this kernel of alien authoritarianism (as a psychological defect) that I write of in The Sacred Nonaggression Principle. Plus, I doubt he's read anything about the approaching Singularity written about by Ray Kurzweil. No matter. Like the LP, Harry's one of the good guys.

Editorial Opinion: Whither the Libertarian Party?

And like the LP, honest, knowledgeable people like Harry will be the citizen-legislators and executors of the new republic, filling in the slots for whatever (very small) government(s) may come to replace the existing political authority. That's basically my personal opinion: that the LP in general and the LPM in particular adopt a grand strategy of being prepared to "be the government" when the people have decided to restore the republic by declaring their independence from the Oligarchy and taking back Constitutional liberty from those who have undone our birthright.

Power [same as freedom] isn't something you ask for, Bobby, power [same as freedom] is something you take. — Jock Ewing, Dallas

This opinion of mine regarding the Libertarian Party presumes at least in part the argument I have made recently for a personal 'Declaration of Independence' from the existing political authority. Let me simply state that one of my premises is that the vast majority of normal humans—who despise aggression and stealing—have been victimized by a psychologically defective minority who lack that repulsion. This minority over a long period—centuries, likely millennia—have self-consciously and secretly coalesced into a financially powerful elite that uses refined control methods to cartelize and otherwise dominate human affairs. That's as specific as I need to be here about "the Oligarchy"... though this column is instructive.

Personally, I didn't come to the essence of this perception until shortly after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 (March 20). For the longest time, I was a TB (true believer) in the Libertarian Party. I thought political action through a legitimate, ideologically correct third party would tip the scales rather quickly by force of the ideas themselves. "People would see the light, because the principle of liberty and individual rights is so clear." And, with a couple of early detours thru anarchism, I approached the LP as a sacred calling... I helped to found the LPM, served as chair a few times, newsletter editor a few times, spent most of my free time, I even collected 6,000 volunteer signatures in the winter of the 1983 ballot drive.

If my recent understanding is true—and I resist assertions that the LP effectively set back the freedom movement by a generation—then quite likely the Oligarchy looked at us back then and said, "Sure, go ahead and play around in the sandbox. We make all the rules. Jump through these hoops over here and you can be on the ballots. No one will vote for you, because we control the media and academia (academedia), plus it's a 'winner take all' system and people would rather have a root canal operation than 'waste their vote' and let the other party's guy win."

Plus the LP is all about changing laws... in an indirect manner, by convincing people to vote for other people who will work for the right bills. An analogy—at least when it comes to the central governments at the state and federal level—might be: the Oligarchy is the school board and principal, while the LP and other third parties are student government. And guess what? An end to compulsory state schooling is not an option.

But I disagree that central-state-level LP activity has been a setback. Learning political processes, mastering parliamentary procedure, and communicating effectively all sit on the positive side of the ledger. Then the

kicker is this— something the Ollies didn't 'factor in': With all us LP 'losers' going about our business, local Libertarians in real communities have emerged and have become an increasingly potent influence at the street level.

The LP is the new rolling stone, and IMHO[3], its growing legions of local officials will become the moral backbone that picks up the pieces—at the neighborhood level under an umbrella of real Constitutional government—as the Oligarchy implodes.

So, here in Michigan (and all over the country), we're moving forward quite nicely with our local heroes. Check out the Michigan LP Website, also the national LP site. One more thing: Libertarians in local government tend toward youth. In months and years to come, more of these respectful 20-somethings—with the requisite revolutionary spirit—will translate to a steady de-graying of the veritable "party of principle," leading us into the New Beginning at long last.

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[1] Jackson is where the party of unabashed corporate-beneficiary state power, the Republican Party, was incepted. (Hiss, hiss, boo, boo.) But aside from that social black mark, the city was once a major rail hub in Michigan and is known as the crossroads of Michigan. It is also home to CMS Energy, once Consumers Power, which supplies the majority of natural gas network customers in Michigan.

[2] The solution is at hand: here is the Brian Wright Real-American Stimulus Package of 2009. It consists of complete liberation of consensual activities, dissolving the military empire, and legal agricultural hemp: my package is worth approx. \$1 trillion per year in the first year, then \$3 trillion per year by the third year. Equivalent to a \$10,000 benefit in real wealth for every person in America... per year.

[3] in my humble opinion

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