



New Jersey Libertarian

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Chair's Message - Moving the Torch; Building the party and Creating a Free New Jersey

By Dan Krause

We Libertarians are no strangers to hard work. Since our party's founding in the 70s, we have stood our ground and advocated for the rights and dignity of all persons everywhere. We have a history of taking the moral and just position, no matter the consequences, and doing what we can to bring justice into the world.

I am proud to have stood my ground for freedom along with you.

We, as a Party, stand on the edge of greatness. This past year has seen an explosive growth of our membership and our registered voters. We have seen a flowering of our local organizations and an upwelling of support for our ideas and policies from the voters. We saw the first election of a libertarian of a state legislature, and the continued reelection of hundreds of libertarians across the country to local office.

The world is ready for our message, the world is ready for our ideas, the world is ready for US.

We have an opportunity this year to support our candidates: get them on the ballot, help them to raise money, staff their campaigns, knock on the doors of their districts, make phone calls on their behalf, and GET THEM ELECTED.

This is no longer a pipedream in NJ. The world has opened itself to us and we can make it tremble to its core.

This is on US, each of us, to build our party and send our members to serve in office.

Remember this: If we can prove success in New Jersey, then the rest of the State affiliates have no excuse. Let's light their way. ♦

2021 Annual NJLP Convention Details

By Convention Staff

The 2021 NJLP annual Convention will be held the weekend of March 19th and 20th. Remote participation is recommended, however in person participation will also be available.

On the evening of March 19th, we will be holding an on-line social at njlp.org/conventionsocial starting around 7:00 PM. During this social we will be opening a Zoom discussion and get together. Come meet us and let us meet you. We will be fielding questions and explaining how the Saturday's business meeting will be held. This is a chance for you to test out your zoom connection and the voting process.

We will be gathering around 9 AM on March 20th to start our business meeting. The Zoom link will be shared with dues paid NJLP members prior to the meeting. Items on the agenda include: nomination of 2021 candidates for public office, nomination and election of 2021 Board Members, Regional Caucuses and elections, [Bylaws Committee recommendation](#) review and adoptions, and general planning for the coming year. Voting will be done via a [convention website](#).

Following a break for lunch we will be reconvening

In This Issue

.....	
Convention Info.....	1
ByLaws Report.....	2
Another Herbert Hoover?.....	4
Extortion, Division, and Snow?.....	5
Dick Roth Passes.....	7
Getting Involved.....	7
Letter to Editor.....	8
Women in Liberty.....	8

at around 2:00 PM for a few guest speakers. So far, we have:

- Scott Horton, author of [Enough Already: Time to End the War on Terrorism](#) and [Fool's Errand: Time to End the War in Afghanistan](#), managing director of the Libertarian Institute at [LibertarianInstitute.org](#), host of Antiwar Radio on Pacifica, 90.7 FM KPFK in Los Angeles and KUCR 88.3 in Riverside.
- Alex Nowrasteh, the director of immigration studies at the Cato Institute's [Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity](#).

In a break from tradition, this year's Convention is completely free to attend. We do encourage a donation into [our State Fund](#) to get our candidates a head start with their campaigns.

We ask that you pre-register for the Convention at <https://njlp.org/convention>. More info is available there as well, including the address of the physical convention for those who choose to attend in person and more information on our speakers. ♦

Bylaws Committee Report and Recommendations

by Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws committee of 2021 consisted of Bill Sihr (Committee Chair), James Tosone, Dan Krause, Jay Edgar, Eveline Brownstein, Mike Guadagnino, Gregg Mele, Ken Kaplan, and Chris Feeney. Dan Karlan is an advisor to the committee.

In accordance with our Bylaws we recommend that the following proposals be considered during our Convention business meeting. Underlined material indicates added verbiage, stricken text indicates deleted verbiage.

Proposal Number 1. Proposed by Bill Sihr

Change summary and rationale:

Existing bylaws does not specify exact language for the Non Aggression Principle (NAP). Because the NAP is a critical component of libertarian beliefs the actual statement should be fully spelled out.

Proposed Change

Change Page 5, Paragraph 3 Membership first sentence second clause:

who certifies in writing that ~~he or she opposes the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals~~ they agree with, shall adhere to, and

New Jersey Libertarian

promote the Non-Aggression Principle (NAP), which states:

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

Committee Recommendation

The Bylaws Committee voted 6 to 0 in support of this change.

