

NEW RAMPART

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Rampart Institute is a tax-deductible 501(c)(3), educational organization.

Rampart Institute Receives Tax-Deductible Status

Rampart Institute has just achieved tax-exempt status.

After almost two years, Rampart Institute is tax-deductible. "Based on information supplied," a letter [Nov. 17, 1981] from the Department of Treasury states, "...we have determined you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code." Furthermore, Rampart Institute has a "retroactive" classification which means that donations in the past to the institute are now tax-deductible.

Congratulations must be given to Rampart Institute's two hard-working attorneys, Richard Deyo and Morton Rosenthal.

Rampart Institute Acquires Building for Office/Seminars

It finally happened. Rampart Institute recently acquired space for a small office and seminar room through the generosity of a businesswoman. We immediately took up the offer and have moved into a relatively new building located near the corner of Harbor Blvd. and Segerstrom. Located at 2727 Croddy Way, Suite J, Santa Ana, CA 92704 (714) 979-5737, Athena Graphics, a new company formed in early November of 1981, has allotted over 500 sq. ft. of space to Rampart Institute.

Now the impossible task. Rampart Institute desperately needs bookshelves, chairs, partitions, paint, desks, file cabinets, etc. to furnish the building. Other materials that we will eventually require include a 16mm projector to show films at seminars and a podium. The most important furnishings needed are folding or stackable chairs, around 25 to 30 chairs, for the seminar room.

Despite these problems, we are moving ahead to line-up seminars by Robert LeFevre, George Smith, Wendy McElroy and Kenneth Gregg, Jr. at our new facility starting in 1982.

Although room is limited, a small library is planned, along with small section of books to be sold. As this project is begun, we will need a library or staff assistant to operate the library/book store. However, until we acquire more space, we can only accept selected books and magazines for our library. So it would be wise to check with us first before donating books and magazines to our library.

Since we now have additional expense for office upkeep, we hope more donations will be forthcoming. Remember, Rampart Institute is now tax-deductible.

For further information, leave a message with Sandy at (714) 979-5737.

LeFevre Retires from Board

In an unpublicized move near the beginning of October, Robert LeFevre, President Emeritus of the Board of Directors of Rampart Institute, stepped down, resigning both his title and his position with the Board. Although his letter of resignation gave no clue as to his reasons for resigning, it is known by other Board members that Rampart's efforts to obtain tax exemption were hampered by the mere fact of having LeFevre in a position of legal authority with the

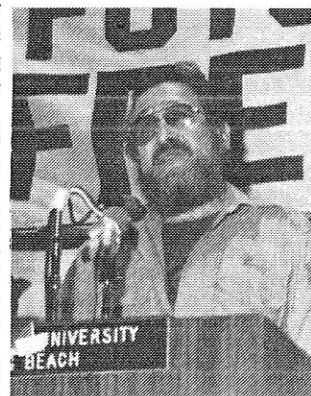
board. The IRS was apparently reluctant to approve a tax exempt status for the Institute so long as LeFevre was in a legal position to profit by being a director of an Institute which might also make use of his books and other writings.

When asked what his feelings about Rampart Institute are at the present time LeFevre said, "I'm behind Rampart Institute all the way. My resignation from the Board should not be interpreted as an indication of a lack of interest or support. As a matter of fact, now that I have no legal connection with the organization, I like it even better. I think you know how I feel about legalities."

During 1981, LeFevre conducted a few mini-seminars on various libertarian topics and plans are being made to arrange additional brief sessions again during 1982.

Academy Award Winning Film (1980) To Be Shown

In cooperation with Society for Libertarian Life, Rampart Institute will have a dinner/film showing event on Dec. 13 (Sunday) at Sir George's Smorgasbord (400 S. Euclid, Anaheim) starting at 6:30 pm. for all-you-can-eat dinner; 7:45 pm for the *Karl Hess: Toward Liberty* film and panel discussion afterwards. Since it is Sunday evening, the program will end before 10:00 pm. The price for the dinner/film is \$7.75 each which includes beverage and tax. Call Howard for Res. (714) 535-5798 or Rampart at (714) 979-5737.



KARL HESS

Karl Hess: Toward Liberty won the documentary short subjects category at the 1980 Academy Awards show in Hollywood.

Also a winner of a Blue Ribbon at the 1980 American Film Festival, the film shows Hess's lifestyle and philosophy that has made him famous. Well-known as a former Republican ghostwriter and speechwriter for Barry Goldwater and Presidents Nixon and Ford, Hess first turned libertarian, then semi-New Left decentralist in the late 1960's. His most recent book is *Dear America*.

