

No presidential campaign is what it appears on prime-time television network news— hordes of newsmen, chanting crowds of boosters, and entire cities turning out to see the candidate. Even though these images become the standard against which all campaigns are measured, any thoughtful person realizes that the reality behind the image is something very different for Democratic and Republican candidates. And it is even more different for candidates of a so-called third, or minor, party.

of media interviews I have done since starting the campaign last fall, the most predictable question has been, "You know you don't have a chance to win, so why are you running?" A related, and almost as predictable, question is, "Even though I basically agree with you Libertarians, wouldn't I be wasting my vote on you, since either the Democratic or Republican candidate is going to win?"

These questions reflect the fact that most interviewers put a lower priority on the issues than on the contest, or "horse race," aspects of the campaign. Presum-

RUNNING THIRD

What it's like to
run for president
as a third-party
candidate.

By David Bergland



I know. Last year, I was selected as the 1984 presidential candidate of the Libertarian Party at its national convention in New York. My past experience as a Libertarian candidate for other offices and as the party's national chair for five years provided me with more forewarning than almost anyone else could have had of what was in store. Still, my life on the campaign trail since then has certainly not been what I—nor anyone else—might have expected.

In any substantial endeavor there is a division of labor. My job, as the candidate, is to answer questions. At press conferences, in individual media interviews, giving speeches to civic organizations, students, and other groups—answering questions is how I spend most of my time. Researching and preparing to answer questions is how I spend most of the rest of it. One can learn a great deal about America and its people simply by listening closely to the questions posed by them and their putative representatives in the media during a presidential campaign. How they respond to libertarian answers is also illuminating.

In the hundreds—perhaps thousands—

ably, media interviewers think that voters want to know only about the candidates with good prospects of being elected. So my Libertarian positions on the issues and the contribution my arguments can make to the political debate are less important to the typical journalist than the personal factors that have led me to become a candidate. This is the exact reverse of my own priorities.

One main objective of the campaign is to make Libertarian analysis of the issues and approaches to them a regular part of the American political discussion. Achieving that objective is a way of "winning" that does not require being elected. It *does* require sufficient reporting of Libertarian stands on the issues.

One encouraging example of such winning occurred at a well-attended press conference at the state capitol in Albany, New York. I had been answering questions for about 30 minutes, and it was becoming quite clear that Libertarians take a dim view of large, costly, and intrusive government. One young reporter was prompted to ask, "Mr. Bergland, would you describe our government as a totalitarian government?" After some

thought, I responded, "No, not so long as we have a free press and open elections." How *would* I describe our government, he asked. I said the best description is "a corporate-fascist, welfare-warfare state."

The reporter asked to know what I meant. I explained to him and the others present that the hand-in-glove relationship between big government and big business—the subsidies, the bailouts, the protections against competition, the pervasive regulatory schemes—justify the "corporate-fascist" label. I added that our huge, costly, and demeaning welfare plantation system that benefits government employees while hurting the poor, and our global interventionist foreign policy that results in ever-increasing military spending and benefits the military-industrial complex at the expense of the people, justify the "welfare-warfare" label.

Those comments went out on the wire services, and for several days I had many opportunities to elaborate on my characterization of our government as a corporate-fascist, welfare-warfare state. No other presidential candidate, particularly Reagan or Mondale, is willing to challenge prevailing political views in such strong and accurate terms.

The Libertarian Party has grown dramatically in the 12 short years of its life, and I've been able to see first-hand just how far

it's come. In 1976, Roger MacBride was the presidential candidate and I was the vice-presidential candidate. We were on 31 state ballots and received about 175,000 votes. By the time of the 1980 election, the party was well established as the country's third-largest. Presidential candidate Ed Clark and his running-



Marty Swinney

mate David Koch were on the ballot in all 50 states and received almost a million votes, about one percent of the national total. (A major factor in this success was David Koch's contribution of over \$2 million to the campaign, approximately two-thirds of the total campaign budget.)