Proposal Number 2. Proposed by Bill Sihr

Change summary and rationale:

Specify that dues must be renewed in membership definition. Current language seems to indicate a one-time requirement.

Proposed Change

Change Page 5, Paragraph 3 Membership second sentence:

Thereafter, such a person shall ~~become~~ be a member upon payment of annual or lifetime dues to the NJLP.

Committee Recommendation

The Bylaws Committee voted 6 to 0 in support of this change.

Proposal Number 3. Proposed by Jay Edgar

Change summary and rationale:

Add a new VP of Political Affairs, rename the existing VP's of Marketing to VP of Public Relations. Also include the word "of" in titles. Rationale is the we do not have a Board Member specifically in charge of elections and politics. Public Relations is a better title that more accurately describes our VP of Marketing duties.

Proposed Change

Page 5, Paragraph 6.c.1 (defines the State Board):

The State Board shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, VP of Political Affairs, VP of Membership, VP of Programs, ~~VP Marketing~~ of Public Relations, and three (3) Regional Representatives ...

Page 6, Para 6.c.6:

The VP's of Political Affairs, Membership, Programs, and ~~Marketing~~ Public Relations may engage other NJLP members ...

Paragraph 9 add paragraph e. (renumber existing e as appropriate):

e. VP of Political Affairs: whose responsibilities shall include candidate recruitment and training, legislative outreach, and political policy development.

Paragraph 9.c. (VP Programs): Delete the text "candidate development" from this paragraph.

Committee Recommendation

The Bylaws Committee voted 4 to 0 with 2 abstaining in support of this change.

Proposal Number 4. Proposed by Dan Krause

Change summary and rationale:

Currently, we only have affiliation defined for regional organizations, which can lead to organizational issues as our party grows to be the Majority party in NJ. If we make clear that members have a right to organize local organizations and when they are organized how they fit into the line of affiliation, then we put ourselves into a position which is robust and able to handle almost any form of governance our state requires.

Proposed Change

Add the below paragraph e. to existing Paragraph 10:

e. Local Organizations

1. NJLP members may create organizations which represent Counties, Boroughs, Townships, Cities, Towns, Villages, and any other appropriate discrete local political unit as adjudicated by the most local affiliated organization entirely responsible for the geographic area in question.

2. A chain of affiliation will define the relationships between organizations affiliated with the NJLP. More geographically local organizations shall be affiliated with a more geographically general organizations responsible for the geographic area of the more local organization.

3. Local organizations may request affiliation by delivering a petition signed by the greater of either three [3] members or ten percent of the members of the NJLP who reside inside the borders of the petitioning organization to the most local affiliated organization entirely responsible for the area in question. The membership of the petitioned

organization will decide on the petition, in keeping with all rules and laws which apply.

4. In the case of gross misconduct or systematic damage to the NJLP or its affiliates, a local organization may have its affiliation removed and declared void by the governing region. Removal and voiding of affiliation will only be done after appropriate measures are taken to rectify and resolve the wrongs committed, and after a 2/3 vote of the membership of the organization seeking to remove and void the affiliation. In all such cases, appropriate notice must be made of all actions which may be taken to all persons and parties concerned, and appropriate reports of actions taken must be distributed to the membership of the NJLP in good order.

5. In the case of dispute over territory or affiliation, the NJLP State Board may rule as appropriate after due consideration and attempts to resolve the issue have been taken, if the Regional Organization responsible has not been able to resolve or is incapable of resolving the issue.

6. In the case of the affiliation of an organization which interposes the chain of affiliation between two previously affiliated organizations, the previous affiliations will maintain validity, but the more geographically local organization will be affiliated with the more geographically general organization.

7. Affiliated organizations shall have the right to use the name and resources of the NJLP and its affiliated parties as appropriate to the rules and laws which apply.

Committee Recommendation

The Bylaws Committee voted 5 to 0 with one abstention in support of this change.

Proposal Number 5. Proposed by Bill Sihr

Change summary and rationale:

Either general membership or the Board needs to have the authority to remove members for reprehensible behavior, however, it needs to be for the right reasons and there needs to be a hurdle involved.

