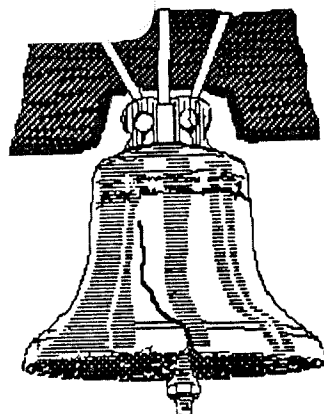


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AMERICA'S LIBERTARIAN HERITAGE

THE POLITICS OF FREEDOM

By David Bergland



Americans put very little trust in government or politicians, and with good reason. For several decades the politicians in Washington and our state capitals have led us away from the principles of individual liberty and personal responsibility that are the only sound foundation for a just, humane and abundant society.

Americans want, and deserve, a political system that respects them as unique individuals; a system that respects them as people who can make their own plans, who can take responsibility for themselves, who are compassionate, who can, and will, solve their own problems if allowed to do so.

The purpose of this booklet is to introduce the Americans of today to Libertarianism, that body of ideas, values and principles that Americans of good will, from the beginning, have used to build and support this great country. As you read, you will see how the libertarian approach can help us all to deal more effectively with political, economic and social issues. Libertarian values are American values. They served America well until the politicians rejected them to build the present day welfare-warfare state. It is time to return to our libertarian roots to chart the course for America's future.

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Chapter I

American Politics: A Libertarian Perspective

The libertarian way of looking at politics and how the system works differs from the short-sighted views of liberals, conservatives, Democrats and Republicans. Libertarians are realistic students of history and principled, idealistic seekers of a better life for all Americans. Where today's politicians are power brokers handing out favors to their cronies at the expense of hard working taxpayers, Libertarians hold that the people in government have one simple job to do; protect the persons, property and rights of the citizens; otherwise, leave them alone.

1.1

Libertarianism Is America's Heritage

Nothing better states the libertarian view of government's proper role than the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson. Although we use different language today, the principles guiding how people ought to deal with each other have not changed since 1776. They are eternal truths. Let's examine how they apply today.

- All people are created equal; where rights are concerned, there are no inferior nor superior human beings. Laws, and governments which create and enforce laws, must recognize that all people have the same rights and must treat them equally.

- Each individual human being has rights, many of them.

Some of the more important of these are the right to life, the right to liberty, the right to seek happiness. In other words, each of us has the right to do anything which is peaceful and honest, to acquire property honestly and to use it according to our own values. Also, we all have the duty to respect the right of all others to do the same.

- People create political governments to secure their rights. Thus, government is merely a tool. People and their rights come first, government second. Government has no authority or just power unless granted to it by the people, by the consent of the governed. Those running the government are agents of the citizens, not their masters.

- When any government begins acting in any way harmful to the people and their rights, it is proper for the people to take the necessary steps to change that government, or even get rid of it entirely, and replace it with a system which will protect them better.

- Each of us has the duty to be vigilant against government abuse of the power granted to it, to speak out, to take action to correct such abuses, so that all Americans might live in abundance and harmony, without fear of government tyranny.

1.2

Why America Needs Your Support Now

For most of the twentieth century America's political leadership has been taking it in the wrong direction, often many confusing directions at once. It has made little differ-



ence whether the leadership was Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative. America has been led away from its original libertarian foundations of freedom and personal responsibility. We have lost much of value because of it.

One trend shows through clearly, regardless of which group was in charge. Government at all levels has grown in size, has taken more power to itself, and is costing more. The people have lost control over their own lives.

How would you answer these questions:

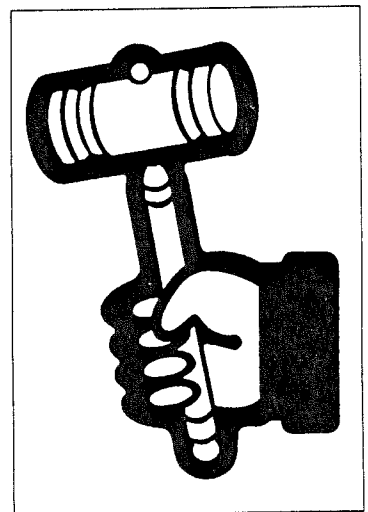
1. Is government too large or too small?
2. Are taxes too high or too low?
3. Does government control your personal affairs too much or not enough?
4. Does government control your business and commercial affairs too much or not enough?
5. Does the U.S. government involve itself in the affairs of other nations too much or not enough?
6. Does government solve problems efficiently or tend to botch things and make them worse?

Most Americans agree that government, at all levels, is too large, too meddlesome, too expensive and worse than merely inefficient. Clearly, the politicians now in power have little desire to move in the direction of smaller, less costly, less intrusive government. Only the libertarians and the Libertarian Party are working consistently, on all issues, all the time, to help the people recover control of their own lives and futures—to recover control of America from the politicians who have led it astray. America needs your help too.

1.3

How Government And Politics Really Work

Government is nothing but a group of human beings, like you and me. There is certainly nothing special nor superior about them. But, because of centuries of tradition, citizens believe it is legitimate for those in government to make rules and force the rest of us to obey them. The people in government seem eager to exercise that power, and to



grab for more.

The basic tool used by government is force. Legislators meet and make rules (laws or regulations) for all to obey. People with guns (police) are sent out to round up anyone who breaks a rule. Anyone accused is arrested and made to defend in a court. If found guilty, he or she is fined or jailed. If he or she resists anywhere along the way, any necessary force, including deadly force, can be used by the government agents. That's how government works. No matter what the subject, there are rules and enforcers.

So, the question we should always ask is: when is it legitimate for the government to use its power?

The answer is: only when necessary to help a citizen defend his or her person, property or other rights against aggressors like murderers, robbers, rapists, muggers, arsonists, polluters, thieves, etc.

Remember, the people in government are only the agents of the citizens. An individual can properly use force in self defense so it is proper for government personnel to aid in that self defense. But, it is wrong for anyone to violate another's rights and so no one can properly call on government to do it either.

George Washington said: "Government is like fire. It is a dangerous servant and a fearful master." The safest course is to limit government to acting only to assist citizens who need help defending their rights. Once it goes beyond that, it begins to violate the rights of some for the benefit of others.

1.4

Voluntary Cooperation: The Alternative To Force And Violence

People can deal with each other in only two ways: one is by force, the other by voluntary cooperation. In our society, government and criminals use force to accomplish their objectives. The rest of us rely almost exclusively on voluntary cooperation.

The most widespread example of voluntary cooperation is the marketplace, commercial activity. People buy and sell millions of different products and services. No one is forced to buy any particular thing or from any particular seller. No one is forced to go into any particular line of work or to provide goods or services to any customer.

In free market transactions, people make deals because, in their judgment, they will be better off by doing it. Compare this to a person forced to give up some property by government or a robber. Such a victim will not likely think he is better off when this happens.

Other institutions, such as church and temple, the family, charitable, educational and civic organizations all work on voluntary cooperation. The key to their success is the libertarian premise of respect for the rights of others. As private citizens in our dealings with each other we almost always are peaceful and honest and expect only voluntary cooperation from our fellow human beings, not submission to force.

How can we use this idea to improve govern-

ment? Think of government as a huge conglomerate of "service businesses." We know that the private sector provides similar services (security, education, transportation, etc.) more efficiently at lower cost. These services do not necessarily have to be provided by government employees and they do not necessarily have to be paid for with tax dollars. Let's begin the process of transferring as many government "services" as possible from the coercive government sector to the cooperative private sector.

1.5

Are Libertarians Liberal Or Conservative?