Wendy McElroy Elected To Rampart Institute's Board

In Oct., Wendy McElroy joined the Board of Directors of Rampart Institute in the position of Secretary. McElroy recently competed the "Liberty Index" for Dandelion Press (index of Tucker's publication *Liberty* from 1881 to 1908); edited a book for Cato Institute on Individualist Feminism; and was a research fellow for one year for the Center for Libertarian Studies. McElroy has written for *Literature of Liberty*, *Libertarian Forum*, Contributing Editor of *Caliber*, Associate Editor of *New Libertarian*, and a former editor of *Reason*.

Can An Unprinted Story Libel?

PART I

By Robert LeFevre

A court decision affecting the Alton, Illinois, *Telegraph*, may have an impact on freedom of the press in this country. The tiny paper (38,000 circulation) was the loser in a legal action concerning a story the paper never published. So the Alton *Telegraph* has a judgment standing over it of \$9.2 million, one of the largest ever handed down.

Attorneys for the paper are filing an appeal. However, if they lose the appeal or find it impossible to reduce the amount of the judgment the paper will be bankrupt and forced to close.

Most libel actions center on a story that some particular news medium printed, broadcast, circulated or otherwise released to the public. What makes the Alton, Ill., case so special is that the entire affair centers on a confidential memo, written by a pair of reporters who were investigating a tip on the possibility of a gangland connection between a building contractor, a local bank and "The Mob."

This memo wasn't published, circulated, aired or otherwise released to the public. It was sent sub rosa to the U.S. Justice Department in an effort by the reporters to check the accuracy of the tip they had received before publishing the story. This is the kind of action that is usually praised. When a reporter refuses to hand in a story until it is checked and cross-checked, we commend him for responsible reporting.

In recent months we have had a few instances of irresponsible journalism wherein a reporter has not checked on the facts, or worse, has fabricated them out of hand. So, at the Alton *Telegraph*, where the reporters did their best to check, and in consequence did not produce a story, one would imagine a possible Pulitzer for restraint, or self-control, or journalistic responsibility.

What makes this story particularly poignant is that a former editor, one Elijah Lovejoy, was martyred by an angry mob 144 years ago for defending this same press which had editorially upheld the right of blacks to be free men. That wasn't a popular position in Lovejoy's time. Lovejoy paid with his life. And now the same newspaper is under seige again.

In any case, back in 1969, reporters Joseph Melosi and William Lhotka got a tip that Chicago mob money was coming into the county through a savings and loan institution.

They passed the tip along to the Justice Department asking for a "confirm or deny." As a result, the Justice Department launched an

investigation, moved in with heavy-handed insolence and so frightened the lending institution that it halted credit to the building contractor. As a result of credit impairment, the builder lost his business. The lawsuit was filed at his insistence.

Meanwhile, the investigation failed to produce corroborative evidence and the reporters dropped the story. However, the government investigation put an apparently innocent man into bankruptcy.

I happen to be a person who doesn't believe that the press is always innocent and blameless. Indeed, if I wanted to complain about the two reporters in Alton, I'd charge them with naivete. It's the kind engendered in most journalism courses in college where the instructor frequently exhorts his charges that when they want to know "the truth" about something they should check with the government.

If the reporters were guilty of anything they were guilty of (1) asking the Feds for help, and (2) presuming thereby that they would learn the truth. A really top reporter may listen to what a government officeholder tells him; but then he goes out and confirms the government story by checking around among nonofficials, hard-working, non-tax-supported humans. A third count against the reporters could be that they should never have believed that their "confidential" request for information would be kept confidential. It wasn't. The erstwhile contractor found out about the memo and the lawsuit resulted.

I don't know what will happen in this case. However, one bit of good that can come from it relates to the point I have just mentioned. If reporters, generally, wake up to the realization that the government is not reliable, won't keep a promise and often wouldn't know the truth from a hole in the ground, then the cause of journalism and freedom of the press may yet be served.

Rampart Institute's CATALOG

Rampart Insitute's educational catalog is finally out. A copy will be mailed to all fellows and supporters. If you wish additional copies, please write to our Catalog Department. The catalog includes many books, cassette tapes, video tapes, lapel buttons, posters, adhesive stickers and some films. It also gives rates to our publications and reprints as well as fees for fellowship.



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