Proposed Change

Modify 6.a.4 to read:

A 2/3 vote at any General Meeting may remove any person from office or membership in the NJLP, provided that notice of consideration of the removal of that person from office or membership was included in the written notice of the General Meeting.

Committee Recommendation

The Bylaws Committee voted 5 to 0 with one abstention in support of this change. ♦

The Democrats Finally Got Another Herbert Hoover: Donald Trump

By Murray Sabrin

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Poor Herbert Hoover. Despite being a wealthy engineer and a philanthropist who led a food relief effort in Europe after World War I saving tens of thousands of lives, he became the Democrats' whipping boy for several decades, because for decades historians asserted Hoover's laissez-faire policies were responsible for the greatest economic calamity in American history, the Great Depression.

But as Murray Rothbard reminds us in his insightful essay, [Herbert Hoover and the Myth of Laissez-Faire](#), "It is one of the great ironies of historiography that the founder of every single one of the features of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal was to become enshrined among historians and the general public as the last stalwart defender of laissez-faire." Rothbard also points out that Hoover as Secretary of Commerce for eight years during the 1920s continually advocated for "enlightened" government intervention. So when Hoover, who never held elective office before he won the presidency in a landslide (1928), confronted the inevitable stock market crash that began in October 1929 and economic downturn to correct the "excesses" of the 1920s easy money policies, his interventionist mindset kicked into high gear.

Even one of the architects ([Rexford Guy Tugwell](#)) of FDR's policies acknowledged, "We didn't admit it at the time, but practically the whole New Deal was extrapolated from programs that Hoover started."

Could there be anything more dishonest in academia and politics than asserting that Herbert Hoover was a "hands off" president, especially in

light of his acceptance speech for renomination in 1932 when he stated: "... we might have done nothing. That would have been under ruin. Instead, we met the situation with proposals to private business and to the Congress of the most gigantic program of economic defense and counterattack ever evolved in the history of the Republic. We put it into action." In short, Hoover proudly proclaimed his statist policies when he ran for reelection.

Although the historical record is clear, namely, that Herbert Hoover was an interventionist who believed in Government planning and oversight of the economy, Democrats (as well as economists and historians) have successfully portrayed him as a "reactionary" defender of laissez faire for the past nine decades.

The Democrats thus set up a straw man—free markets cause and exacerbate depressions—and the only way to combat an economic decline is to run budget deficits, spend on public works, increase unemployment benefits, provide subsidies and grants to businesses, and flood the economy with new money courtesy of the Federal Reserve. In other words, Democratic as well Republican administrations have been "fighting" recessions since the Great Depression with the same policies Hoover implemented and Roosevelt embraced throughout the 1930s.

Donald Trump, wealthy real estate developer, successful TV reality show host and like Herbert Hoover never had held elective office before surprising virtually all the pundits and political establishment first by winning the Republican nomination and then by defeating the heavily favored Hillary Clinton for the presidency in 2016. Even Trump was surprised by his win, because there were virtually no transition plans in place before the November election, while Hillary Clinton was in effect picking out curtains for the Oval Office believing her presidency was inevitable.

Right from the start of his administration Democrats asserted Trump was an "illegitimate" president who was assisted by the Russians during the campaign, even going so far as to claim that the Donald was a secret Russian agent doing Putin's bidding. The Democrats game plan was simple: Trump must be "punished" for his narcissism, ill-tempered remarks, boorish behavior, "fascist" tendencies and his notorious phone call with the

Ukrainian president asking him to investigate former vice president Biden and his son, Hunter, for their activities in his country. This was the last straw for the Democrats who controlled House of Representatives and voted for several articles of impeachment, but the Republican controlled Senate acquitted Trump.

The last thing Democrats wanted was a second Trump administration and given the weak Democratic presidential field the insiders decided the consummate insider, former vice president and longtime senator Joe Biden, would be their man to ride to victory last November. (Whether the presidential election was in fact stolen from Trump is beyond the scope of this essay but given the irregularities that were observed in the key swing states, a thorough investigation should be undertaken.)

Trump was understandably upset about the presidential election outcome. Thinking that the Senate presided over by Vice President Pence would decertify the electoral results and have the states that Trump felt was stolen from him reconsider their decision, he spoke at a rally in DC on January 6th where tens of thousands of his supporters gathered.