Fortunately, you are not stuck with only two choices. The libertarian way gives you more choices: in politics, in your personal and business affairs, in every way.

The traditional left-right spectrum is a misleading myth. It doesn't measure anything. It's useless. The value of political labels is to help you make predictions about a person's positions on the issues. Labels like Democrat, Republican, liberal and conservative do that job poorly.

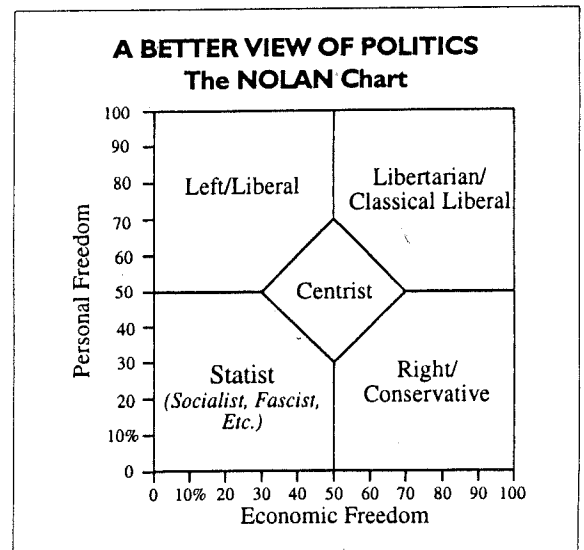
A much better way to understand politics is represented in the chart shown below which is based on an original idea by David Nolan, one of the founders of the Libertarian Party.

On the chart, the vertical axis measures what a person or party advocates on issues of personal liberty; the horizontal axis measures advocacy of economic liberty. A position close to zero means the person seeks lots of government control; a position close to the 100 means the person wants more freedom and less government control. "Personal liberty" refers to matters such as privacy, what one chooses to wear, eat, drink, read, smoke, or their sexual practices. "Economic liberty" refers to matters measured in dollars: commerce, wages, prices, trade and business regulation, taxes, etc.

Libertarians, or classical liberals, advocate a high degree of both personal and economic liberty. Today's liberals like personal liberty but want government to control your economic affairs. Conservatives reverse that, advocating more economic freedom

but wanting to clamp down on your private life. Statists, such as socialists, communists, Fascists and the like want all aspects of your life to be under the government thumb. Some people lean in different directions on the same kind of issues and so wind up in the "center."

Libertarian positions on the issues are not "left" or "right" or a combination of the two. Libertarians believe that, on every issue, you have the right to decide for yourself what's best for you and to act on that belief so long as you respect the right of other people to do the same and deal with them peacefully and honestly.



1.6

How Libertarians Approach The Issues

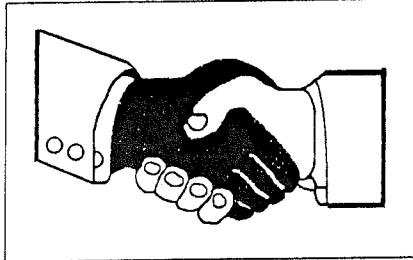
Libertarians use a caring, people centered approach to politics. Politicians too frequently forget that their laws and regulations affect real, live human beings. Libertarians never lose sight of that fact. We see each individual as unique, with great potential. We want a system that encourages all of us to discover the best within ourselves and make the most of it. A system that encourages the development of the most harmonious relationships among all people.

In dealing with political issues, libertarians focus on the people involved. Who is having a problem? What is it? What is the government doing already, if anything, and might that be the cause of the problem?

Most importantly, Libertarians ask: is anyone violating another's rights? Is someone committing murder, rape, robbery, theft, fraud, embezzlement, arson, trespass, etc.? If so, then it's proper to call on government to help the victim defend against the wrongdoer. But, if not, the government should not get involved.

Another way to ask the same question is: are the people

involved dealing with each other peacefully and honestly? If so, the government should leave them alone. (As private citizens we might offer to do a number of things to help people solve their problems, but that is not the proper function of government.)



The second step is to ask whether the government action proposed, or already in effect, is practical. Even when justified, many government actions don't solve the problem, they make it worse and cause additional ones. More obvious are the many instances where the government shouldn't be involved, but is, and the consequences are deplorable. The best historical example is Prohibition. It didn't slow down alcohol use, but it did create

organized crime, corrupt the criminal justice system, and turn city streets into violent war zones. Impractical policies should be rejected.

Invariably, it seems, people do better if allowed to work out their own problems through voluntary cooperation without introducing the coercive tool of government.

1.7

The Libertarian Party, founded in 1971, represents all freedom lovers in American electoral politics. It is one element in a much broader libertarian movement. The modern (post-World War II) libertarian movement is a diverse, international collection of individuals and organizations all working to create a world where human rights are respected and political governments are limited to protecting those rights.



In addition to the Libertarian Party, a strictly political organization, there are a number of libertarian "think tanks", such as the Reason Foundation, the Center for Libertarian Studies, the Mises Institute and the Institute for Humane Studies which conduct research and educational programs and publish scholarly works in economics and the application of free market and libertarian principles to current issues. In addition, there are many libertarian public policy research groups such as the CATO Institute, the Heartland Institute, the Local Government Center and the National Center for Policy Analysis. Other organizations such as the National Taxpayers Union and Citizens for a Sound Economy are public interest advocacy groups which lobby for changes in the law which will lead toward a free society. The Advocates for Self-Government, Inc. trains libertarians in communication to advance the spread of libertarian ideas and solutions in society.

The Libertarian Party was formed to bring America's libertarian heritage back into the mainstream of American politics. It is now America's third largest political party, in spite of horribly unfair election laws designed, by Democrats and Republicans, to stifle political alternatives. Millions of Americans have already voted libertarian and there are over 140 Libertarian officeholders. In its short life, the Libertarian Party has established itself as a credible and respected part of the American political scene, offering highly qualified candidates and valuable, insightful solutions to society's problems.

Libertarians seek a world where you can make your plans, work to achieve your goals, keep what you earn, and not worry about the next legislative session taking it all away from you. Your life is yours. Libertarians want it to be the best you can make it. The Libertarian Party is the political vehicle to achieve those goals.

In the simplest terms, the Libertarian Party is the only political party in America working for everyone's liberty, on every issue, every day. To inquire further, you may contact the Libertarian Party National Headquarters at (800) 682-1776.

Chapter 2

Economic Liberty: The Free Market

Libertarians hold that people have the right to deal with one another in any peaceful, voluntary and honest manner. It doesn't matter whether the people involved are Americans or live in other countries, the principle is the same. Libertarians advocate the free market because it is the only economic system compatible with individual rights. It also happens to be the most productive economic system by far.

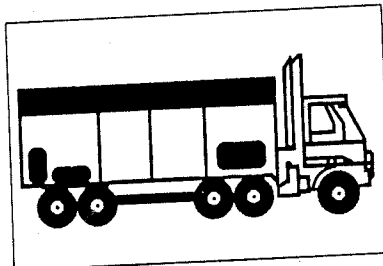
2.1

Libertarians Advocate A Free Market Economy. What Does That Term Mean?

A "free market" simply describes what goes on among people who recognize and respect each others rights. They produce and buy and sell, or give, all kinds of goods and services to each other. No one is forced to deal with another. No one is forced to deal at all. No one is prevented by force from dealing with others who wish to deal. There are no laws against capitalist acts among consenting adults.

The rules of law which make a free market possible are the basic libertarian rules of property law. What you acquire by producing it, or trading peacefully and honestly for it, belongs to you. Whatever you own, you have the right to decide what is to be done with it. Robbery, theft, fraud, embezzlement or destruction of another's property is illegal.