The Libertarians now have party organizations in all 50 states, some much more developed than others, and there are about 50 Libertarians holding local government office. There are no Libertarian officeholders in state legislatures

or Congress, but two Alaska Libertarians have previously held state legislative positions (see sidebar below).

I remember vividly that in 1976, the most common question was, "What is the Libertarian Party, and what does it stand for?" Frequently the questioner had trouble even pronouncing the name (*libertine* being a favorite fall-back). Now recognition of *Libertarian* is relatively wide. A 1982 public-opinion survey in California to determine the Libertarian Party's name recognition turned up a credible 61 percent. Of course, that was California, where the party has been quite active since 1972. Now, when speaking to nonlibertarian groups, I often ask how many had heard of the party or my campaign before learning of my appearance there. I'm pleased to say that the responses vary from about two-thirds to 100 percent.

Another way we are "winning" in 1984 is by educating hundreds of journalists, college professors, and others in basic libertarian ideas. From my past experience, I knew that a significant obstacle to the party's success was ignorance and misperceptions about the party and its underlying philosophy. Accordingly, the campaign has put together a media kit that includes (in addition to the usual paraphernalia) a party history, a Q&A booklet, and a one-page item, "Libertarianism in One Lesson," that is designed to clear up some of the more

Libertarian Lights

In the 12 years of its existence, the Libertarian Party has attracted a variety of individuals from a variety of backgrounds. Two who have made their mark on the party in quite different ways are Dick Randolph, an Alaska insurance agent, and Tonie Nathan, a TV newswoman and producer in Oregon.

Randolph has been the Libertarian Party's most successful politician. Like many other party activists, he was a disenchanted Republican when he discovered libertarianism. "The first time I got involved in political activity was the Goldwater campaign in 1964," he told *REASON*. He was elected to the Alaska state legislature as a Republican in 1970 and 1972, but his experience there soured him on Republicans. "I was very disillusioned with the hypocrisies of conservative Republicans," he recalled. "There's a big difference between what they profess and how they perform."

By 1976 Randolph had left the Republican Party and was serving as the Alaska coordinator for the presidential campaign of Libertarian Roger MacBride. The Republicans' loss was the Libertarians' gain. Two years

after making the switch, Randolph was elected on the Libertarian ticket as a state representative and was reelected in 1980.

Dick Randolph:
Elected twice
to Alaskan
legislature as
a Libertarian.



Two years later he ran for governor, winning 15 percent of the vote in a three-way race (few Libertarian candidates ever garner as much as five percent of the vote).

Alaska Libertarians currently have about a dozen elected officials, and although Libertarians elsewhere have not yet succeeded in winning any state (or federal) offices, Alaska voters have elected Randolph twice and another state representative, Ken Fanning, once in 1980. Fanning went down to defeat in 1982, and no other Libertarians won state legislative seats—but according to Randolph, "we were strong enough by that time that we could have elected others that year if

we hadn't put all our resources in the governor's race."

An indication that the Libertarian Party is a force to reckon with in Alaska has been a string of victories in state-initiative campaigns. In 1980, it organized such a campaign to repeal the state income tax. The initiative seemed headed for victory when, shortly before election day, the state legislature beat the voters to the punch and hastily repealed the income tax on its own. This is the only time any state has rescinded an income tax.

The Libertarian Party was also behind what is known as the "tundra-rebellion initiative," a measure establishing state government jurisdiction over federally owned land in Alaska. (It passed by an 82 percent landslide, but Randolph says that the current governor, Bill Sheffield, has refused to enforce it.) And the party organized a successful petition campaign to give Alaska voters the chance to vote this November on deregulating intrastate transportation.

Randolph has been working actively this year on behalf of four Libertarian candidates for the state legislature. "I don't have any specific plans to run for office myself," he

common misconceptions and lays out, in quotable form, some of the most basic libertarian concepts.

