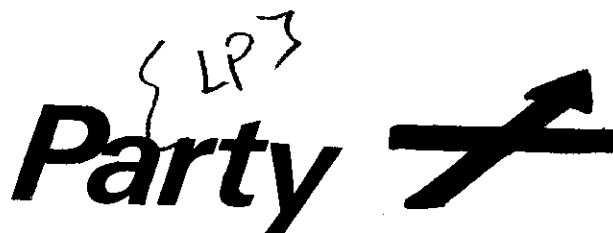


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LIBERTARIAN PARTY CHALLENGES "PUBLIC FINANCING" OF CAMPAIGNS

The Libertarian Party, which gained nationwide attention last year when a Republican elector from Virginia voted for its presidential ticket, today attacked proposals for so-called "public financing" of federal campaigns. The LP praised the Senate filibuster which defeated one such scheme last week and pledged all-out opposition to new efforts to pass such legislation, including a constitutional challenge in the courts if it is approved.

"We are absolutely opposed to this legislation on principle," explained LP National Chairman Sue Nolan. "This is basically just another attempt by the established politicians to pad their pockets at taxpayer expense and to shut out competition."

LP Washington representative Eric Scott Royce praised the efforts of Sen. James Allen of Alabama and others which led to the elimination of the Kennedy "public financing" amendment to the debt ceiling bill last week. After two attempts to invoke cloture against their filibuster failed, the section was removed from the bill.

The party announced that it will join with other groups to fight attempts to pass such legislation next spring. Should such a law be enacted, the party plans to file suit in the federal courts to challenge its constitutionality. "We have confidence that the Supreme Court would rule such an inequitable law unconstitutional," Ms. Nolan commented.

"Public financing," the LP explained, amounts simply to taking tax money,

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involuntarily extracted from the long suffering public, and turning it over to the politicians as a subsidy to their campaigns.

Under the Kennedy plan, the present tax check-off system--which allows taxpayers to allocate \$1 to a party or to a general campaign fund--would be continued. Taxpayers would no longer have the option, however, of declining to contribute, since any deficit between voluntarily checked-off funds and candidate allocations would be made up by direct appropriations from the Treasury. This, the LP pointed out, is a violation of the right of Americans to refrain from political participation.

Many Americans obviously do not wish to be associated with any party or with politics at all. Only a few percent of last year's tax returns authorized the dollar political check-off. Some forty percent of the Americans who could vote for president last year declined to do so. And the percentage of Americans who identify themselves to pollsters as "independent" rather than "Republican" or "Democrat" is at an all-time high--33% according to a mid-September Gallup poll.

Worried about loss of individual support, and under attack for selling out to the "special interests," the politicians apparently decided to cut off one link to the interests and to make up for the loss of campaign revenue by picking the taxpayers' pockets to subsidize their political extravaganzas.

"Public financing" proposals offer a built-in advantage to established politicians and parties over new ones. The LP was particularly critical of the idea that major parties should automatically be handed large sums of tax money. "Fund raising is a major part of the work in any campaign," noted Mr. Royce. "Why should the GOP and Democrats receive the special advantage of having most of their money just handed to them, while new parties, minor parties, and independents would still have to raise most of their money the hard way? The whole thing is a denial of equal protection of the law."

The LP denied interest in receiving such funds as might be available to them under "public financing."