After several hundred individuals who apparently had gathered at the Capitol before Trump told his supporters to march “peacefully and patriotically” to have their voices heard, they stormed the building and caused one of the most chaotic incidents in the history of the Republic leading to one officer’s death and the shooting death of one of the protestors by a Capital officer.

The Democrats were beside themselves and rushed through one article of impeachment and sent it to Senate. Senator Rand Paul stated on the floor of the Senate that a trial would be unconstitutional, because Trump is no longer president and thus cannot be removed for office. In a vote 44 GOP senators agreed with the Kentucky senator setting up a trial for the second week in February where the outcome is not in doubt. There will not be a guilty verdict.

So, what is the point of the second impeachment and trial of former President Trump? The Democrats need another Herbert Hoover to run against for the next several decades just as they did in the 1930s and beyond. For the Democrats Trump epitomizes the “anti-democratic, insurrectionist,

pro-fascist wing” of the Republican Party and therefore only Democrats can preserve our “democracy.” What an irony!

Make no mistake about it Trump was no limited government, free market president. Neither was he going to gut the Bill of Rights. The tragic irony is that Democrats are the real “insurrectionists” who are in the process of eviscerating the Bill of Rights, the foundation of the American Republic, and they will spend trillions of dollars to “stimulate” the economy similar to the failed Hoover/FDR policies that began in 1929 and lasted for more than a decade. History certainly repeats itself. The “players” have changed but statism lives on. ♦

Extortion, Division and ... Snow?

by Mike Rufo

This past week in New Jersey we've dealt with three minor snowstorms. Each one of them dropped between 3"-6" near me and were relatively uneventful. Sunday night, Super Bowl Sunday, was the 2nd storm and it was a wet, and heavy, snow. The following morning, I performed my usual clean up routine. My neighbor, with his snow blower, began with the sidewalk on the side of my house which gets good foot traffic, we always want it to be safe (We often help each other out). With that I began by clearing my driveway. At the end of my driveway was the typical mounds of plowed snow, except this time it was heavier, icier and further into the street than usual. After cracking my plastic snow shovel, to make things easier, I grabbed a metal shovel, cleared my way to the street and made a nice space for the mail truck.

At this point you're probably thinking, "Dude! Get a snow blower!" Yes, this would help, but this might have been the 3rd time in 8 years I've had to shovel this way, so for what it's worth, at my age, its ok for now. *At least, that's what I thought.*

I finished clearing my mailbox, went to start the rest of my sidewalk, and that's when it happened, I felt a twist in my back from the right shoulder blade down to my hips. It wasn't crippling but it was enough that I called it a day. All-in-all about 1/2 - 2/3 of my sidewalk was clean (especially the only part anybody really uses), my driveway was clean, and my mailbox cleared out. Now, you may be asking why this is important and what it has to do with liberty? I promise if you stay with me it will all make sense.

As you may well be aware, most townships, if not all, have ordinances that require the cleanup of snow in a timely manner. The penalty for failure to comply (extortion) varies greatly, and this is where we start to connect the dots.

Flash to Tuesday afternoon and my back is feeling much better. My wife mentions that she is going to *Michael's* to buy paints and asks if I need anything while she's out. I ask her to get a snow shovel because I ruined the other and wanted to finish the sidewalk. On her way to the car she grabs the mail and brings it back to the house. With the mail was a yellow door hanger from the township, usually used for coordinating inspections for various reason, except this was not dated, signed, nor marked with a time. This notice contained nothing but a white envelope sticker that said, "YOU HAVE 24 HOURS TO REMOVE THE SNOW FROM YOUR SIDEWALK OR A SUMMONS AND \$2000 FINE WILL BE ISSUED." That's right a TWO THOUSAND DOLLAR fine. Talk about EXTORTION. Safe to say, I was LIVID!

Now, I planned on finishing the sidewalk regardless, but, as I said, I was a bit taken back. First of all, it's not the first time I've taken a few days to clear the walk and I've NEVER received so much as a dirty look from neighbors. As a matter of fact, I usually clean the sidewalk of my one elderly neighbor and the driveway of my mother's friend across the street. Who could have possibly complained? Well as it turns out, the neighborhood extortionist (code enforcer) slipped the notice into the mailbox of every house that had snow on the sidewalk. Did I mention we had 3" of snow in the forecast for that night?