We are succeeding in educating the journalists. In the past, a common practice of print journalists was to write what I call a laundry-list article. This is a compendium of Libertarian Party positions on a number of issues, usually the most controversial, with no discussion of our principled basis for taking those positions. A typical article would go something like this: "Libertarians are for ending all government support of schools, fire departments, welfare, Social Security, and business subsidies. They want to repeal all laws against drugs, gambling, prostitution, pornography, and gun ownership. They say the US government should get out of NATO and the UN, end foreign aid, end military alliances, and stop the nuclear arms race. Libertarians want to cut government down to nothing and then some. They are radical right-wing and left-wing at the same time. Weird."

Today, laundry-list articles are quite rare. Reporters have come to know better. Among journalists, the party has established substantial credibility for itself and libertarian ideas because it has kept working and not gone away, and its candidates consistently adhere to the principles of individual liberty.

In the past, many interviewers did their best to question me about issues

where they thought the Libertarian position would be unpopular in order to see if I would waffle. An example was, "You really advocate repeal of *all* drug laws—even against *heroin*?" Now, many journalists are informed about our principles, and many have even told me that Libertarians receive a great deal of respect for



that reason.

Sometimes journalists even make comments like, "I agree with you guys, but it's impractical. We'll never get there." Such statements are cause for optimism, in my view. People who have arrived at that position may soon be saying, "If it's right, let's give it a try."

It is encouraging to me when interviewers answer their own questions because they have grasped the party's principles well enough during the interview to see how they apply to given

issues. A common area of inquiry is financing the campaign. When it comes up, the questioner will often ask, "Since you are opposed to taxation in principle, you probably don't take federal matching funds, do you?" The answer, of course, is that we will not take any stolen property in the form of taxes for our campaign. No Libertarian would.

I also take the opportunity to point out that according to the *National Journal*, the Democrats and Republicans together will extract about \$130 million from the taxpayers for "matching funds," convention expenses, Secret Service, and related expenses in connection with their campaigns. That alone is reason enough for any working, taxpaying voter to reject both of them. By comparison, the Bergland-for-president campaign has a projected budget of \$1.5 million, all of which will come from voluntary contributions.

One interesting misperception about the Libertarian Party is that it is made up of wealthy, upper-middle-class whites who have it made, will benefit from freedom, and could not care less about those who might not. I hope that my campaign is serving to disabuse people of this fallacy.

Recently, at the beginning of an interview at the *Las Vegas (Nev.) Sun*, a reporter was asking me how I respond to the charge that the party is an elite party, when I walked my campaign aide and

told REASON. "First, I want to see what happens in 1984."

Unlike Randolph, Oregon's Tonie Nathan is busy with her own campaign this year, running in a nonpartisan race for county commissioner in Lane County, Oregon, where her home town of Eugene is located. She has already survived a grueling primary that eliminated well-connected politicians in the area.

In some ways, Nathan is like any number of other Libertarian candidates this year, but in an important way, she's very different. Running as the Libertarian Party's vice-presidential candidate 12 years ago, she became the first woman in history ever to receive an Electoral College vote. When the Electoral College convenes in December, Geraldine Ferraro will be following in Nathan's footsteps.

Curiously, when Nathan attended the 1972 Libertarian Party convention in Denver, running for vice-president was not in her wildest dreams. She was a producer at KBAL-TV, the local NBC-affiliate television station in Eugene, Oregon, and the hostess of a daily show called *Dialogue*—something of an accomplishment at a time when few women

had jobs in broadcast news (she was then the only TV newswoman in Eugene and one of only three in the state). Nathan had been attracted to individualism upon reading books by novelist-philosopher Ayn Rand, and she went to the Libertarian convention in



Tonie Nathan:
First woman
to win an
electoral vote.

1972 intending to make a documentary on the beginning of a third political party with which she was already sympathetic personally.

"I thought I could combine a vacation in Colorado and do the documentary," she recently told REASON. Indeed, on the day before the convention was to nominate its candidate, she had breakfast with philosophy professor John Hospers to discuss his new book *Libertarianism*. Neither expected to be nominated for anything. By the next day, he was the Libertarian candidate for president; she, for vice-president.