An abundance of historical experience shows that when these are the rules of the game for everyone, all people produce more and the standard of living for everyone goes up rapidly. This makes sense. If you know that your property, work and investments are secure from thieves or expropriation by government you're more likely to work harder because you know you or your family will be the beneficiaries of your effort.



2.2

Don't We Need Anti-Trust Laws To Prevent Monopolies?

One of the great false myths in our economic history is that the "robber barons" of the late 19th century had to be brought under control with anti-trust laws to keep them from monopolizing all industry.

"Monopoly" refers to one producer of a product who can raise his price without fear of competition, or to a cartel (a group) attempting the same thing. There never has been a successful attempt to monopolize over any significant product line, geographical area or time without some government interference to protect the monopolist from competition. In a free market, anyone who wanted to could try to compete with a potential monopolist or cartel. Anytime a company is making high profits, other entrepreneurs will jump in to the same business to make profits also. This added competition drives prices down and the consumers benefit. Monopoly doesn't work if there are no legal barriers

to competition.

People often cite Standard Oil as an example of a monopoly in the late 19th and early 20th century. The facts are otherwise. Over that time the price of oil declined steadily. Many new oil companies were started, including some that grew into large companies like Shell and Mobil.

Anti-trust laws and other regulation of business were not instituted at the request of the public. Big businesses asked for regulation to protect themselves from competition from new, small companies. Today, every proposal to deregulate is opposed by the large companies and applauded by the little companies who know they will have a better chance in a free, openly competitive marketplace. Anyone who wants to fight monopolies should call for repeal of all laws which create them, like the law making it a crime to compete with the Post Office.

2.3

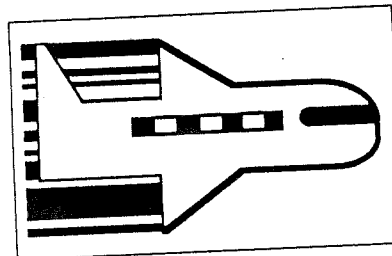
Do Libertarians Favor Deregulation Of Airlines And Railroads?

Anyone who wishes to offer their services as an air carrier or railroader has the right to do so. They surely don't violate anyone else's rights by making such offers. Naturally, they must have the capital equipment and other resources to actually provide the service.

The airlines were regulated from the beginning until the Civil Aeronautics Board was phased out beginning in 1979. Until deregulation, not one single new major airline could get started. Existing airlines opposed deregulation because they didn't want to face the competition they knew would come. Since deregulation, scores of new airlines were created, more cities have service and air fares have plummeted. More jobs and better service.

We can expect similar results when the Interstate Commerce Commission, which regulates railroads and trucking, goes out of business. In recent years it has regulated less, allowing more competition. Many new trucking companies have started. The increased competition has helped cut shipping costs for all products because trucks and railroads compete with each other.

Libertarians seek an end to coercive government



economic regulation. The force of competition in a free market is a more efficient regulator.

2.4 Hasn't Deregulation In Air Travel Reduced Safety And Over- crowded The Airports?

On a per passenger mile basis, the safety record of American commercial air carriers is steadily improving. But, there are so many more passengers being carried and all safety breaches get such wide notice, it may seem that safety is a greater problem than it really is. Another misleading factor is that foreign air crashes and problems with military airplanes get lumped into to the news reports on air safety. U.S. air passenger carriers, the airlines you fly, have excellent and improving safety records.

As for overcrowding, the parts of the market still under government control are the cause of the problems. Almost all airports are owned by governments. The Federal Aviation Administration handles air traffic control, with obsolete equipment. That's the bottleneck. The overcrowding also makes flying less safe.

Libertarians advocate sale of airports to the private sector and allowing private companies to offer air traffic control services. Technologically advanced air traffic control systems already exist, but the FAA bureaucracy refuses to install them. Private companies already handle air traffic control more efficiently at smaller airports, but it will take a change in the law for them to expand their service into major airports.

2.5 Do Libertarians Support Privatization Of Government Services?

"Privatization" is an idea originated and developed by libertarians, primarily Robert Poole of the Reason Foundation. Privatization is simply the process of getting the government out of certain lines of business and allowing private companies, that are eager to do so, to offer the same services to willing customers.

Just look at all the businesses government operates, invariably inefficiently, at great cost to the taxpayers: postal service, passenger railroad, power plants, airports, air traffic control, roads, commuter rail, buses, parks, grazing lands, hospitals, charity (welfare) systems, schools, security services (police), libraries, universities, fire service, rubbish collection, sewage treatment, etc.; and all in competition with private businesses.

Ask yourself these questions: (1) Must these services be provided only by government employees? and (2) Must they be paid for with tax dollars? The answer to both questions is: obviously not. The same or similar services are already being provided more efficiently at lower cost by private companies where allowed by law.

(Example: it's a crime to deliver letters in competition with the Post Office.)

Libertarians want people to have the very best services they are willing to pay for. An open competitive market invariably provides better service at less cost. As government "services" are privatized, our taxes can be reduced and we will all have more control of the type and quality of services we want to purchase.

2.6 In A Free Market, What Would Keep Employers From Paying Only The Lowest Wages?

Today, there is a shortage of skilled, qualified workers. They receive high wages because employers compete to hire them. It has always been that way. The people we should be concerned about are the poorly educated youth who have little or no job experience or skill.

If you had a small business and were looking to hire someone as a trainee, you might take one with no skill for low pay and hope he would improve. As he became more productive, you'd have to pay more to keep him from looking elsewhere. He'd have gotten the start he needed. But, with a minimum wage law requiring you to pay skilled workers' wages to an unskilled beginner, you probably couldn't afford to carry him during the training period. So you wouldn't hire him to begin with and he'd stay unemployed, perhaps forever. What a tragedy!

Virtually all economists argue against minimum wage laws because they clearly cause unemployment. Only politicians promote such laws, because they protect the skilled (and organized) employed from competition from unskilled newcomers. Politicians buy votes with this demagoguery at the expense of the poor, uneducated and minority youth who will remain unemployed because of cruel and counterproductive minimum wage laws.

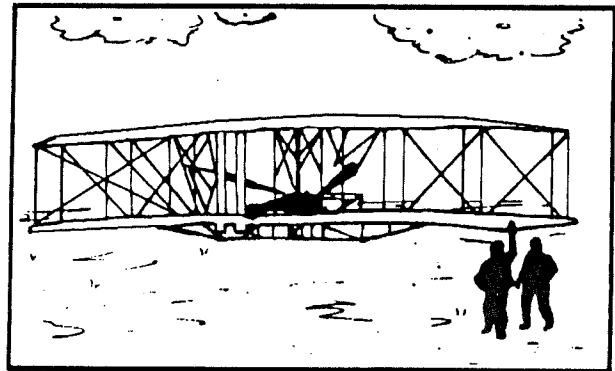
2.7 Can Libertarians Guarantee That The Free Market Will Work?

Libertarians want all people to have the best opportunity to make the kind of life they want for themselves and their loved ones. Of all the available options, the free market system does that best.

No one can guarantee Utopia, that mythical place where everyone always gets everything they want, no one gets sick and nothing ever goes wrong. Utopia is not one of the options. The free market does not promise Utopia, it just allows those who try, a better chance at success.

A quick look at history and the world around us shows that the freer an economy is, the more productive the people in it are and the easier it is for someone who starts with nothing to climb the ladder. Just compare the U.S., West Germany, Japan or Hong Kong or to all those socialist economies that imploded disastrously in 1989 and 1990 after years of lying to cover their failings.

It's not impossible guarantees that should concern us, but opening up the system so more people have a wider range of choices. That means keeping the coercive hand of government out of the peaceful and honest economic activities of the people. When government tries to regulate economic activity, it invariably creates worse problems.



