



Liberty News

June 2000

a publication of the Libertarian Party of Boulder County

The Enemy Is Us

by Jerry Van Sickle

A recent article in *Boulder Weekly* touched on the fundamental issue of countries in which only the government has guns. Among ourselves we often conclude that this basic issue is impossible to sell because of the response: "our democracy protects us". I'll welcome reactions to this attempt: **Jerry Van Sickle, 303-443-5578, vansickm@dellnet.com**

We have met the enemy and he is us.

Because so many of us are willing to turn over life and death controls and services to the imperfect humans in government at every level: our ability to work and trade with each other locally and around the world; our health care and old age security; the safe construction of our home, workplace, and stores; crucial local services; our children's education; our decision to fight and die in war -- and to protect ourselves, our families, and neighbors.

Because we have allowed congress and the president much more power than our constitution granted them -- a constitution hammered out by those who experienced the thirst for political power under a democratic parliament and among themselves. They could see the all too human tendencies to dominate or be subservient, as we can, repeated throughout history.

Because that constitution tried to limit policing to the local level. Because police at every level are subject to stereotyping and the temptation to bully and intimidate -- and an admirable but dangerous *esprit-de-corp*s. Even reluctant policemen and officials, with their jobs on the line, are likely to carry out dubious orders in time of crisis as their counterparts did in

Germany and Japan and in our own military not so long ago.

Because we continue to look for heroes on white horses to lead us, who will direct this centralized police system and use the public power to justify their directives with spin and propaganda. Because so few of us are willing to question their underlying motives, or facts, or conclusions -- or defend and listen to those who do. Most of us tend to ride the wave of emotions influenced by official statements rather than pursue and digest alternatives. Few of us were even willing to look carefully at the possibility of innocent victims at Waco or Ruby Ridge -- isolated events during times of widespread peace and prosperity.

Every day we are willing to let armed agents of government at every level incarcerate people who have not harmed anyone, not even themselves, in a war on drugs that pose less risk or harm than our favored legal drugs, alcohol and tobacco - except for the economic incentives and violent crossfire created by that war. It continues in spite of glaring lessons learned during our previous prohibition, and we are willing to tie the hands of judges who might prevent many of the individual tragedies.

Most of us are willing to close our eyes when police or other officials invade or confiscate innocent people's homes and personal property. We are willing to abandon the crucial safeguards of innocence until proven guilty, and due process of law, because these

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The Enemy Is Us *(continued from p. 1)*

cases involve someone else. We are willing to see other people and their property sacrificed for the "common good".

We are willing to allow government to monopolize education and reinforce its biases during our children's formative years, with federal and state grants and local controls instead of family control, forcing such education on our children and our neighbors' children.

We have been willing to have most essential services -- water and sewer services, gas, electric and telephone services, and roads -- in the hands of local governments or franchised monopolies instead of providing ourselves with a multitude of alternatives in case of natural or manmade disasters. We are willing to empower a centralized emergency management agency able to impose martial law so that our own judgments and responses will be at the mercy of appointed officials who, like police, must be obedient and may become ruthless in times of crisis. They may prohibit efforts to help ourselves and our neighbors.

In spite of affluence and safety that few citizens had at the time of the constitution, all of us are treated as children, unable to take care of ourselves or our family and neighbors when in need, during old age, sickness, or injury - or to spread the risk as we did through family, friends, neighbors, and civic clubs - and as we can now through private insurance. Many of us are eager to put our own and our family's health and that of all our fellow citizens at the mercy of a nationally run health care system with the frightening title of "single provider".

Even if we hope these services will benefit those most in need, we are putting all their eggs and our own in one basket. Those who would offer alternative ideas, public services, utilities, transportation, and education create the ferment and experimentation which lead to improvements in learning and safety and standards of living for everyone. They may also be our lifeline to survival during emergencies.