I know there are plenty that say, "But Mike it's just a warning, they didn't have to do that." Where this is true and understandable, I would now like to explain the flaws in the actions that took place.

The method of delivery is lazy, impersonal and devoid of any sense of community.

Perhaps the homes with cleared driveways, and more, could have received a knock at the door and a friendly reminder. Since these homes would be a safe walk to the door, would this not be the community feel so many complain is missing in our society? Should the public servant not serve and determine the following: Was everybody ok? Will they be able to complete the work? Are they disabled, elderly, terminally or chronically ill?

Imagine a person in one of those positions getting a friendly check in vs a threatening, lazy sticker on a door hanger.

The wording of the notice is aggressive and threatening, thus unnecessary.

There's really no need to yell. ALL CAPS IN THE COMPUTER AGE IS YELLING. Would it have been so hard to say: "Dear Resident, we are kindly reminding you that according to town code XYZ... Thank you and Stay Safe." The response would have been more "Ah damn, let me go finish that" vs "Oh slow the hell down man I'm working on it." One is aggressive and threatening the other is neighborly and professional.

The threat of the "\$2,000 fine" is intentionally misrepresenting the actual code in an effort to manipulate the emotions of our neighbors with a worst possible case scenario. It leverages fear of an astounding fine during a draconian lockdown and an economic/unemployment crisis, a fine that for some would mean financial ruin.

According to the actual code in town the fine assessed shall be, "...a penalty of not less than \$100 and not to exceed \$2,000 or imprisonment for a term not to exceed 90 days, or both, in the discretion of the Judge before whom such conviction may be had." So, not only is it not guaranteed to be a \$2,000 fine, you have a chance to speak to a judge who has the ultimate say in the what the penalty *may* be, meaning there *may* be none at all, since they *may* choose to *not* convict.

This last point is less of an issue but should still matter. If they had the time to print the sticker and place them on door hangers, could they not have printed up a kindly and professionally worded letter? Would it not have been less expensive, more efficient, and more respectful?

The actions of the township officials involved are a gross weaponization of the town's code book. They unnecessarily struck fear and anxiety into the hearts of plenty, and through chosen actions created a sense of hostility and division rather than one of community and pride. Yes, be a good neighbor and clear your sidewalk, the overwhelming majority act accordingly. No, you don't have a right to threaten extortion, never mind intentionally deceive your neighbor by making it sound worse than it may be already. ♦

NJLP Member Dick Roth Passes

by Ken Kaplan



NJLP stalwart, Richard S. "Dick" Roth, 89, of West Caldwell, N.J., passed away Dec. 2, 2020.

Born in Irvington, Dick grew up in East Orange and lived in Bloomfield before moving to West Caldwell.

A retired investment consultant, Mr. Roth had worked for IDS American Express, which became Ameriprise Financial Services.

Mr. Roth proudly served in the Navy with the rank of Lieutenant JG from 1953 to 1956. He first ran for NJ State Assembly as a Libertarian in 1975. During the 1980's, he was an LP candidate for Congress. He could always be counted on to gather signatures for our presidential and gubernatorial candidates during many election cycles.

Mr. Roth was a member of A.A. for 48 years and was proud to make this his second family. He became a mentor and good friend to many.

He was predeceased by his sister, Katherine "Betty" Florentine, who was also very active in the NJLP. ♦

How in the heck do I get involved?!?

by Dan Krause

The first thing to know about the NJLP is that we are a Member Driven organization. Everything the party does is at the direction and for the benefit of the members of our party. The Membership is the final authority on all things and can override ANYTHING the State board does if it wishes to. Section 6 of the bylaws has some more details on this.

The future of our Party in NJ is very much in YOUR hands.

At the core, this means if there is a project, or a problem that you feel we should accomplish or fix, the best person for the job is YOU. Contact us and we'll do our best to guide and support you to be as powerful as you possibly can be. You can always reach us at chair@njlp.org or info@njlp.org

Our party is structured with a State Board, Regional Organizations, and more and more frequently local and county Organizations.

Additionally, committees are formed and operated by the Members to achieve specific goals which the party has set. Committees are as independent as possible and a great way to do good work for NJ with the backing of the party. If you want to join any of the State Committees, OR CREATE YOUR OWN, send an email to chair@njlp.org.

