

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

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Stossel ponders voting options ahead of Libertarian debate

by John Stossel

Excerpted from *Fox News Opinion*
Published on March 9, 2016

In this year's Republican presidential primaries, Sen. Rand Paul got little traction. In 2012, his father failed. That year, the Libertarian Party candidate, former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, got just 1 percent of the vote. We libertarians must be doing something wrong. Maybe our anti-government message is too radical, says Jerry Taylor [formerly a director at Cato]. May-

be we should soften our approach.

"Libertarians need to be more realistic," Taylor told 500 young people at a taping of my TV show at [the] International Students for Liberty conference. In electoral politics, he said, finding libertarians is "like trying to find a daisy in Hiroshima" after the nuclear blast.

Taylor, a smart libertarian who runs the Niskanen Center, says to become more popular, we libertarians ought to change our views. He criticized Rand Paul for saying that in 1964 he would've

voted against the Civil Rights Act.

Actually, Rand didn't say that. He supported the act's ban on government racism, like Jim Crow laws. He objected only to the act's ban on private discrimination. Rand was right to object. If owners of a private business want to serve only gays, basketball players, or bald men, that should be their right.

Market competition will punish bigots for their narrow-mindedness, because some people will avoid that store.

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Americans need a third choice when picking president

By Mike Strobel

Excerpted from the *Toronto Sun*
Published on March 6, 2016

So Donald is Hitler, Hillary is a cyber Scime suspect, Marco Rubio resorts to penis jokes, and 39% of Floridians believe Ted Cruz could be the Zodiac Killer.

The Three Stooges meet Frankenstein meets American politics.

Our neighbours are in dire need of a reboot of their political gene pool.

Which brings me to Monday's presidential debate. It's in Raleigh, N.C.

(Editor's note: What!? How'd we miss that? Let's rush somebody down to cover it.)

Relax, boss. It's the Libertarian Party presidential debate. In a perfect world, the Libertarians would be an escape valve for disgusted Democrats and Republicans.

But America, that pillar of pluralism, persists in its two-party rut, which, when you think of it, is just one party more than communism.

Third parties flounder in the States, the exception being 1992 independent candidate Ross Perot, who at one point

topped polls and finished with 19%. Folks were mightily pissed at establishment politicians. Sound familiar?

In 2012, Libertarian champion Gary Johnson, former governor of New Mexico, finished third behind Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, with 1.2 million votes, less than 1%.

On the other hand, Johnson got nearly 3% in Montana, coincidentally the anti-government Unabomber's last known address, other than a jail cell.

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If you think the nutty Unabomber is a true Libertarian, think again. Most of us are much better groomed.

John Wayne Gacy was active in the Democratic party—doesn't mean all Democrats are serial killers. Al Capone

bankrolled Republicans—but not all Republicans are thugs.

On Saturday, comedian Louis C.K. called Donald Trump an "insane bigot ... a Hitler. And by that I mean that we are being Germany in the '30s. Do you think they saw the sh-- coming? Hitler was just some hilarious and refreshing dude with a weird comb-over who would say anything at all."

C.K. was, by remarkable coincidence, also promoting his show. He insisted he wasn't backing Democrats Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders, and urged Republicans to pick anybody but Trump. But who, Louis, who?

I'd suggest you tune in Monday to the Libertarian debate, but it's not on TV. They're not preempting Antiques Roadshow for it. No way.

So I'll tell you, and you can pass it on to your American friends, that Gary Johnson is running again, with a dozen other wannabes, and is expected to take the convention in May. He'll be on the ballot in all 50 states in November.

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Libertarian Party candidate: Bernie Sanders vs. Donald Trump would be our 2016 dream

By Colin Campbell

Excerpted from *Business Insider*

Published on Feb. 5, 2016

Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson thinks Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump could be his ticket to having a significant effect on the 2016 race.

“If the Libertarian candidate for president ever has a chance of getting elected or getting prominence on the national stage to actually profess what is to be a Libertarian, it would be Bernie Sanders vs. Donald Trump,” Johnson told *Business Insider* in a recent interview [at our office].

“I mean, that would be the Libertarian wet dream,” he quipped.

Johnson ran as a Republican in 2012 before changing teams and running as the Libertarian nominee. He dropped by to pitch his campaign.