2.8

Isn't The Modern World Too Complex To Rely On The Free Market?

The orderly functioning of a free economy is a model of stability compared to the chaos that follows when government attempts the impossible task of supervising billions of daily transactions. Central "planning" leads to shortages, famine and oppression.

When people are free to produce, buy and sell according to their own decisions, without government interference, market prices help all of us make the best decisions. When government force intrudes into that decision making, it blurs the signals for everyone and productivity suffers. Government intrusion makes economic planning difficult.

No person, or group of them, could possibly know what all the hundreds of millions of people working, producing, selling and buying want. The collapse of the Soviet and other socialist economies across the world is just the most recent example of the inevitable failure of central planning.

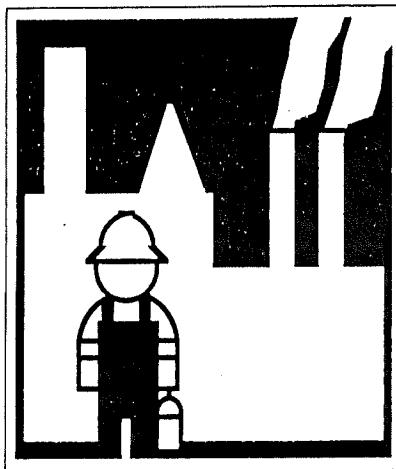
The complex modern world, as we know it, could never have developed without a large degree of economic freedom. Its increasing complexity makes economic freedom a greater necessity every day. The socialist countries have learned that lesson the hard way. Our domestic economic regulators should learn it as well and retire from the field.

2.9

Should The Government Help Important Businesses To Save Jobs?

You should not be forced to subsidize anyone's business enterprise, large or small. Government cannot "help" anyone except by taxing the rest of us. And when it does this, it does more harm than good.

If a business is in trouble, operating in the red, it means that the people running it are wasting valuable resources producing things consumers don't want. They should wake up, respond to consumer demand and produce more efficiently, or go out of business. If such a company does fail, its assets are not lost, they are released to be acquired by other successful businesses know how to use them more efficiently. It's bad for all of us if the government helps inefficient companies stay in business and continue their wasteful ways. Further, the



more efficient businesses, because they are taxed to pay for the subsidy, have less to hire or retain some employees, so the job loss is merely shifted, not avoided.

We can all be concerned about those who lose jobs when companies fail. But, that is a process which cannot be avoided. People looking for work will have a better chance of finding it in a more dynamic, unregulated market.

2.10

What About Farmers? Are They Entitled To Some Help?

The best way to help farmers is to remove all the government interference that has plowed under what could have been a great American system of free enterprise in agriculture.

The U.S. government's so-called farm policy has done grievous damage to poor and small farmers.

All of the U.S. government's interference in the agriculture business should end immediately so that farmers can operate in a competitive, open marketplace, selling their products to any willing buyer.

About \$30 billion tax dollars per year are wasted on price supports and other subsidies paid to farmers so that they will produce less food. The money for those programs comes out of the earnings of taxpaying mechanics, tax drivers, waitresses, school teachers and others. What does it accomplish? Because less food is produced, the prices we all pay at the supermarket are higher.

It gets worse. Much of the food never reaches the market. It is stored at taxpayer's expense. Some of it is given away, if it doesn't spoil first.

One of the most ridiculous aspects of government "farm policy" is tax

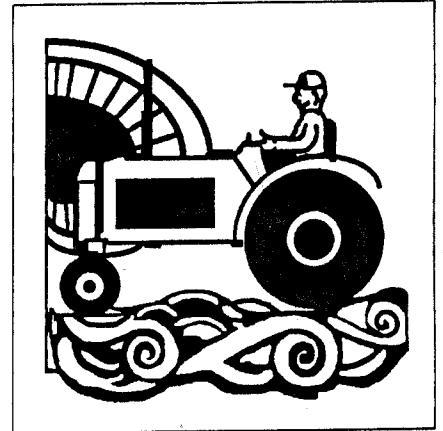
funded subsidies to tobacco growers. Taxpayers are subsidizing tobacco producers while being forced to pay for government propaganda against tobacco use.

Most of the tax dollar payments go to the largest corporate farmers, not to those small family farms we hear so much about. A major source of their problems is the cheap, subsidized loans made available to them through government subsidies. Many small farmers overextended themselves on low cost credit and then drown in red ink.

Finally, the government passes laws preventing American farmers from selling their wares to buyers in some important foreign markets. This is particularly damaging in the long run because agriculture in other countries is improving, so those foreign markets may be lost to America's farmers forever.

Farmers, like all business operators, should take full responsibility for their business decisions. Fortunately, for everyone who eats, agriculture has become steadily more efficient. In 1900, a third of Americans were in farming. Now it's less than 3% and declining. As appealing as the rural lifestyle may be, the supply of farm products is outrunning demand. Inevitably, more people will leave the farm. It is not right for the government to continue robbing Peter in the city to pay Paul just so he can live in the country.

All of us, farmers, taxpayers and consumers, will benefit from a competitive marketplace in agriculture, free from all government interference.



Chapter 3

A Libertarian Look At Domestic And Social Issues

Libertarians are often asked how they would approach certain social and economic problems. The short answer is: let the people involved take the lead. All presumptions should be in their favor. The people most directly involved know better than faraway bureaucrats what they want and need to do, just as you know yourself, your values and your abilities better than anyone else. In all cases, we should seek to replace the use of government force with voluntary cooperation as our means to achieving practical solutions to our problems.

3.1

What Is The Libertarian Attitude Toward Taxes?

Libertarians want to see coercive taxation replaced with voluntary methods of financing legitimate government functions. Libertarians see little difference between robbers threatening to use force to take your money and the Internal Revenue Service doing the exactly same thing.

Remember, the government is only many people providing a variety of services. People in the private sector provide similar services for less. Whether it's education, fire service, security, detective work, insurance, road building and maintenance, package delivery, or whatever, if private companies are allowed to do it, they do it cheaper and better than government. And they are paid voluntarily by willing consumers.

We can go a long way toward cutting taxes to nothing at all by simply allowing private businesses to replace government operations which already have private competitors, like the Postal Service, power plants, railroads, regulatory agencies, welfare departments, airports, etc. The approach is to privatize as many government functions as possible as quickly as possible and sell other assets which are not needed for government's basic function of protecting the rights of the citizens.

Our goal is to set working people free of the tyranny of taxes and tax collectors because we believe people will live better the more that voluntary cooperation replaces force in all human relationships. It may be a long time before all taxes are eliminated, perhaps never, but the closer we come to that goal, the better off all Americans will be.



3.2

What Do Libertarians Propose To Deal With Problems Like Big Federal Budget Deficits And Inflation?

Federal budget deficits are simply the result of the President and the Congress spending more money than they collect in taxes. They have to borrow to make up the difference. That means the interest the government pays on the national debt now almost equals the total amount paid by taxpayers each year through the Federal Income Tax! There is only one solution. The government must spend less, stop trying to do everything and get back to basics.

The federal government should do only two things: (1) provide a national defense, and (2) protect the citizens' constitutional rights from violations by state and local government, such as protecting our right of free speech or to vote. If it did those two jobs well, it would need only a fraction of its current \$1.4 trillion plus annual budget.

Inflation is the process the government uses to create money out of thin air through the Federal Reserve System and the printing press. It's like a hidden tax because every dollar created this way reduces the value of the dollars in your paycheck. Governments throughout history have used monetary inflation to pay for unpopular projects and embezzle the value of the people's money.