- Bylaws Committee - Refines and proposes changes to our bylaws for approval.
- Platform Committee - Refines and proposes changes to our state platform for approval.
- Political Affairs Committee - Defines policies we want to pursue and lobbies Trenton and Local governments on our behalf.
- Open Government Advocacy Project - Works to create a more open and transparent government.
- Preempted Ordinance Repeal Project - Seeks to repeal local ordinances which by law should be removed but have not been.
- Police Accountability Project - Seeks to expose misconduct by law enforcement and support justice for the victims and reforms to prevent the abuse.
- Convention Committee - Organizes the State Convention

Also, each Regional and Local Organization uses its own committees as it needs to get the job done.

That all was a bunch of info, and I'm sure you have a few questions. I'll try to address a few right here:

- **How do I run for State Board? I want to help guide the party at the state level!** → Show up at the convention and ask to be nominated.
- **How do I get involved with my Regional Organization? Doing activist work in my area is where my heart is!** → Look them up on our Webpage or on Facebook and contact the leadership
- **How do I get involved with my local party? How do I start one in my area? I think my town is ready for a Gold Rush!** → Contact your local or Regional organization and go from there.
- **What if I can't reach anyone? What if I want to do something else?** → Send an email to

chair@njlp.org or info@njlp.org. I'll do my best to help you.

I want to thank you for being a member and for helping us to make our state better for all New Jerseyans. With all of us doing what we can, when we can, with what we can, I'm sure our State has a brighter tomorrow. ♦

Letter to the Editor: Stop the Revolving Door

by Emerson Ellett

Published in the Coaster, November 2020

It seems that at least Asbury Park, Deal and Ocean Township are ridding their police departments of officers guilty of misconduct.

At the state level the police union unsuccessfully sued the Attorney General in an attempt to prevent his office from naming State Police officers who have been disciplined for misconduct. (Question: why haven't they been let go?)

Federally, it wouldn't hurt if a law were passed barring other police departments from hiring officers let go for misconduct. ♦

Women in Liberty

By Eve Brownstein

I had lots of helpful ideas for writing this, my first contribution to this Women-in-Liberty Corner. In the end, I thought the best starting point would be to share about the women who have inspired (and still inspire) my journey toward Liberty.

I was born in former Rhodesia, now named Zimbabwe. At the tender age of four years old, I immigrated with my parents to South Africa. I remember a few things about the move – our first apartment in the city before we moved to the suburbs, my nursery school, visiting my grandfather after school as he lived walking distance from there... what kids tend to recall. Mostly, I remember that my father always said he left Rhodesia after the Rhodesian Front political party won election in 1962 and then declared unilateral independence from Britain in 1965. He believed this move would lead to an uncertain future for the country of my birth. The Rhodesian Front won election by running on a campaign of maintaining a government run by the white minority, and on gaining independence from British rule. My mother, in contrast, always said we left because my father couldn't find work in

Rhodesia. Regardless, I grew up knowing that my parents had been quite involved in Rhodesian politics. I have pictures of toddler me wearing a white dress with a large, purple RF political button and ribbon. The Prime Minister, Ian Smith, was personally acquainted with my parents. My brother was named Ian after him and he was also my brother's Godfather. I was wowed by this.

My childhood was anything but uneventful, but since it's novel-worthy and space doesn't permit, I'll focus on how I started to become more activist during my teen years in South Africa. My parents were by then divorced and couldn't be more polarized in their political leanings. My mother was extremely conservative and active in a couple of political parties that aggressive teen me would refer to as "Nazi." My father was politically very pragmatic, looking for ways to encourage dialogue and foster kindness in a climate of much racial tension and unrest. Under the South African apartheid government people of color born and living there had no right to vote. Only whites held government positions. This unjust system was maintained by a strict set of censorship rules and regulations which controlled what anyone, regardless of skin color, could read, watch, or learn about and where they could live, work and be. The censorship committee – composed only of men sitting and reading all written materials and watching all movies and documentaries – had final say on what the public could access.