So are those who provide private policing, and neighbors who are able to protect themselves and help us when public police cannot get to our homes in time, or to our workplaces, crowded theaters, restaurants, and schools -- who raise life saving doubts in the minds of burglars, rapists, bullies, psychopaths, and the armed agents of other governments, or our own.

QUOTABLE...

"Live and let live."

- FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

Drug War Claims Another Victim: *Police Integrity*

LONGMONT -- Libertarians have long said that the War on Drugs corrupts law enforcement authorities. Now they have more proof, right here in Colorado.

Veteran police officer Paul Olsen has been accused of alerting suspects about upcoming police raids.

"When you outlaw something that some people want, like drugs, you raise the price of that thing dramatically," said BetteRose Smith, Chair of the Libertarian Party of Colorado. "When the price goes up so very high, bribery of police, prosecutors, and judges cannot be far behind."

Just as alcohol prohibition led to payoffs of police and judges, so has drug prohibition. There have been cases similar to Olsen's all across the country, and they may just be the tip of the iceberg.

Such cases lower the public's respect for the police and may cause crooked police officers, now hooked on bribe money and fearful of exposure, to overlook violent crimes.

"When you have broken one law, it makes breaking other laws that much easier -- and sometimes necessary," said Smith. "We need to get our police out of the business of chasing non-violent drug users, so they will not be in the position of accepting bribes in the first place."

"While it is almost certain that most police officers are honestly trying to uphold the law as written, having them spend so much time on victimless crimes can only increase the likelihood that they, themselves, will become criminals," Smith said. "This endangers us all."

New Home for LP-CO Website

The new website for the Libertarian Party of Colorado is now online. The address is:

www.lpcolorado.org

Please update your bookmarks accordingly.

Send all website contributions and suggestions to Ari Armstrong: **ariarmstrong@hotmail.com**

Letter: Sensible Alternative to Gun Laws

[The following letter was recently submitted to the Daily Camera newspaper. The Camera has a 300 word, once per month limit on letters to the editor. The Camera's web page is located at www.thedailycamera.com. Letters to the editor may be sent to: openforum@thedailycamera.com.]

Editor,

A *Washington Post* editorial recently reprinted in the *Daily Camera* stated, "The most sensible proposal, to ban handguns and assault-style weapons, gets no hearing." (See "And Now the Zoo," *Friday April 28, 2000*.)

Will gun bans be as effective as our bans on some drugs? Since drug prohibition doesn't stop criminals from obtaining illegal drugs, why would gun prohibition stop criminals from obtaining illegal guns? Wouldn't gun bans succeed in disarming victims just as drug bans succeed in keeping medical marijuana out of the hands of glaucoma, cancer, and AIDS patients?

Libertarian Party presidential candidate Harry Browne has a sensible alternative to victim disarmament. Due to the fact that our justice system believes that it's more important to keep nonviolent drug offenders behind bars than violent criminals, tens of thousands of violent criminals are let out of prison early every year to make room for nonviolent drug offenders.

Does it make any sense that our justice system is putting violent murderers, rapists, wife beaters, and child molesters back out on the streets to make room for nonviolent drug offenders?

Drug prohibition has given violent criminals a "get-out-of-jail-free" card.

Since we're releasing violent criminals from our prisons to make room for nonviolent drug offenders at an alarming rate, and we're wasting scarce police resources chasing after nonviolent drug offenders instead of chasing after violent criminals, why is anyone surprised by our sky-high homicide rate?

Harry Browne's Libertarian alternative to victim disarmament is to end the prohibition of drugs. If we follow Harry's sensible alternative to victim

Libertarian Online Guide

f National Libertarian Party
f www.lp.org

f Colorado Libertarian Party
f www.lpcolorado.org

f Boulder County Libertarian Party
f www.lpboulder.com

f Harry Browne for President 2000
f www.HarryBrowne.org

f Don Gorman for President 2000
f www.Gorman2000.org

f David Baker for Congress 2000
f www.baker2k.com

f Advocates for Self Government
f www.self-gov.org

f Cato Institute
f www.cato.org

f Laissez Faire Books
f www.laissezfaire.org

f Libertarian Weekly TV Schedule
f www.missliberty.com

disarmament and end drug prohibition, say good-bye to the Al Capone-like drug gang shoot-outs over high stakes drug turf; say good-bye to drug-deal-gone-bad shootings; say good-bye to "no-knock" police drug raids on the Ismael Menas of the world; and say good-bye to victim disarmament.