The best protection against the inflation scam is the gold standard. If the dollar is tied to a specific weight of gold, you can protect yourself by using your weakening dollars to buy gold and by conducting your business in gold. The government wouldn't be able to inflate because the people could avoid it too easily. Congress should repeal the Legal Tender law (it requires you to accept paper money) and put America's money on an anti-inflationary gold standard.

3.3

Should Government Be Involved In Education?

The government schools have failed our children. Libertarians want the best possible educational opportunity for all people. We should bring competition into the education business so that it will be controlled by the consumers, the students and their parents.

Today, one out of five teenagers is a functional illiterate. Colleges have to teach reading and writing to freshmen. Private schools do a better job of educating at about half the cost of public schools (which averages about \$5,000 per year per student). The educational tax burden keeps going up while student performance drops.

Government schools are a protected monopoly. Compulsory attendance laws and tax financing protect them from market competition. They are a battleground over what is to be taught and the content of textbooks and libraries. It cannot be otherwise so long as government is in charge because decisions are made on political grounds.

An important first step toward increasing choice and quality in education would be a tax credit for anyone, or any company, who pays for the education of any student, or any number of them, in any school, public or private. This would allow many people and businesses to help poor students shop for better education. The competition among educators for students would improve educational quality and put the control where it should be, with the consumers. Children of the poor will gain the most from this proposal. They now receive the worst treatment from the government schools. Tax credits will give them a chance to get out.

Ultimately, government has no proper role to play in education. Just as we have separation of church and state, there should be a separation of education and state. Freedom in the area of mental development and personal philosophy (true education) is fully as important as freedom of religion.

3.4

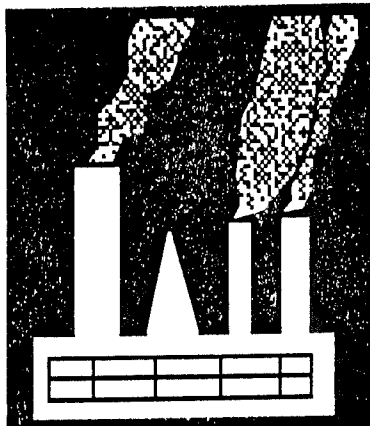
How Would A Free Market Stop Industrial Polluters?

Pollution is a trespass. It involves one person or company removing trash from his property and dumping it on other peoples' property without their consent. The free market system is grounded in property rights. In it, the laws recognize and protect everyone's property rights. So a polluter would be guilty of trespass on another's property and would be ordered by a court to stop polluting and to pay money damages for any injury already done.

The main reason we have pollution is because our governments have eliminated private property rights in water and fail to use them in dealing with air pollution. Most pollution occurs in surface water, underground water and air. Governments own the water and haven't protected it. Where private ownership of water is allowed, private owners are motivated to stop water polluters just as you would be motivated to stop your neighbor who was dumping trash in your yard. People are less concerned about dumping trash into public property, including water, because they don't own it.

Air pollution involves trash light enough to be carried in the air from its source to other peoples' property. In a true free market system, you would be able to sue any polluter who was a source of air pollution which invaded your property, including your body.

The problem we have today is that private citizens cannot sue to correct most pollution problems. The subject has been taken over by the Environmental Protection Agency and similar state bureaucracies. The problem has been politicized. So the people with the most political clout tend to get their way. Many of them are the polluters. Anyone concerned about protecting the environment should be working to replace bureaucratic controls with a free market, private property based system.



3.5

Don't We Need The Food And Drug Administration To Protect Us Against Unsafe Food And Drugs?

Libertarians, like all Americans, want to be able to buy safe food at the supermarket and safe and effective medicine for their families. Unfortunately, the FDA bureaucracy is more of a hindrance than an assurance.

FDA regulations are so strict that they are driving the pharmaceutical business abroad. It takes too many years to get a new drug approved. This makes all drugs much more expensive, often too expensive for many people to buy, so they go without. By delaying approval of drugs for years, the FDA causes many sick people to die or suffer needlessly. Particularly if they can't afford to leave the U.S. for treatment. Others are driven to try high risk "black market" medicine or treatment. The current AIDS epidemic is causing some relaxation in the regulations because even the people at the FDA recognize how serious an obstacle their regulations are to early discovery of something to help AIDS sufferers.

As with licensing, restrictive regulations do more harm than good. What we all want is good information about the products we buy so we can take the responsibility for our own decisions. The private sector (which includes organizations such as Underwriter's Laboratories, Consumer Union and the American Society for Testing Materials) does a better job of providing such information without the bad side effects of bureaucratic red tape.

3.6

The Free Market Is Impersonal. Does This Mean Libertarians Don't Care About The Poor And Unemployed?

Libertarians want every able bodied person to be able to find work, to be self supporting. The first step toward helping the poor and unemployed is to repeal all the laws and regulations which get in the way of people who want to work.

Minimum wage laws cause massive unemployment among the poorly educated, unskilled young, particularly minorities. Economists point out that nearly one-third of black teenagers are unemployed primarily due to the minimum wage law. Federal labor laws prevent people from producing certain products in their homes. Zoning laws prevent people from working at home. In Houston, which does not have zoning, the greatest opposition to zoning comes from poor people who run small businesses from their homes. Licensing and other regulations prevent people from offering their services as taxi drivers, hair dressers, nurses and in hundreds of other lines of work.

Consider the mother who offers to care for the children of other working mothers in her home. She will run afoul of zoning, building, business, health, welfare and who knows what other regulations. An effective, voluntary community solution will be shut down.

We must realize that the practical effect of all these laws regulating business is to stifle small business and employment opportunity. If we want to help the poor go to work, we must be willing to repeal all such laws.

3.7

What About The Poor Who Are Too Sick Or Disabled To Support Themselves?

Libertarians want the compassion we all share for the sick and disabled to mean something, to work. Private charity works, government welfare doesn't.

In his 1984 book, *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950 to 1980*, Charles Murray reviewed all the major federal welfare programs and demonstrated that the groups they were supposed to help were worse off than before. The people who benefit most from those programs are the well educated middle class folks who run them. Most of the welfare tax dollars go to welfare workers. So they naturally have an incentive to keep expanding the welfare plantation. People on welfare have a similar incentive to stay on rather than go to work and lose the benefits. Government welfare is demeaning and intrusive. Recipients lose their right of privacy and tend to become apathetic and dependent.

There are thousands of private charitable institutions and groups like the churches and temples, United Way, Red Cross and others which do a much better job of helping those who need it. Their overhead averages a low 10%. They tend to be much closer to the people and better understand the actual problems and how to solve them. Private charities are more concerned with helping people become self sufficient.

Government welfare costs hundreds of billions of tax dollars every year. Private charities raise well over \$100 billion per year in money and services from contributors who give voluntarily. If government got out of the charity business, taxes could be cut dramatically. That would help the economy and create jobs. Working people would have bigger paychecks every week. We would all be in better position to exercise our compassion helping those we choose to help, working with other people in our own communities on real problems close to home.

3.8

How Do Libertarians Approach The Issues Of Health Care And Increasing Medical Costs?

Libertarians want everyone to have access to good health care at reasonable costs. Also, free people should have the final say about whether to be treated and what type of treatment is the best for them.

Expensive government medical care programs, including Medicare and Medicaid, have resulted in massive increases in medical costs and extensive fraud. Government intervention invariably makes things worse. By making medical care free or inexpensive to the consumer, demand increases and drives costs up. The taxpayers wind up paying for it all. Government then responds by stepping in to regulate medical procedures, thereby destroying the doctor-patient relationship which is a necessary component of quality health care.

Another way that government drives up health care costs is by limiting the number of people who can become physicians or offer medical advice and treatment. Finally, government promotes the attitude that good health is a right and should be risk free. To avoid potential liability, health care professionals order every possible test, further increasing costs.

