

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

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LP Responses to Atlantic Magazine

On May 17, 2012, Atlantic Magazine asked the following questions of LP Executive Director Carla Howell. Here are her responses:

It's widely believed that the LP may be more effective at influencing the policy debate than in advancing a candidate to the White House at this time. Do you accept this premise?

The LP influences elections in several ways: We transform otherwise trivial chatter into substantive political debate, we sometimes cause a Big Government politician to win or lose, and we sometimes win.

Does party leadership have a preference between Gary Johnson's two rivals? If it was choice of "the lesser of two evils," is that Romney or Obama?

Howell's Law: The difference between a) Big Government Democratic and b) Big Government Republican politicians is LESS THAN the difference between a) what anyone can reasonably predict either will do if elected and b) what they will actually do if elected.

In other words, if you want more Big Government, higher taxes, higher government spending, toss a coin to pick either the Big Government Democrat or the Big Government Republican. The difference is negligible and unpredictable. But if you want more liberty, more jobs, lower government spending, lower taxes, less foreign meddling and a stable dollar, vote Libertarian for Gary Johnson and Jim Gray.

Would the LP disavow or be actively supportive of a "vote-trading" strategy designed to boost the GOP candidate in swing states while protecting the LP's overall total nationwide?

The Libertarian Party says: Vote small government Libertarian. Every election. Every ballot. Every time. That's the only way we'll see an end to the high taxes, recklessly high government spending, and dangerous government meddling that Big Government Democrats and Republicans are inflicting on America.

How do you assess the vote trading strategy as an ethical matter?

Trading votes misses the point. Any vote for a Big Government Republican or a Big Government Democrat - in any state - will make things worse. They move us the wrong direction.

Many libertarians admire Ron Paul. Will the LP work to persuade Paul's supporters that they should instead vote for Gary Johnson regardless of whether they are in blue, red or purple states?

The Libertarian Party is the natural home for Ron Paul supporters who want to advance Liberty candidates. Should Ron Paul not get the GOP nod, we encourage his supporters to carry the torch to Election Day by voting for Libertarian Gary Johnson and by joining us to advance our shared goals of more liberty, peace, small government, and an end to the Federal Reserve.

From your point of view, what is the most realistic best-case result for the LP? Given the tenor of the times, it seems that a "breakthrough" is possible.

Every election, the Democrats and Republicans lose more credibility - while Libertarians gain more approval by voters. Could 2012 be the year that we see a major breakthrough? That is certainly possible.

Libertarian candidates have caused Big Government Democrats and Republicans to lose in the past, and may well again in 2012. The more we cause Big Government politicians to lose, the more they are forced to enact substantial spending cuts, cut taxes, stop foreign meddling and preserve the value of the dollar.

Voting small government Libertarian is the only way to force the Republican Party to sever its ties to Special Interests and respond to the needs of everyday Americans.

Voting Libertarian is a far better bet than buying a lottery ticket - and it's free! A real chance for lower taxes and more freedom.

2012 Libertarian Party National Convention Coverage

Libertarians Pick Former New Mexico Governor

Taken from *The Las Vegas Review Journal*, May 2012

By the time the Libertarian National Convention concluded in Las Vegas on Saturday, party members had the man they hope can propel them to relevance in presidential politics.

Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson won about 70 percent of the vote on more than 600 ballots, finishing well ahead of Libertarian newsletter founder Lee Wrights.

What it means is Johnson, a former Republican who served two terms as governor from 1995 to 2003, will carry the party's torch in a campaign against Democratic incumbent President Barack Obama and presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney.

Johnson says a "pie-in-the-sky" goal for himself and vice presidential candidate Jim Gray, an Orange County, Calif., Superior Court judge and outspoken critic of the war on drugs, is to generate enough support to qualify for debates on the same stage as Obama and Romney.

"If that happens, anything is possible," Johnson said. "I don't think either Obama or Romney are talking about solutions to the problems."

He's betting a swell of supporters for Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul will shift to the Libertarian candidates once Romney becomes the nominee.