For more information on Harry's sensible alternatives, go to his website located at www.HarryBrowne.org.

Sincerely,
Chuck Wright

How We Can Manipulate the Media

by Jon Ford

Although the Libertarian Party has enjoyed a refreshing increase in press coverage from the mass media, we still have a long way to go when compared to the stranglehold the two major political parties have on media attention.

When Libertarians do manage to get their opinions into newspaper, television, or radio spots, the citations can be less than respectful. Whether it's the abolition of the income tax or the privatization of national parks, our ideas are often portrayed as unworkable, overly idealistic, or downright nutty by liberal and conservative pundits. And there's nothing we can do about it.

Or is there?

David Alexander worked for major newspapers and television networks for more than 25 years, and his book *How You Can Manipulate the Media* (Paladin Press, 1993) offers a wealth of practical information, tips, and examples of how to get your story covered in the first place *and* get it covered with the spin you want.

Libertarian public relations officers, press liaisons, campaign managers, and event coordinators can learn a lot from Alexander's insider perspective. Here is just some of his advice:

QUOTABLE...

"Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys."

- P.J. O'ROURKE

- k Learn who really makes the day-to-day decisions on what gets covered in the news and solicit those individuals. With newspapers it's generally the news and city editors and their assistants (and sometimes reporters); with television, go for the assignment editors. Don't waste your time with anyone higher up the ladder than these folks.
- k Know the "pegs" that reporters, editors, and producers look for when choosing stories and exploit them. Most everyone knows that the media loves conflict and timeliness (pro-gun and anti-tax protests fall into these categories), but Alexander also points out lesser known hooks such as "self-help" stories that can be used to Libertarian advantage. An example would be a group of citizens pooling their own money and time to fix a local road rather than waiting for the county bureaucracy to get off its butt to do it. A Libertarian spokesperson attaching him or herself to such an event would guarantee at least one sound bite with the right spin.
- k Rather than sending out announcements for another dull news conference, Alexander recommends "confrontational piggybacking" on an already scheduled event. If, for instance, the Boulder City Council holds a news conference on free RTD passes for all citizens, an articulate, well-crafted disruption of the event has a better chance of getting press than a competing news conference or press release. A young woman successfully accomplished this at a recent Charlton Heston speech on the CU campus. She mimicked Mr. Heston's speech, was politely ejected from the event, and found herself--and, more significantly, her message--the subject of a local newspaper article the following week.

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How We Can Manipulate the Media *(continued from p. 4)*

- k Piggybacking can also be used during local incidents involving assaults on civil liberties. Think of the coverage the LP would receive if members even briefly halted a bulldozer exercising an "eminent domain" demolition. The LPBC pulled off a perfect example of this when it organized a lively protest in support of the owner of a local sandwich shop whose business was put in legal jeopardy due to the independent actions of one of its employees (involving drugs, naturally).
- k Use guerrilla tactics. One man announced that he was going to burn a puppy to protest U.S. military activity in Central America, causing a huge uproar in the press and public opinion. He was interviewed throughout the week leading up to the stunt, which he took full advantage of by articulately voicing his opinions about his cause. On the appointed day,

with several reporters and live television cameras on hand, the man lambasted the press for showing up to broadcast the burning of a puppy while ignoring human rights violations abroad. (Alexander points out that the environmental group Greenpeace is the master of such guerrilla media tactics when it hoists antinuclear banners on dams and skyscrapers, disrupts whaling boats with its own flotilla, and so forth.)

Making it on the mainstream news puts the libertarian message and the benefits of freedom in front of a mass audience, many of whom may be ripe for conversion to the Libertarian Party.