Now, some people want some sort of "national health" insurance or care system operated by the government. Just take a look at health care in socialist countries or our own Veteran's hospitals if you want to see the results. Impersonal, substandard care and years of waiting in lines to receive it, all accompanied by huge increases in taxes.

OUR HEALTH IS FAR TOO IMPORTANT TO TRUST TO GOVERNMENT. Responsible human beings must be allowed to deal with each other in this area. Let us repeal laws and regulations which prevent skilled people, such as midwives, from offering their services. Eliminate government licensing of physicians. End government interference in decision making between health care professionals and

patients. End all government medical insurance and subsidy programs and let private insurance companies and charitable organizations provide these services and aid to the needy.



3.9

Without Licensing, Who Would Protect The Public From Quack Doctors And Other Phony Professionals?

Libertarians want the best assurance that doctors, lawyers, pharmacists and other professionals have the training and experience we expect them to have before they treat or advise us.

What we really want is good information about them. Government licensing schemes don't provide the best information but, they do cause other problems. Most important, licensing keeps qualified people from offering their services and that keeps the price of professional services high at the expense of the consumer.

A government license tells you the person passed a test once. It does not ensure competence now. There are too many instances of malpractice for that to be true. In fact, a government license gives many people a false sense of security. They fail to take the responsibility to check further on the background of the professional.

Private industry has hundreds of testing and certifying organizations. Underwriters Laboratories tests and approves electrical appliances. The American Society for Testing Materials tests and sets standards for thousands of materials used in industry. A variety of boards certify physicians for special skills such as orthopedic surgery or internal medicine, leaving the government completely out of it.

The private sector is already doing a better job of providing information about professionals than government licensing schemes. Relying on private sources of information will allow more competition across a wider range of professional qualifications and ultimately benefit the consumer with lower prices.

3.10

Don't We Need Affirmative Action To Keep Bigoted Employers From Refusing To Hire Minorities And Women?

Libertarians want to see people of all types working in the most harmonious relationships. "Affirmative action" refers to laws that force people into relationships whether they want them or not. Not too many years ago, there were laws in many states that prevented people of different races from doing a variety of things together, working, eating, marriage, etc. Libertarians oppose all such laws because the people involved have the right to decide for themselves whether or not to enter a relationship or association.

An old saying states: "it takes two to tango." Relationships or associations require at least two people. We cannot justify using force to keep people out of voluntary relationships and we cannot justify forcing private citizens into relationships against their will.

Government employment is a different case. The only criteria for employment or advancement in government work should be merit. The Constitution requires that we all be given equal treatment under the law. Since governments are created by law, they are Constitutionally required to be absolutely even handed. Private citizens or companies on the other hand have the right to be stupid and suffer the consequences.

Attempts to correct bigotry with affirmative action haven't worked very well. Such laws are easy for bigots to circumvent and people tend to think minority employees did not earn their positions on merit even if they did. They also make it possible for bigots to harass minorities by demanding employment at minority owned businesses.



3.11

If We Didn't Have Zoning And Other Land Use Regulations, Wouldn't There Be Chaos?

No one wants chaos. We all want a stable set of rules so we can make long range plans for the future. Zoning and other governmental land use controls are less stable than our traditional private property system.

Zoning is a 20th century phenomenon. Zoning and other land use controls were designed from the beginning to keep blacks and other ethnic groups "in their place." Today they are used mainly to stop growth, to protect current residents from an influx of newcomers. This is done by not allowing owners to build on their property. Fortunately, the U.S. Supreme Court has recently ruled that such severe restrictions are a "taking" under the 5th Amendment and the property owner is entitled to just compensation.

Government controls are unstable, subject to change at any time. That's chaotic. A better alternative is "private zoning" through voluntary deed restrictions. Owners in an area agree on use restrictions, such as residential only, and the deed to each property reflects the restrictions. These are contractual rights which no one, including government, can alter arbitrarily. This system is used in many places, including Houston, Texas, the nation's fourth largest city, which does not have governmental zoning.

The absence of zoning laws does not result in pig farms or gas stations invading your residential neighborhood. Economic science predicts and experience shows that types of uses naturally group together because all property owners benefit if they do. Residential property is too valuable to use for pig farming. Non-zoned cities like Houston don't have incompatible uses adjacent to each other. What they do have is lower rents and greater adaptability to the changing needs of property users.

Chapter 4

Very Personal Liberty: Controlling Your Own Body

You own yourself. You have the right to decide what's best for you. You also must take responsibility for those decisions and respect the equal right of all other individuals to make their own decisions. The French philosopher Voltaire, speaking of the right of free speech, once said: "I may disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." Libertarians would broaden Voltaire's statement: "I may disagree with how you choose to live your life, but I will defend to the death your right to make that choice."

4.1

Does Libertarian Support For Personal Liberty Extend To Things Like Drugs?

Libertarians would like all people to be healthy and free of drug dependence. But drug laws don't help. Prohibition tore America apart during the 1920s and 1930s; today it's the "war on drugs." Criminal penalties cannot prevent drug use, but they do make it difficult to help those who want it.

Prohibition did not stop alcohol use; drug laws haven't stopped drug use. Prohibition spawned organized crime; drug laws keep it going. Criminal laws drive up the price of the booze or drugs, making dealing very profitable. The high prices also increase real crime because some addicts steal to pay for expensive drugs. Since it's illegal, criminal types go into the business. They corrupt the criminal justice system, buying off cops and judges. They don't employ honest business tactics; they use violence to squelch competitors, who can't complain to the police. People died from "bathtub gin" during Prohibition;

people die from adulterated drugs today. But since it's illegal, there is no consumer protection. Let's respect the right of people to control their own bodies, repeal the drug laws, work to help those who want to be drug free and direct law enforcement to protect us from real criminals.

4.2

If Drugs Were Legalized, Wouldn't There Be Millions More Drug Addicts?

Our history with legal and illegal drugs indicates clearly that relatively few people can't handle addictive substances. The great majority of us can take them or leave them alone. This should be obvious if we consider that, although expensive, even illegal drugs are easily obtainable. Government sources estimate that over 25 million Americans are occasional users, not addicts.

Opium and its derivatives, like morphine and heroin, were legal, and inexpensive, before 1914. Although these addictive drugs were readily available, few people were impaired due to addiction. According to a major study entitled *Licit and Illicit Drugs*, published by Consumers Union, even addicts can cope readily if the price of their drug is low.

Today, alcohol causes three times the drug addiction problems of all the other drugs combined. The experts tell us that the most physically destructive and most addictive drug of all is the nicotine in tobacco. No one suggests that alcohol Prohibition be brought back or that tobacco be made illegal.

We all know too well what would happen—the same thing that happened during Prohibition and is happening now with laws against drugs like cocaine, marijuana and heroin.

Again, let's respect the right of each person to be responsible for his or her own body and what goes into it. Voluntarily help those who want it, save the billions of tax dollars wasted on fruitless efforts to suppress peaceful drug use with the criminal law, and avoid all the problems created by those fruitless efforts.

4.3

Do Libertarians Want To Decriminalize Prostitution?

Every day, millions of adult Americans voluntarily agree to make love. Most of those agreements are between heterosexuals, some are homosexual. Some are between married people, some not. A tiny fraction of these agreements involve the exchange of money.

Since all the agreements we are talking about are voluntary and between consenting adults, libertarians cannot justify putting any of the participants in jail. As with any other peaceful, honest transaction, neither party is violating the rights of the other and the government therefore has no role to play in it. Further, the impracticality of trying to suppress sex, whether money is involved or not, ought to be obvious. We only get the same results as with alcohol or drug prohibition.