“I don’t want to be tilting at windmills, right? There are better things to do,” Johnson said. “But in this case, I think that at the end of the day, I will end up being the voice of reason in all of this.”

The former governor said he had a “horrible” time in ’12, trying to grab attention as a Republican. As a Libertarian, he ultimately grabbed about 1%—a bit under 1.3 million votes.

Johnson stressed that he still has to win the nomination...he is competing against a host of other candidates.

Without self-funding his campaign like Ross Perot in the ’90s, most political observers would predict that Johnson, if he gets the Libertarian nomination, would again suffer the fate of virtually every other third-party presidential candidate in recent history.

But [he] argued that either of the top-two Dem. presidential candidates—Sen. Sanders or former Sec. of State Clinton—would contrast well with a Libertarian contender if Donald Trump were the Repub. nominee.

Johnson said he was suing to get into the general-election debates, which are typically one-on-one matchups between the Repub. and Democratic candidates.

He said a prominent lawyer, Bruce Fein, had already filed a lawsuit against the Commission on Presidential Debates based on “the notion that they are a business and that they collude with one another to exclude everyone else.”

Johnson added: “Our contention is that if you’re on the ballot on enough states to be mathematically elected, then shouldn’t you be included in the presidential debates?”

Johnson stressed that he still has to win the Libertarian Party’s nomination, for which he is competing against a host of other candidates. •

America needs a third choice

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You may fret that he’ll sap Republican strength and put Hillary, the most cynical politician, back in the White House, this time as commander-in-chief. But in 1992 Perot stole from both parties, as did his Reform Party in 1996.

In a nutshell, so to speak, the Libertarian stance is: Live and let live. Less government, more freedom. Fiscally conservative, socially liberal.

They, we, favour individual choice on such things as pot and same-

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sex marriage—and minimal regulation, tax and bureaucracy. Fill your boots, do what you want, if it harms no one else, but don’t make the rest of us pay for it.

Libertarians are anti-war except in self defence. So, no blowing stuff up. No Unabombers.

I suspect most people are Libertarian. They just don’t know it yet. •

[The Libertarian nominee] is the only candidate outside the two major parties who could be on the ballot in 50 states

by Alex Pfeiffer

Excerpted from *The Daily Caller*

Published on Mar. 4, 2016

Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson is running for the Libertarian Party nomination, which will appear on the ballot in all 50 states, he told The Daily Caller.

Tech tycoon John McAfee is his most serious opponent in the race for the Libertarian nomination.

Johnson has been at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) for the past few days and said, “the reaction here has been terrific, I mean I can’t even walk without people wanting their picture taken with me.”

While he was still well received a year ago when he visited, “it was not as enthusiastic as it is now.”

The former governor is hoping to ride the tidal wave of conservatives who are condemning Donald Trump and saying they would never vote for him.

He believes Trump alienates half the Republican Party and is thankful in a way for his successful candidacy. He said that, against Republicans,

he would still advance the libertarian cause but, “in my opinion none so much as Donald Trump.”

Johnson believes Trump’s proposal to deport 11 or so million illegal aliens is “crazy.”

He said, “If he’s the nominee, it’s the end of the Republican Party.”

Even though neoconservatives strongly disagree with Johnson’s non-interventionist foreign policy outlook he could see himself getting their support. “On the basis of smaller government and free markets, yeah I should sweep anybody that holds to those principles,” said Gov. Johnson

Mitt Romney said Friday that he wouldn’t support either Clinton or Trump: “If those are my only two choices I’d vote for a conservative on the ballot—and if there weren’t one that I was comfortable with, I would write in a name.”

Gov. Johnson admitted the fact that someone like Romney might end up voting for him is “absolutely” surprising.

This does lead to questions about whether the former governor would end

up as a spoiler in the general election, taking away votes from the Republican candidate and handing Hillary the keys to the White House.

Johnson believes the opposite will happen, “I think I take a lot more votes from Hillary.” Adding, “libertarians are so much closer aligned to Bernie Sanders than people realize, not socialist, not giving the farm when it comes to fiscal policies, but on the social side we look pretty darn close to Bernie Sanders, so I’m believing ultimately this takes more votes from Hillary.”