She was nominated by a fellow Oregonian

and, like other candidates, Nathan was questioned by the convention delegates. "No one at the convention even brought up the fact that I am a woman," she recalls. "No one asked if I was married or how many children I had. They asked me rational questions about my background and how much time I could devote to the campaign. What was important to them was that I was a media person and would know how to deal with other media people."

The Libertarian ticket did not win any states in the November 1972 elections. But when the Electoral College subsequently convened, a Republican elector from Virginia, Roger MacBride, broke with custom and, instead of voting for his party's slate, cast his vote for Hospers and Nathan. (Four years later, MacBride was himself the Libertarian presidential candidate.)

Lately, she has been called by several reporters asking for her reaction to Geraldine Ferraro's nomination as Walter Mondale's running mate. "I was delighted by her selection," she says. "It was way past time." And she adds, "Of course, she'll be the *second* woman to be getting an electoral vote."

—P. G.

fundraiser, Dick Boddie, who is black. We all chuckled, the reporter somewhat sheepishly, and then she said, "Well, I want an answer to that question anyway."

Dick and I jointly elaborated on the idea that the party's appeal is generally to voters capable of exercising independent thought, regardless of group labels. In one sense, the party is elite—in that a little independent thinking is required to learn about it, its views, and its goals.

Most Libertarian activists in fact are young, starting careers and families, and have little money to contribute to political campaigns. If we really were a wealthy elite, there would be a lot more in our campaign coffers! And corporate PACs have contributed little or nothing to the campaign, for corporate managers seem interested only in the short run and therefore support only candidates who appear to have a good chance of being elected.

The extent to which the journalists focus on the contest aspects of the campaign varies with the media. TV news interviewers are the worst. Political sophistication is apparently not a job requirement. Most TV news spots are 30 to 60 seconds long, so one colorful quote from the candidate, regardless of how much tape is shot, is all that will appear on the broadcast. TV news people, I am convinced, perceive TV only as an entertainment medium.

Early in the campaign, I discovered that the first TV interview question would probably be, "You know you can't win, etc.," and that if I made a statement conceding the truth of that proposition, that was the statement that would be broadcast. So I stopped doing that and concentrated on making concise, provocative statements on substantive issues. This has improved the TV news spots, from my point of view—but not always from the reporters'. I have been amused several times when the interviewers have returned to the same question, trying without success to elicit the "I know I can't win" statement from me.

In fact, my view is that no one, including me, has a basis to predict the outcome of the 1984 presidential election. Clearly, if every voter dissatisfied with the choice of Mondale and Reagan were to vote for me, I would win in a landslide. Among liberals, the Hart and Jackson success was based on an appeal to those fed up with the old Democratic status quo. During the primaries, a number of Hart and Jackson supporters told me that if Mondale were the Democratic nominee, they would vote for me. Among conservatives, Reagan's 1980

success was based on his promise to reduce the size of government, cut taxes, and get government off the backs of the people. But his conduct in office has all too often been the opposite of his campaign rhetoric, and many of his 1980 supporters have told me they will not be fooled again and will vote Libertarian this time.



During the course of a full-time campaign that began more than a year ago, I have traveled to 40 states, giving talks to many nonlibertarian groups. I ask them questions, too. The responses indicate to me that most Americans are agreed that government is too big and must be reduced substantially, that taxes must be cut drastically, that government interference in our private affairs should be reduced, that government intervention in the economy is causing problems and should be cut back, that the US government should curtail its interventions abroad, and that the nuclear arms race is out of hand. In short, it seems to me that most Americans are libertarians—they just haven't discovered it yet.

I am reminded of another frequently asked question, "When did you become a libertarian?" My answer to that is: June 4, 1935. I was born on that day. I was born free. So were you. I was born with all the rights all humans have. I have the right to control my life, my body, and my property. You have the same rights. In order to live my life fully, to exercise

these rights fully, I must have a free society in which to live. A free society is my birthright, and I intend to claim it.