All laws making consensual sex "criminal" should be repealed.

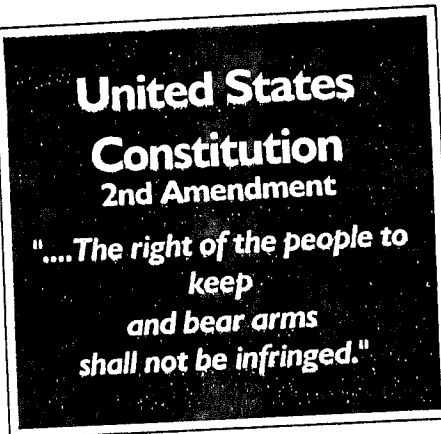
4.4

Do Libertarians Apply These Same Principles To Issues Like Gun Ownership?

Guns are inanimate objects. If you own a gun and use it responsibly, you do not violate the rights of another person and therefore, the government should leave you alone. If, however, you are negligent with your gun and injure another, or if you intentionally threaten or injure another, that would violate his or her rights. It would be wrong and you should

be required to make restitution to the victims for any injury you cause.

The Second Amendment to the Constitution says "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." The nation's founders intended this, not merely for hunting or personal protection,



but as a protection retained by the people against possible government tyranny. Libertarians agree with the founders on this point.

Further, as with other "victimless crimes", laws against gun ownership don't work. If people want them, an underground market will develop to supply them and we will have the same old set of Prohibition problems. Finally, the people who most urgently feel the need for weapons to defend themselves are the poor who live in high crime neighborhoods. Because police protection is inadequate, inexpensive guns are their first line of defense. No one should take that away from them.

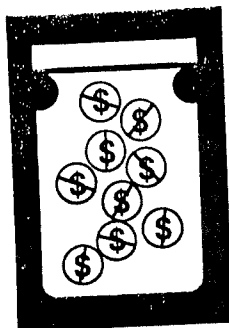
4.5

What Is The Libertarian Position On The Military Draft And National Service?

A military draft is slavery. It is immoral, unnecessary and impractical. The same is true of any compulsory "national service" program.

Slavery consists of some people taking over ownership of other human beings, depriving them of the right to decide for themselves what to do with their lives, their bodies, their energies, their time, how to dress and whether or not they will try to kill other people -- or provide care for them. The Civil War was fought to end the involuntary servitude of one human to another. It is time to end involuntary servitude to the state.

Some people argue that a military draft is necessary for national defense. History proves otherwise. During the Civil War, both sides tried a draft and found it took more manpower to enforce the law than was produced for fighting the war. We have had an all volunteer military for twenty years and it has proven far superior to conscripts, most recently in Iraq. The quality of personnel keeps improving, as it must to operate the high technology of modern warfare. Volunteers stay longer than draftees, saving billions in training costs.



A libertarian defense policy focused on defending Americans and their property in America will require far fewer men and women at arms. When the state has the power to draft people, the generals too easily succumb to the temptation of military adventurism. History shows that free people are the most eager defenders of their homeland. They don't need military conscription as an incentive. Slaves make lousy defenders of freedom.

But the statists never rest, now calling for a draft of young people, if not into the military, into some sort of "national service" corps, where they will be forced to work on

roads, in hospitals, in schools, libraries, etc. This is supposed to teach them the value of service to others in their community. The real lesson is that your life is not your own, that you are the property of the state to be used according to some bureaucrat's whim.

A respect for human rights demands an end to the slavery of the military draft and repeal of draft registration which makes it a crime for young men to refuse to register for the draft. The same principle requires that slavery in all forms be resisted, including the proposed slavery of compulsory national service.

Chapter 5

International Relations And National Defense

Political borders between nations do not alter basic principles of human rights and personal responsibility. People seem to get along quite well because they have so much to offer each other. Governments create international tension and war by preventing the peaceful interaction of people through trade and travel. Libertarians believe that free markets and democracy have so much more appeal to all people than socialist central planning, that the best foreign policy is one which works to export those ideas, rather than the clumsy violence of military intervention.

5.1

How Would You Describe The Libertarian Foreign Policy?

As Jefferson said: "Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all peoples, entangling alliances with none." The libertarian foreign policy can be summed up in the words: neutrality and free trade. That is the tradition of America's earlier years. It will serve us well now.

Rather than trying to police the world, or meddle in the affairs of other nations, the U.S. government should confine itself to what is necessary to defend Americans and their property in America. It should simply recognize other sovereign governments and end its military and covert methods of propping up or trying to topple any other government.

Expensive and clumsy military approaches to foreign policy frequently end in disaster and have made the world less safe for Americans. We would do better to rely on the obvious benefits of trade and peaceful relationships to promote democracy, free markets and human rights throughout the world. Nothing can compete with the appeal of capitalist consumer goods and what they teach about the free people and societies that produce them.

5.2

Should Free Market Principles Apply In International Trade?

People have the right to engage in peaceful and honest trade. That principle applies regardless of the products or services exchanged and regardless of political boundaries. The right to trade should not be abridged whether people live on the same street, in different states or in different countries.

The subject of international trade is often confused because it is discussed in terms of nations trading with each other. More accurately, people and companies trade across political boundaries. Government to government trade is a small fraction of all international business.

Not only should the right to trade be respected, it is the most practical way. Everyone benefits when trade is free. The more producers, sellers and buyers in any market, the more competition, the more is produced and the better things are for all consumers. One of the keys to historically high living standards in the U.S. is that the Constitution does not allow trade barriers between the states.

Free trade is also a great inducement to international peace. When people are improving their conditions through trade, they don't want their governments to interrupt them with war. Conversely, when trade is cut off with embargoes, high tariffs and quotas, history shows that the likelihood of war increases. World War II was preceded by a "trade war" which spread the depression world wide and created conditions leading to Hitler's rise to power and to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

One of the best things we can do to improve economic opportunity for all people, and to spread American style democracy abroad, is for the U.S. Government to remove all of its barriers to trade between Americans and people of other cultures. For example, lifting the trade embargo on Cuba would also quickly eliminate Castro

5.3

Don't Foreign Imports Take Jobs From Americans?

There would be no foreign imports if Americans weren't eager to buy them. No product sells unless buyers think it's a better deal for the money than the competition's product. No one has the right to stop you from buying what you think is best for you, regardless of who manufactured it or where.

Allowing good deals to be imported ultimately creates more jobs. Every dollar you save on a good deal will be invested or spent somewhere else. The number of jobs in those other industries will increase because you had the choice to spend your

money your way. Economists tell us that trade barriers which keep out imports cause the loss of twice as many jobs as they appear to save.

Just as with subsidies paid with tax dollars, using trade barriers to protect inefficient companies hurts everyone just to help the small group who work in that industry. A bad trade-off. History also shows that protected companies don't become more efficient, they just raise their prices.

During the 1980's, while America was supposedly suffering from a trade deficit with Japan and West Germany, unemployment dropped here and went up in those countries. Many more jobs were created in the U.S. than there. The best policy is to allow full and free competition worldwide so that competition, productivity and economic opportunity can increase more rapidly for all. And even if other governments retain trade barriers, Americans will still benefit if the U.S. government drops all its barriers and negotiates with other governments to lower theirs from the position of having done everything it could do already.