On the Republican side, Ted Cruz has been actively seeking to gain the support of more “liberty-minded” voters, especially since Rand Paul left the race. Though the former New Mexico governor believes due to Cruz’s shift to a more hardline stance on immigration his efforts to gain the libertarian vote will fail.

Johnson was the Libertarian Party’s nominee in 2012 and received just about 1 percent of the vote, but he believes that “most Americans are libertarians—they just don’t know it.”•

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Kasich dodges another bullet in judge's order to dismiss Libertarian Party case

by John Michael Spinelli
 Excerpted from *Plunderbund*
 Published on March 1, 2016

More than any other news group, *Plunderbund* has covered the legal case against Camp Kasich, filed by the Libertarian Party of Ohio [LPO], who saw its candidate for governor, [Charlie Earl], two years ago tossed off the primary ballot, through a scheme that involved long-time political operatives spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to find a protester who could challenge signatures on party petitions.

For all practical purposes, that fight is now over, in light of an order released [on Feb. 29] by Franklin County Common Pleas Court Administrative Judge Patrick Sheeran, who dismissed an appeal by lawyers representing the LPO to a ruling by the Ohio Elections Commission to not pursue the complaint.

LPO attorney Mark Brown [said] the order can be appealed to the 10th District Court of Appeals.

Brown has long argued that evidence shows that the Kasich campaign, the Ohio Republican Party and its

Chairman Matt Borges, along with a long-time friend and political operative Terry Casey, and officials in Secretary of State Jon Husted's office, were all involved in a scheme to remove Earl from the primary ballot in 2014.

Gov. Kasich, with no challengers to eat away at his base of voters, as Earl's candidacy was thought to be able to do,

Ohio governor. All the right ingredients worthy of an Ohio episode of "House of Cards" were in place, from Nixonian-style dirty tricks squads to powerful lawyers charging \$600,000 or more for their representation of their secret client, Mr. Casey, and Mr. Felsoci, who another judge called a "guileless dupe" for purposes of knocking Earl off the ballot.

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went on to win big, but in a low-turnout election. Had the Ohio Elections Commission pursued the matter, as Brown wanted, Gov. Kasich, his close advisers including those leading his reelection campaign would have been in a very bad spot given the governor's presidential run that emphasized his years in Washington as a congressman and now as

John Kasich has been able to rely on the courts to keep him out of harm's way. Whether it was the Ohio Supreme Court not hearing a challenge to his secret jobs group, JobsOhio, or this sleazy episode that could be a Hollywood script about graft and corruption in public office, Gov. John Kasich has escaped being on the firing line. •

Stossel: Libertarian options

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There's no need for government force.

"Right," said Taylor, but "5 percent of the American public says *yes* to that, and 95 percent say *no*.... They're not going to embrace a candidate who says, *Tough, people should just suffer under the teeth of bigotry because white people have that right.*"

I suppose Taylor is correct. Voters prefer simple answers ("Mexico will pay for a wall!"). They don't want constitutional lectures about property rights or free association.

Taylor is fine with welfare spending, too. He points out, "Even people like Milton Friedman and F.A. Hayek supported a safety net to help the indigent."

Taylor and some other libertarians sound like "reform Republicans" who want free-market advocates to embrace the welfare state. They think they're being practical, realistic.

But we free-market supporters know what really creates prosperity and opportunity: economic freedom! We saw it work in America when America was young. We see it now in Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand, Switzerland, Australia, and other countries that today offer more economic freedom than the United States. Government that governs least governs best.

I said to Taylor, rudely, "Your plan for victory is to surrender?"

"No," replied Taylor. "I don't think it's surrender to say that the rights and freedoms of people in this coun-

try can be secured by government."

I don't either. But America's government has gone well past "securing rights and freedom." Today's welfare state provides much more than a safety net. It's become a giant hammock that encourages dependency. Government today takes half our money and micromanages the workplace.

"Stossel" will host...three leading Libertarian presidential candidates—they placed top three in a poll done by the Libertarian Party—[who] will debate. They are former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, software entrepreneur John McAfee, and Libertarian Republic founder Austin Petersen.

The forum will air [on], unfortunately, April 1. But this is no April Fools' Day joke. Our future is [at] stake. •