

Libertarians Condemn Republicans for Voting Against 4th Amendment

by James W. Harris
Editor, *The Georgia Libertarian*

The Republicans were elected this past November on pledges to slash taxes and shrink big government. But many of them seem more intent on shrinking our precious Bill of Rights.

On February 7, the House passed H.R. 666, the "Exclusionary Rule Reform Act." This bill, sponsored by Rep. Bill McCollum (R-FL), will let federal prosecutors use, in court, evidence seized illegally by federal law agents without a search warrant, as long as the agents had acted in "good faith". This bill will destroy most of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The Fourth Amendment was written by our founding fathers in order to protect American citizens against unwarranted government searches and seizures. Our Founders, prior to the American Revolution, had experienced first-hand the terror and indignity of warrantless raids by British soldiers—in fact, such raids were one of the major causes of the American Revolution.

As former Republican

Senator Warren Rudman said four years ago in arguing against similar GOP legislation: "The Founding Fathers, after having been abused by the King's soldiers and marshals, felt that the one thing that Americans would be secure from would be unreasonable searches and seizures."

This February, House Republicans argued that the Fourth Amendment's "exclusionary rule"—which prohibits the use of illegally seized evidence in court—unnecessarily hampers law enforcement. In fact, however, studies show it rarely interferes with proper police work. And many law enforcement officers feel it helps by insuring professionalism among police and enabling the police to make better cases. Among supporters of the exclusionary rule is FBI director Louis Freeh.

The Fourth Amendment has already been gravely weakened by a series of recent court decisions, mostly related to the War on Drugs. This new bill, if it becomes law, will destroy most of what is

left of it. It will put every citizen—even the most honest and law-abiding—at the mercy of sudden, unannounced, unjustified and warrantless government raids.

During the debate, one opponent of the bill, Rep. Mel Watt, a North Carolina Democrat, proposed an amendment to H.R. 666. His proposed amendment was worded as follows:

"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by Oath of affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

That, of course, is the Fourth Amendment itself. Every member of Congress has sworn a sacred oath to uphold those very words.

The Republican majority, and many Democrats, voted it down, 303-121. They voted against the Fourth Amendment. The House then passed H.R. 666, 298-142.

Libertarians Demand: *Take A Meat Cleaver to the Federal Budget!*

by James W. Harris

According to the National Taxpayers Union, in 1991 an American family of four with a pre-tax income of \$52,985 paid \$26,680 in federal, state and local taxes. That's over half of their income paid out to the government.

Our outrageous tax burden is damaging American families, by forcing many parents to take second jobs and put their kids in daycare centers. It is destroying needed jobs by taking money out of the economy. It is destroying our independence and self-reliance, by forcing us to lower our standards of living and rely on government handouts.

Here are three big cuts, supported by the Libertarian Party, that would put dollars back in our pockets and win us more personal and economic liberty:

1) Cut defense

America now spends \$264 billion dollars on the military--almost as much as the rest of the nations of the world combined. We could have a strong defense for America for only a fraction of that amount. We should stop trying to be policeman and nanny of the world. We should let rich nations like Europe and Japan pay for their

own defense, instead of sending U.S. taxpayers the bill. We should return to our Founding Father's "America First" foreign policy, best expressed in the words of Thomas Jefferson: "friendly relations with all nations, entangling alliances with none."

Instead, though, both Democrats and Republicans are supporting increased military spending. For example, Clinton's defense budget calls for spending \$6.5 billion on upgrading nuclear missiles on Trident submarines—despite our current nuclear ability to flatten every large city in any country in the world. And a bigger defense budget is a key part of GOP plans as well.

Washington should wake up. The Cold War is over. The Soviet Union is history. There is no excuse for not slashing military spending and bringing American soldiers back home. Cutting the Pentagon's budget in half—a modest enough goal—would alone take us two-thirds of the way to a balanced budget. And ending overseas meddling would save American lives, as well.

2) End corporate welfare

Stephen Moore of the

highly-respected CATO Institute recently issued a paper calling for an end to "corporate welfare"—government hand-outs to big business. These handouts add up to tens of billions of dollars—all taken directly from our pockets.

"Corporate welfare is anti-capitalist," says Moore. "Corporate welfare converts the American businessman from a capitalist into a lobbyist."

It's not fair to force some businesses to pay taxes to subsidize other businesses.

3) End Social Security

Social Security is a fraud. It's draining billions of dollars from taxpayers and from our economy. It is headed straight for bankruptcy, and before it gets there it will loot still more billions from the current generation of workers.

We could allow those already retired or nearing retirement to stay in and keep their benefits; let those over forty years of age get back what they've already paid, and encourage them to invest in a private retirement plan; and let younger workers simply get out of the system and invest their money in private retirement plans.

Re-Legalize Drugs

by James W. Harris

Atlanta has once again been named the most violent city in America. Murders and robberies are staples of our daily news.