Think about this and utilize these practical measures the next time you have the opportunity to plant a pro-freedom story in the press.



drawing by Chris Hendrickson

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Annual Meeting of the Libertarian Party of Boulder County

The annual meeting of the LPBC will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 13th at the home of Dave Baker, 2626 Crestridge Court in Boulder (see directions below).

At this annual meeting, we will be holding the election of LPBC officers for 2000-2001.

To vote: All voting members can vote, either in person at the July meeting or with the official Absentee/Sample ballot (which will be mailed to all voting members in the July newsletter, several weeks prior to the election).

To run for office: All voting members are eligible and encouraged to run for board positions. To indicate your desire to run for the board, you must contact the Publicity Director, Dave Baker, by 6/8/00. Contact Dave at (303) 417-9086 (h), (303) 417-9103 (w), or betabaker@earthlink.net

Board positions: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Director, Publicity Director, Newsletter Editor.

Currently announced candidates:

- \ Treasurer - *Chuck Wright*
- \ Membership Director - *Tom Parker*
- \ Publicity Director - *Ron Bain*
- \ Newsletter Editor - *Steve Funk*
- \ Chair - *(none)*
- \ Secretary - *(none)*

More info available on our website:

- k Duties of officers:
k www.lpboulder.com/by-laws.html#VI
- k Election of Officers of the Board:
k [#Election](http://www.lpboulder.com/by-laws.html#Election)
- k Complete By-Laws of the LPBC:
k www.lpboulder.com/by-laws.html
- k Latest election news:
k www.lpboulder.com

Directions to annual meeting:

- k Take Hwy. 36 about 6 miles north of Boulder.
- k Turn west onto Middle Fork (it only goes west from 36). This is just south of the Greenbriar Inn.
- k Turn right at the first fork, onto Crestridge Court.
- k One-third mile up, on the left, is 2626 Crestridge Court.
- k Park in the cul-de-sac; set your parking brake.

*Dave and Barbara Baker
2626 Crestridge Court
Boulder, CO 80302
(303) 417-9086*

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Colorado Libertarian Candidates for Elected Office (November 2000 Election)

U.S. House of Representatives

District 2: David M. Baker

Secretary of State

Johanna C. Fallis

State Senate

District 17: Charles A. Wright

District 33: Jesse L. Wilkins

State House of Representatives

District 13: Wright J. Morgan

District 18: Desiree Hackett Hickson

District 24: Shawn E. Glazer

District 29: Gregg Miller

District 33: Norman T. Olsen

District 52: Alberto Squassabia

*This listing may not be complete.
Most info taken from
[www.sos.state.co.us/elections/
state_cand_2000.htm](http://www.sos.state.co.us/elections/state_cand_2000.htm)*

QUOTABLE...

"...the art of government consists in taking
as much money as possible from one class
of citizens to give to the other."

- VOLTAIRE

The Non-Sense of the Senate

Blame the Drug War -- not guns -- for child killings

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA -- On Wednesday, May 17, the U.S. Senate, pressured by the "Million Mom March" and the overwhelming desire to act as though the Senators knew what to do, passed a pair of non-binding "Sense of the Senate" resolutions. "The Democrats stated their strong support for further restricting Americans' Second Amendment rights and the Republicans countered with their continued support for 20,000 bad gun laws," declared Harry Browne, Libertarian candidate for President.

Even though the resolutions were non-binding, the debate was characterized as procedural hardball. And it yielded a surprising admission by Senator Larry Craig of Idaho (quoting from a Reuters report) that young people who die of gun-related causes each year are not little children but older teens, many of whom "are caught in the cross-fire of a drug war in the streets of America." The solution to that, he said, lies in the War on Drugs, not in a War on Guns.

"I have never met anyone who believes we're winning the insane War on Drugs. But politicians love to pretend that we are," said Harry Browne, the Libertarians' 1996 nominee for President. "Perhaps Senator Craig is finally realizing what millions of Americans already know -- that the Drug War is a cruel and brutal failure."