"As much as I would like (Paul) to be the nominee, I don't think that is going to happen," Johnson said.

History says a Libertarian probably will not be included in the debates. The last candidate who wasn't a Democrat or Republican to participate in a debate with the front-runners was Ross Perot in 1992.

Libertarians are hopeful Johnson will fare better. They cite his experience as a popular governor who appealed to Democrats and Republicans in New Mexico and his stances on issues that should have cross-party appeal.

For example Johnson wants to dramatically cut government spending, get the government out of health care, and he supports gun ownership, which could appeal to conservatives. He also is in favor of same-sex marriage and immigration reform that doesn't

emphasize using fences and walls to keep people out of the country, stances that tilt left.

"The Libertarian candidate for president is going to be the only candidate talking about gun rights and gay rights in the same sentence," Johnson said.

Unity behind Johnson is a far cry from the 2008 convention in Denver when it took six rounds of voting to nominate former Georgia U.S. Rep. Bob Barr, another former Republican, for president.

Barr, before his conversion to libertarianism, was known as a foreign policy hawk and opponent of gay marriage.

During speeches at the event Saturday, Libertarians spoke of Barr as a candidate who damaged the party's credibility.

"There wasn't this genuine energy for our candidate in 2008 that there is today," said Joseph Silvestri, state party chairman for Nevada and candidate for the new 4th Congressional District.

While delegates such as Silvestri sought to emphasize the party's mainstream appeal, the event also included its share of iconoclasts. Willy Star Marshall, a longtime Libertarian, made national headlines in 2001 when he became the first openly gay mayor in Utah. His earliest acts as mayor of Big Water included repealing his own salary and calling for the legalization of marijuana.

"I'm a Libertarian because I believe in freedom," Marshall said. Major party candidates "talk a little different but in practice Obama continues the wars and Republicans expand welfare."

A New Dawn for the Libertarian Party and the Obstacles Still In the Way

From Reason Magazine (Online), May 9, 2012

The Libertarian Party has struggled with its identity since its founding in 1971. Technically America's third largest political party, the LP's political efforts have often made it seem like America's Third Largest Debate Club. 2008, the party broke with tradition by nominating a carpetbagging repentant drug warrior, former Republican congressman Bob Barr, whose nomination over LP mainstay and perennial candidate for office Mary Ruwart nearly tore the party in half.

It appears the party has found a balance with the nomination of former two-term New Mexico **Governor Gary Johnson** for president and **Judge Jim Gray** of California for vice president. Both men are former Republican officeholders with high media profiles, both are committed libertarians, and both won their respective nominations at the Libertarian National Convention in Las Vegas by large margins and after only one round of voting.

New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

Paul M. Anderson	Jacques R. Lachance
Kenneth O. Archbold	Trevor A. Larned
Lyle C. Arthur	Warren L. Loschky
Dwight E. Baker	Jonathan W. MacCollum
Arthur C. Barker	Robert Margetin
Jesse R. Bethke	Joseph J. Maschak
Gabriel M. Blanchard	Robert B. Matthews
Raymond M. Bledsaw	J. Thomas May
John R. Boyd	Charles McLaughlin
Patric R. Brock	Joan P. Mokray
Thomas W. Brockriede	Thomas E. Monahan
H. A. Cole	Dawn R. Moore
Roger J. Cooper	Shane H. Newcomb
Kenneth Dancer	Kate O'Brien
Mark E. Darby	Mark A. Oldenburg
Westley F. Deitchler	Norman T. Olsen
Jeremy L. Dixon	Randolph Padal
Mark Duckworth	William A. Peddie
Logan R. Fleckenstein	Gilbert K. Ranney
Shawn D. Fox	Thomas Rose
Nuray Gercek	Lawrence K. Samuels
Charles E. Glenn	Eugenia Sansone
David R. Glueckert	Charles Schmid
Darrell Goldman	Douglas L. Shaffer
Matthew Graham	Mark Spikes
Michael Grogan	Mark Stockfisch
DeWayne Guimond	Howard Taylor
Jim Henriques	Scott A. Thomas
Ian Hickey	William Tomasek
Glen Hilts	Alvoryce M. Webb
Randy D. Hix	Daniel P. Wiener
Dean S. Hodge	Eric M. Witcher
Geoffrey H. Hunter	Tracey H. Young
Sergei Kostenko	Sergey V. Zubkov

