

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

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Here's why the Libertarian Party might get more votes

by John Stossel

Excerpted from Fox News
Published on April 13, 2016

The Libertarian Party might get more votes this year.

Before the primaries, Time Magazine [called] Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ken.) the “most interesting man in politics.” Then Paul fizzled, and pundits said the “libertarian moment,” if there ever was one, had ended.

But Sen. Paul never ran as a libertarian. He ran as a libertarian-ish Republican, and he wasn't particularly convincing when he got to speak in debates. Americans were unimpressed.

But now that, according to *Election BettingOdds.com*, the presidential race will be a choice between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, Americans may give libertarianism a second look.

My TV show [“Stossel”] recently held a debate between the Libertarian

Party's three leading presidential candidates. They sounded so reasonable to me. Take immigration.

While Democrats pretend they will carefully vet refugees from Muslim parts of the world, Republicans talk about deporting 11 million people. The Libertarians on my show talked about reducing border problems by simplifying our complicated immigration laws.

Immigrants often break our current laws because the alternative is waiting [possibly forever] while [wading] through our bureaucracy.

“Incentivize legal immigration [to] cut down on illegal immigration,” said candidate Austin Petersen. “If we make a simpler path to citizenship, then people will not break the law, if they know that there's a chance [to] come here.”

Republicans like Trump talk about illegal immigrants as if they're bad people who are bound to break other laws because they climbed border

fences. But as Petersen asked, “If you were living in a third-world country and your family was starving to death, who would not cross that wall?”

My parents came here from Germany in 1930 to get away from European stagnation. Who can blame them? I wouldn't be embarrassed if they had come here illegally.

Trump shouts about bad effects of global trade, but his destructive bans and tariffs would do more harm.

Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson asked during the debate, “Who benefits from free trade but you and I as consumers? If China wants to subsidize goods and services that they send to the U.S., who benefits? We do!”

He's right. Cheaper goods from abroad mean Americans have more money to spend on other things, and cheaper ingredients for products we manufacture. Yes, some Americans

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Will the Libertarians benefit from Trump fears?

by Andrew Desiderio

Excerpted from BBC
Published on April 8, 2016

Republicans and Democrats. Democrats and Republicans. Thus it has been; thus it will always be. Or could 2016—a year of firsts in presidential politics—be the moment the Libertarian Party (LP) steps into the spotlight?

Gary Johnson, the former governor of New Mexico who appears poised to once again be the Libertarian standard-bearer, certainly thinks so. He views his party as the natural home for Republicans recoiling from the prospect of Donald Trump as their nominee.

“If they're honest with themselves and they really are about smaller government, then I'm it,” Mr Johnson said in a recent interview with the BBC.

There is some evidence to back up Johnson's hopes. Mr Trump has eye-popping [unfavourability] among female voters, minority groups, and even the most conservative Republicans.

An exit poll from the 15 March primaries showed that 61% of GOP voters who did not cast their ballots for Trump would seriously consider a third-party alternative to Trump and Hillary Clinton, the presumptive Democratic Party nominee.

All this has sparked talk of other options for disaffected Republicans—but the choices are limited. State filing deadlines for an independent conservative candidate are rapidly approaching.

The LP tends to attract Republicans who are more socially liberal, and is likely to [be] on the ballot in all 50 states this year. Johnson's presence could help Republicans avoid disastrous down-ballot consequences in pivotal House and Senate races, which could be compromised if Republicans are not enthused enough by Trump to show up to the polls.

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Petitioning Commission on Presidential Debates

Let viable third-party candidates into general election presidential debates

Excerpted from a petition by **Stuart Hayashi**,
published at *Change.org*

With the increasing likelihood of Donald Trump winning the Republican Party's nomination as its presidential candidate, many public commentators, including George Will in the *Washington Post*, have raised the suggestion that voters consider a third-party candidate for President of the United States. In fact, a viable third-party candidacy already exists, as the Libertarian Party [LP] is the only political party, other than the Democratic and Republican Parties, expected to be on the ballot in all fifty states.