Browne noted that "the National Rifle Association (NRA) and Republican politicians have recently urged that today's 20,000 gun-control laws be enforced -- no matter how bad those laws. Libertarians know that those laws are, at best, useless -- and, at worst, highly dangerous."

Senator Craig is on the Board of Directors of the NRA, and is one of 69 Republicans who voted for the resolution calling for stricter enforcement of gun-control laws.

"Instead," urged Browne, "we need to recognize that those 20,000 laws are a principal cause of the current violence in society. They have made people much less safe -- by disarming innocent citizens and thereby encouraging armed criminals to take advantage of us."

Browne pointed out that many of those armed criminals are drug dealers. "Only Libertarians want to end the nightmare of Prohibition -- with its criminal gangs and drive-by shootings."

"Besides," argued Browne, "the Drug War has led to the trampling of the Bill of Rights. And that's the central issue with both guns and drugs: the U.S. Senate has no business violating your constitutional rights, no matter how noble the cause."

Browne concluded, "On my first day in office, I will pardon all federal, non-violent drug and gun offenders. And during my term, I will lead the fight to end the insane War on Drugs, and to remove federal gun-control laws from the books."

[Press release reprinted from the LibertyWire e-mail subscription, available online at no charge from www.HarryBrowne.org.]

QUOTABLE...

"I would rather be exposed to the inconveniencies attending too much liberty than those attending too small a degree of it."

- THOMAS JEFFERSON, LETTER (1791)

Liberty News

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Send all newsletter contributions, correspondence, and advertising inquiries to Stephen Funk at funks@peakarts.org or 6822 Countryside Lane #290, Niwot, CO 80503

Editor: Stephen V. Funk

Contributors: Ron Bain, Jon Ford, Steve Funk, Chris Hendrickson, Tom Parker, Jerry Van Sickle, Chuck Wright

LPBC Calendar of Upcoming Events

Every Monday, Noon:
LPBC Weekly Lunch
Healthy Habits Restaurant
Baseline & Foothills, Boulder, CO
Visitors Welcome!

Saturday, June 3 & Sunday, June 4:
Tanner Gun Show
Denver Merchandise Mart
I-25 & 58th, Denver CO
Call Chuck Wright (303) 666-0509

Thursday, June 8, 6:30 pm:
LPBC Board Meeting
Cheng's Garden Restaurant
480 W. Dahlia, Louisville, CO

Saturday, June 10 & Sunday, June 11:
"Crossroads of the West" Gun Show
Holiday Inn
I-70 & Chambers, Aurora, CO
Call Chuck Wright (303) 666-0509

Thursday, June 29 - Monday, July 3:
2000 Libertarian National
Convention
Anaheim Marriott Hotel
Anaheim, CA
*Call the Balcom Group
(800) 272-1776*

Thursday, July 13, 7:00 pm:
LPBC Annual Meeting and
Board Officer elections
David Baker's residence
2626 Crestridge Ct., Boulder, CO
See Official Notice on page 6

Saturday, August 5 & Sunday, August 6:
Tanner Gun Show
Denver Merchandise Mart
I-25 & 58th, Denver CO
Call Chuck Wright (303) 666-0509

*More info about all LPBC events:
Call Ron Bain, (303) 444-4537*

Join the Libertarian Party of Boulder County!

Choose one of these options:

___ *Combo Package: Join the LPBC, LP-CO, and LP-US for only \$40*

___ *Join the LPBC for THREE FULL YEARS for only \$36*

___ *Join the LPBC for the small annual fee of \$15*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Day Phone: _____ Eve Phone: _____

Email address: _____

If you wish to be a voting member, please sign and date the following pledge:

"I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Choose a membership plan above and enclose a check or money order payable to the LPBC for the amount listed. Send to: LPBC, PMB #427, 2525 Arapahoe Ave., E4, Boulder, CO 80302. *Thank you for your support!*

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www.lpboulder.com

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