Of course, generations of radical teens were always finding ways around these restrictions. My father tells of a scary time as a teen when he borrowed his cousin's car. He was stopped by the police for a traffic violation which seemed routine until he got home. When he opened the trunk of his cousin's vehicle, he discovered it was filled with communist literature; this was an offense punishable by jail time. We grew up being told that the communists were going to take over the world – not the Russian ones, but the Chinese ones (we can chat about that another time). South Africa had no free speech. In fact, most anti-government speech or the reading or possession of materials not approved by the government would carry a jail sentence. The police were militarized to carry out the suppression of any anti-government acts...and they did.

There were some notable exceptions to the censorship rules. If you were in academia you could access banned materials for the purpose of educational pursuits. Enter Ms. Schulman, my high school history teacher. She still had privileges at the University of the Witwatersrand where she earned

her teaching degree. To add context to our government-approved, censored and edited history texts, she would copy materials at the University and share them with us. I like to think there are hundreds of students she influenced to be less compliant with a propagandist and racist government. She certainly influenced me to question whatever government officials and politicians tell you, to view everything through a propaganda lens, and to not be afraid to speak out when you see injustice, no matter who's perpetrating it - but definitely when government is. Access to alternative points of view was especially meaningful to me as a young and curious student growing up in a sanitized, environment insulated from knowing the plight of others my age. Children purposely separated from me on the basis of race and color were attending crowded schools - sometimes with two grades in a single classroom and permitted only to learn heavily censored material from teachers often with no more than a 10th grade education. Learning about these educational disparities shaped my stubborn support of school choice which persists today.

Around this time, I would hear my father frequently refer to Helen Suzman. She was becoming a bit of a celebrity in our house because she was Jewish; we were Jewish. To my father, she had community credentials and some automatic respect, but he also admired her politically, so when Helen was on the radio, we dare not talk. Only listening was allowed, followed by robust discussions afterward. My father strongly encouraged hearty debates, especially around political themes.

Helen Suzman's story as an anti-apartheid activist and politician is quite remarkable. She was voted to represent a very influential and affluent, white suburb in South Africa. Some of the wealthiest South Africans lived in her constituency, but for decades, undeterred, they consistently voted for her to represent them. Between 1961 and 1974 she was the only anti-apartheid parliamentary representative. Alone as she was, she was constantly maligned by the rest of the House of Parliament and frequently targeted with misogynistic and anti-Semitic disparagement by her fellow parliamentarians. Nevertheless, she stood steadfast in her convictions, fighting daily for racial and gender equality, access to equal education, and humane treatment in prisons. She frequently visited Robben Island, where Nelson

Mandela was being imprisoned and fought for better prison conditions for the prisoners there. She also fought for the release of Mandela and other political prisoners. She was not afraid to use her public position "to challenge forcefully the government and bear personal witness to the suffering inflicted on millions of South Africans," as she put it herself. In 1971, she was the sole vote against the passing of a law that mandated a two-year sentence for marijuana possession.

Helen's steadfast commitment to be the voice for those without one earned her great respect among much of the Jewish community, but especially from me - a young and impressionable woman who wanted so much to be like her. So, in 1980 when I could register to vote I did not hesitate to align myself with the Progressive Federal Party - the party that Helen Suzman led. Their main platform mantra was "one man, one vote." I used to say, if they ever got what they were working toward, they would no longer be needed! But the work of Liberty is never done.

No matter where in the world we are, there are laws being passed that have unjust consequences. There are governments that need to be challenged forcefully for inflicting suffering. There are inequalities that need righting and there are people in prisons who shouldn't be there. This is why I am a Libertarian - to continue the work that the women who inspire me started and to inspire others to do the same. This is why I have run for office and will continue to do so. I want to make a difference like Helen Suzman and Ms. Schulman did. The calendar says March is Women's History Month. I say, every month, every week, every day is another opportunity to elevate the voices of women who were instrumental in forging a liberty path for the voiceless and powerless, and to honor them by continuing their work. Won't you join me? ♦

Is there a woman in the liberty movement who has inspired you and whose story you think will inspire others? Do you have a Libertarian journey story you'd like to share? Do you have a topic that you'd like to get a Libertarian woman's perspective on? Send your articles and suggestions to editor@njlp.org



New Jersey Libertarian Party - - - - -

Are you a current member? **Please consider joining.**

I'd like to join the NJ Libertarian Party! I have checked the level at which I want to join and have enclosed the corresponding dues. I certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force to achieve social or political goals.

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