That's why I have to correct the good-hearted libertarians who approach me frequently in my travels to express appreciation for the effort I am making on behalf of freedom. Often they thank me for making such a "sacrifice," for "taking a year out of my life," or something similar. It is true that my law practice has been put aside for a year and that almost full-time travel is wearing. But I see this, not as a sacrifice, but as an investment in a future that I believe is attainable. I am not taking a year out of my life. I am spending a year working to bring that free society of the future closer and meeting hundreds of remarkable, wonderful people in the bargain. What a story to tell my grandchildren!

So many Americans feel, at this time, that they are powerless to change things, to recover control of their lives from government. They suspect that things will turn out the same regardless of whether we wind up with Reagan or Mondale in the White House. This sense of hopelessness is manifest often in the "wasted vote" question put to third-party candidates. Too many people think they must vote for the lesser of two evils because who is in office is all that counts, even if the difference is minimal.

What these people don't realize is that voting can serve another purpose than selecting the lesser of two evils—it can serve to influence the future policies of those in office. A vote for any Democrat or Republican tells all of them that you like what they have been doing and that you want more of the same. For anyone fed up with the status quo, *that* is the wasted vote. A responsible voter will determine what he or she thinks is right for the direction of American politics and then vote for the candidates that best represent that direction.

Most Americans do seem to want to reduce the size, cost, intrusiveness, and danger of government and its policies. Almost without exception, Americans agree on the fundamental value of freedom and the vision of the founders of America. Of course, liberty does have a price. That price is best stated in the words of William Allen White: "Liberty is the only thing you cannot have unless you are willing to give it to others." In no small way, the Libertarian Party is helping Americans understand that they can have freedom if they will pay the modest price of giving it to others. □

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Another Chance for

Ronald Reagan

came into office in 1980 with a set of economic ideas so seemingly foreign to the postwar consensus that his name was attached to it. "Reaganomics" promised to bring down inflation and unemployment and balance the government's books to boot. As a second Reagan ad-

on the quantity of money. They repeatedly goaded the Federal Reserve to ignore falling commodity prices, the soaring dollar, and interest rates and stomp out even brief bulges in the money supply. On the fiscal front, conservative Keynesians—like Alan Greenspan, Charls Walker, and Herb Stein—suc-

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Reaganomics!

A noted supply-sider diagnoses the problems with Reaganomics and writes a prescription for a second Reagan term.

By Alan Reynolds

ministration looms on the horizon, it is useful to review the flow of economic policies in the first four years to see what went wrong in 1981-82 and what went right in 1983-84. History does not have to repeat itself.

There were always two sides to Reaganomics—a supply side and a demand side. The demand-siders were assigned the task of gradually slowing the growth rate of spending, or nominal GNP (gross national product), by slowing the growth of the money supply. This was the monetary program of Reaganomics. The supply-siders had the job of increasing the growth of production, *real* GNP, by reducing marginal tax rates and regulations. This was the fiscal program. I was briefly involved in both sides, as a member of Reagan's Inflation Task Force in 1980 and with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) transition team in early 1981.

This division of fiscal and monetary responsibilities quickly began to strain an uneasy truce between supply-siders and what can be called "the austerity school of demand management." On the monetary front, the supply-side prescription was countered by Beryl Sprinkel and other "monetarists," with their emphasis

cessfully argued for diluting and postponing real reductions in personal tax rates.

But as supply-side economist Paul Craig Roberts had warned in a *Wall Street Journal* article in August 1980, "The promise of lower tax rates in the future would cause GNP and tax revenues to be lower in the present." In another *Journal* article on the eve of the recession, July 1981, I had added, "The dilution of [Reagan's] tax program jeopardized economic expansion."

Why was the

issue of tax cuts so vital? President Carter's inflation had increased federal taxes from 18.2 percent of GNP in 1976 to 20.6 percent in 1980. His 1981 budget proposed to hike taxes further, to 23.6 percent of GNP by 1985—yet nonetheless expected real GNP to rise by 5 percent a year from 1982 to 1985.

It seems almost entirely forgotten by now, but when the Reagan team surveyed the economic problems they had been handed by the Carter administration, they were not optimistic about