I'm sick of it. Aren't you?

I'm sick of seeing innocent young children gunned down in drive-by shootings. Sick of reading about families who live in constant terror of gangs, drug dealers, and violent criminals. Sick of kids selling drugs, and kids murdering other kids.

And I'm almost as sick of the phoney election-year "solutions" politicians are hollering for: more prisons and more concentration like "boot camps;" longer prison sentences for even casual drug users; and further cutbacks on our vanishing Bill of Rights freedoms.

Such "solutions" won't work. That's because they don't address the major cause of murder and violent crime in Atlanta and the rest of America: the War on Drugs.

Politicians claim the War on Drugs is supposed to protect us. But here is what this War is really doing to you and me and our families:

The War on Drugs is the leading cause of robberies, burglaries and thefts in America. Outlawing drugs doesn't get rid of drugs. It just drives their production and sale into an illegal, underground black

market. Heroin, for example, costs perhaps 50-100 times what it might cost if it were legal. This means that addicts—driven by an insatiable desire for heroin—must commit crimes to get money to pay for their habits.

Researchers estimate that a huge percentage of robberies and burglaries and thefts are committed by drug addicts stealing to pay jacked-up black market prices for their drugs. If drugs were legal, a fix would cost about the same as a pack of cigarettes or a bottle of booze. Addicts would no longer have to steal to buy their drugs. That would halt most of their robberies. After all, when did you ever hear of a nicotine addict or an alcoholic breaking into houses to feed their habits?

Furthermore, the Drug war ties up tremendous amounts of law enforcement and prison resources. If the Drug war was ended, those resources could be used to fight other property crimes.

The Drug war causes up to half of the murders in America. In the black market, gangs fight one another to gain control of the dope business. They settle disputes with guns.

Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman estimates that as many as 10,000 of the 20,000 homi-

cides committed in America each year are due in this way to the War on Drugs. The exact same thing happened when America outlawed alcohol in the 1920's. Gangs sprang up overnight to supply booze, and violence skyrocketed.

The Drug War encourages kids to use and sell drugs. Drug pushers use children as look-outs, money carriers, and sellers because kids, when arrested, get off easy in the juvenile court system. The lure of big money also encourages kids to sell dope instead of staying in school and working at lower paying, legitimate jobs.

Drugs, including marijuana, heroin and cocaine, were perfectly legal in America from 1776 until 1914. And we experienced none of the problems described above.

Drug prohibition, like alcohol prohibition, is an experiment that has failed miserably. It just puts money, guns, and power into the hands of the most ruthless and vicious elements of society.

James W. Harris is editor of the *Georgia Libertarian*, newspaper of the *Libertarian Party of Georgia*. An award winning writer, his articles have appeared in numerous publications including *The Nation*, *The Freeman*, the *National Taxpayers Union's Dollars and Sense*, the *Atlanta Constitution* and more.

Libertarian Party *of Georgia*

Libertarian Party Challenge to GOP: Cut Government--Or Get Out of the Way

by James W. Harris

Early in January, the Libertarian Party issued a public challenge to the new republican congressional majority to live up to their campaign promises and drastically reduce the size and scope of the federal government.

The LP hand-delivered the challenges to the offices of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, House Majority Leader Dick Armey, and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole. In the document the Libertarians urge Congress to immediately abolish 21 unneeded or destructive federal programs, agencies, and regulations.

While the Republicans have been surprisingly reluctant to spell out proposed cuts in the federal budget, the Libertarian Party has plenty of suggestions.

"The next six months will determine if Republicans can be trusted to start eliminating many of the federal programs and agencies that have no place in a free society," said Libertarian Party national chair Steve Dasbach. "The LP chal-

lenges the Republican Party to immediately abolish or defund every one of these programs, agencies, and policies.

On the Libertarian Party's "hit list" were Amtrak, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Civilian Marksman Program, Steamtown USA, the National Endow-

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ment for the Arts, Selective Service, the Economic Development Administration, the Appalachian Regional Commission, Fossil Energy Research, the Davis-Bacon Act, the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the National Service Program.

Also included were FCC controls on 900 lines and cable TV; subsidized grazing

fees; the space station; the DC Domestic Partners regulation; shipping quotas and subsidies; the Overseas Marketing Board; the Clinton Crime Bill's semi-automatic weapons ban; several "War on Drugs" civil liberties violations; and unnecessary NATO and UN spending.

If enacted, these reforms would immediately save taxpayers at least \$4.5 billion, and would ultimately reduce the federal budget by hundreds of billions of dollars. These repeals would also greatly increase the personal and economic liberty of Americans.

LP Chair Dasbach stressed that this is not some pie-in-the-sky, politically impossible wish list. In fact, legislation has been previously introduced in the House or Senate to repeal most of the items above. But often Republicans have joined Democrats in failing to support these repeals.

Of course, these 21 points are only a small part of the cutting that so urgently needs doing. But it is at least a starting point.

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