5.4

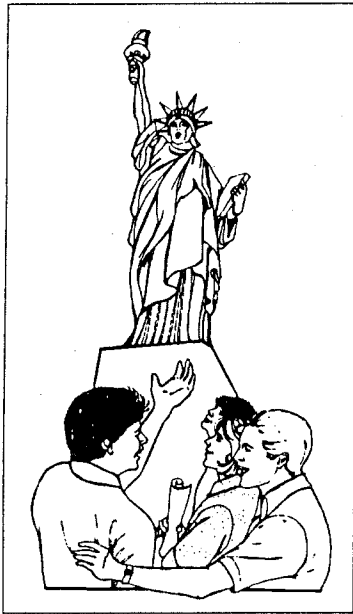
What Is The Libertarian Position On Human Migration?

An international boundary does not change the fact that all people have the same rights, regardless of where they were born or where they live. Every human being has the right to travel peacefully wherever he or she may want to go provided it's done at his or her own expense and without violating the rights of other individuals.

Put it on a personal level. Would it be right for you to stand at the California/Mexico border with a gun and threaten to shoot anyone crossing the border, in either direction? Of course not. Nor is it proper for the U.S. government to do so.

Immigration barriers only aggravate the problem. Economic studies of immigration show that most immigrants only want to visit, work for short periods, and return home. But making every border crossing excessively expensive, by making it illegal, induces them to stay much longer. It works like the drug laws; a violent underground immigration market comes into being.

The same studies show that immigrants (legal and illegal) increase overall economic productivity, create new businesses and job opportunities, and pay more in taxes than they receive in welfare. This makes sense. It is the most ambitious and motivated who make the effort to move to new countries seeking opportunity. Typically they are young, healthy, and eager to work. The only humane policy is to welcome any fellow human being willing to take responsibility for himself or herself.



5.5

Should The U.S. Continue To Give Foreign Aid To Other Nations Or Support The United Nations?

The U.S. government cannot send aid to other governments or pay for U.N. operations without first taking the money from working Americans to do it. That would be immoral if you did it. It's immoral when the government does it.

There are many wonderful causes in the world which individual Americans and organizations support voluntarily. American Jews have raised untold millions in voluntary contributions for Israel over the years. We're all familiar with voluntary efforts to help children and starving people in other countries. Libertarians applaud such efforts and participate in them. But, it is obviously wrong to force others to support your particular idea of who to help and how to help them.

Government to government aid typically is drained off into the pockets or Swiss bank accounts of officials in the recipient country. As with domestic welfare, international charity works better when done through private efforts.

Our government should stop foreign aid and help the poor in other countries by removing all legal barriers to trade, travel and private assistance. As for the U.N., many Americans, including many libertarians, would voluntarily support an organization for peaceful international discussions. If the U.N. is perceived as beneficial by many, there is no need to force Americans to pay for it.



5.6

What Should The U.S. Government Do About Defense?

National defense should mean: providing Americans and their property in America with security against the risk of an attack from a foreign power. Fortunately, the risk of such an attack is nil. The Cold War is over. Unfortunately, we still pay huge amounts for "defense" unnecessarily.

No one is foolish enough to try invading the U.S. and they would be defeated quickly if they did. (This is one reason libertarians support the right of individuals to own firearms. Potential invaders know that an armed citizenry defending their homeland are the toughest opponents.)

There is no more Soviet Union nor risk of a nuclear attack from it. Now independent, former Soviet republics, such as Russia, are working with the U.S. and West European countries to reduce nuclear arsenals and to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to third world despots -- the only remaining nuclear risk.

But our military budgets still average about \$300 billion per year. Most of that is for personnel and the bulk of them are overseas. Manpower could be reduced substan-

tially by bringing the troops home to protect the American homeland. Nor does American security depend on having a Navy all over the globe. Nuclear submarines on patrol are the best deterrent to the misuse of nuclear weapons held by other nations. Other ships should remain primarily in U.S. waters.

Defense policy should protect Americans in America, rather than acting as self-appointed global policeman. This would reduce defense costs by more than half and serve American interests better.

5.7

Should The U.S. Military Be Sent Abroad To Protect American Interests Or Do Humanitarian Work?

The history of U.S. military intervention abroad shows that it seldom accomplishes much good and frequently causes other problems, including the deaths of young Americans. The typical pattern is that warring factions somewhere cause concern on the part of some Americans and the President and generals take the opportunity to make war. American soldiers are sent abroad, some are killed, other people are killed, we finally realize that little good is being accomplished and pull out, then things go back to the way they were before.

The Gulf War may have seemed a great success, but it accomplished little of vital interest to Americans. One despot invaded a country ruled by other despots. Even if Iraq had taken over Kuwait, the oil there would still have been sold on the international market. Other than testing high tech military hardware, nothing related to the security of Americans happened. And Saddam Hussein still rules Iraq.

The military is trained and designed to fight wars. That means killing people, either offensively or defensively. Soldiers don't do well when plopped down among warring local factions and told to keep the peace, or distribute food, but not to shoot anyone. There is absolutely no justification for putting them at risk for such purposes.

Nor should American companies or tourists abroad be the concern of our military. Such people must take responsibility for their own safety under the laws and conditions of the countries they visit. They must not call on the U.S. government and taxpayers to bail them out when the host government mistreats them. That is simply a call to make war.

Productive and peaceful foreign relations come through free trade, diplomacy and respect for the sovereignty and cultures of other nations, not a roving U.S. military.

5.8

What Would American Allies Do If The U.S. Withdraws From NATO And Other Alliances?

What any country chooses to do for the defense of its own people should be decided, and paid for, by the people in that country.

For years, American taxpayers have paid much more for the defense of the NATO countries, for Japan, Korea and others than the people in those countries pay to defend themselves. (Coincidentally, that helps companies in those countries compete with American companies because their taxes are lower than they would be if they paid their own defense costs.) The European countries have a larger population and combined gross national product than the U.S. It's time to take them off military welfare and give the American taxpayer some relief. Those countries should decide what they need to defend themselves and they should pay for it. That should be our policy toward all nations.

In the last 25 years, while the Cold War still held center stage in the foreign policy arena, it became quite clear that neither the U.S. nor the Soviets could run the world or even dominate smaller countries which fought back. Now the Soviet Union has dissolved itself, peacefully, and its former East European satellites are doing their best to become free market democracies. Former Soviet republics are struggling independent nations and constitute no military threat to anyone. The Warsaw Pact, against which NATO faced off for decades, is no more. In the end, socialist economies collapsed and took the threat of military expansion with them.

The two main ingredients of American culture, democracy and the market economy, are now viewed throughout the former Soviet sphere of influence as the salvation to their problems. We Americans should continue supporting the export and implementation of those fundamentally libertarian ideas instead of relying on military alliances and confrontation in the struggle to make the world free.

Conclusion

Libertarianism is that body of ideas, values and principles that Americans of good will, from the beginning, have used to build and support this great country.

It's respect for our traditions of liberty, personal responsibility, earning your way, and working hard to create a better future for your family.

It's the idea that being free and independent is a great life. That you should be able to live, love, work, play and dream your own way, at your own pace, win or lose.

It's respect for each unique individual and recognition of the great potential each of us has. It's wanting to help others discover the best within themselves and make the most of it.

It's self-ownership and self-government; accepting the responsibility to exercise your right to decide what's best for you and respecting the right of others to do the same.

Libertarians want a world in which all of us have the greatest possible opportunity to make our own plans and achieve our goals. A world of harmony, abundance and peace for all peoples.

Libertarian values are American values. Let them chart the course for America's future.

About The Author

David Bergland was the 1984 Libertarian Party presidential candidate and is the author of the book, *Libertarianism In One Lesson*. He holds a bachelors degree in English and economics from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Southern California (USC) School of Law. He is a practicing attorney in Orange County, California, and an occasional professor of law.

The Libertarian Party • • • Statement of Principles

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual.

We hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual: namely, (1) the right to life -- accordingly we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action -- accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property -- accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.