I would like to make a one-time donation to the LP:

<input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50
<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30
<input type="checkbox"/> \$250		<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other		<input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other	

(minimum \$10)

I would like to increase my monthly pledge to this level:

(Please make checks payable to **Libertarian Party**.)
 Please bill my Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover

Card number: _____ Exp: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Occupation*: _____

Employer*: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work: _____ Cell: _____

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* Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year. Political contributions are not tax deductible.

Libertarian Party in the News

Changing the Party from Within: Ron Paul, Gary Johnson, and Libertarianism

From The International Business Times, May 7, 2012

Ron Paul's biggest supporters have made their intentions clear: Changing the Republican Party from within surpasses any devotion they may have for the **Libertarian Party** and its presidential candidate, **Gary Johnson**.

Still, Johnson and the Libertarian Party are hoping to draw support from Paul's devotees, assuming the Texas congressman fails to snag the GOP nod from former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

Both Paul and Johnson have very similar fiscally conservative and socially live-and-let-live ideals. They both want smaller government, lower taxes, looser business regulations, and to abolish the Federal Reserve, as well as allow gay unions and legalize marijuana. There are some small differences; both were against going into Iraq and Afghanistan, but Johnson supports some military interventions for humanitarian reasons and Paul doesn't. Ron Paul is against abortions, while Johnson supports abortion rights.

The biggest difference between the two is not policy, but the path they've chosen. The presence of both of them in the presidential race -- particularly Paul -- indicates how libertarians may have more influence in the Republican Party's platform this year at the national convention than they ever have before.

For Johnson, running for president is also more about voice than winning. "When [Johnson] was running in the Republican Party, he was largely excluded from the debates," his campaign spokesman Joe Hunter said. "It was a crowded field ... Frankly, the [third-party] strategy is proving to be correct. He's got a much more effective microphone than he did in the Republican field."

Another great microphone? The support of enthusiastic, strategizing Paulites. Libertarian Party

Executive Director **Carla Howell** said she expects the "vast majority" of Ron Paul supporters to vote for Johnson if Paul doesn't make the ticket come November. "Gov. Johnson and much of the Libertarian party wish Dr. Paul every success in his pursuit of the GOP nomination. We welcome his supporters with open arms," she said.

But that doesn't mean Paul himself will endorse the candidate (although Howell said she'd love that) nor that Paul's loyal fans will turn into Johnsonites once the national convention concludes and Paul doesn't make the ticket.

Howell said she regularly talks to Paul campaign staff but there has been no talk about an endorsement (Paul dodged a question on Bloomberg TV last week about whether or not he would endorse Romney, saying it depends on how the platform ends up), while Hunter said there has been no coordination between the two campaigns. Harmon said he personally had no idea who he would vote for in November assuming Paul was not on the ticket, but could see himself picking Johnson as a "protest vote." "I'd rather throw my vote away than throw my country away," said Harmon, who clarified he was speaking on behalf of himself and not Endorse Liberty.

Still, that doesn't necessarily mean there should be hard feelings between the two candidates. In fact, just the opposite. Even if Johnson is barely riding the coattails of Paul's campaign, two libertarian candidates in an election just shows how much the movement is creeping its way into mainstream Republican politics.

"Ron Paul has clearly chosen to stay with the GOP, so we're not working directly together, but we recognize that we are all working together for the broader cause of liberty," Howell said.

A lot of Paulites agree.

"Many people, including myself, were in awe to see, not just one, but TWO Libertarians running for president this year in the Republican Party," wrote Tyler Mittan, who has a blog called The Angry Libertarian. "This is the Libertarian's chance to really get their message across."