In 2012, surveys that included the Libertarian Party's then-presidential nominee, Gary Johnson, alongside the candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, showed that Johnson polled at 4 percent of likely voters. Also, Johnson was on the ballot in 48 states plus Washington, D.C., and would have been on the ballot in the other states if not for ballot-access challenges imposed by the major parties.

That demonstrated that Gary Johnson was a serious enough candidate to include in the general election presidential debates against Obama and Romney. Yet the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD)—the not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation in charge of the debates—sought to deny all third-party candidates any role in the debates. The last time the CPD allowed a credible candidate in any of these debates was in 1992, when independent Ross Perot debated against George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

With Bruce Fein as counsel, the Libertarian Party and Green Party are suing the CPD, arguing for viable third-party candidates to be allowed into the 2016 general election debate. Regardless of the outcome of the lawsuit, justice requires that credible third-party candidates be allowed into the general election debate. The United States of America was founded as a republic where citizens voted, based on their informed choices. Being an informed voter requires that one hold knowledge of every viable candidate—not merely select candidates put forth by the CPD in some sort of electoral cartel.

We citizens have a right to hear from viable third-party candidates in direct exchanges with the nominees of the two major parties. Adherence to the principles of our constitutional republic [requires] that the voters get to hear direct verbal confrontations between nominees of the two major parties and viable third-party contenders.

Thus, we advise that viable third-party presidential candidates—those likely to be on the ballot in over 45 states—be let into the general election debates. This has always been a reasonable request; the current state of the 2016 election only makes the urgency of this principle all the more obvious. •

New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

Ronald Adkins	Larry Mahaney
Chadwick Bailey	Robert Margetin
William Bamler	Diane McFarland
Jeremiah Barnett	Chuck McLaughlin
John Berntson	Benjamin Michalisko
John Blair	Sean Milmore
Richard Boddie	Gavin Minty
John Borkowski	David Moore
Mathieu Brundige	Jack Moore
Alison Burgujian	Jefferson Morgan
Tim Carrico	Jeannette Morrow
Adam Childress	Patricia Norcom
Benjamin Clement	Roy Odhner
Timothy Cole	Carl Payne
Tim Cowles	Michael Peter
Christopher Creel	Christopher Rainwater
Mark Darby	Carole Rand
Matthew DiGiallonnardo	Joseph Richardson
James Duerksen	Edward Ritter
Sean Duncan	Phillip Robertson
Mark Durfee	Zachariah Robinson
John Egan	Craig Rodenberg
Robert Fugiel	Frankie Rohrer
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Robert Gump	Heather Scott
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Richard Hutchins	Amy Thomas
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Stephanie Kemp	Richard Tomasso
Boyd Kerr	Steve Tong
Robert Kraus	Cole Uecker
Ashley Lara	Mark Walker
Thomas Lemberg	Donnie Webb
Russell Lindbom	Devin White
Jay Lozier	David Wright
Steve Lueck	John Youmans
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Learn more about the campaign for fair debates at:
www.FairDebates.com

Yugely Hated Trump Even With Clinton in New NBC Poll

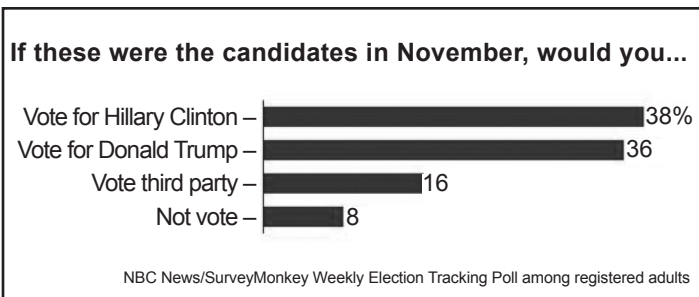
by Nick Gillespie

Excerpted from *Reason's Hit & Run Blog*

Published on April 12, 2016

God, is there anyone running for president who's worse than Donald Trump? As it turns out, yeah.

A new online NBC/SurveyMonkey poll of 11,000 people who say they're registered to vote (yes, yes, caveats apply!) showed that the awful billionaire is basically neck-and-neck with Hillary Clinton and that he fares better against the former senator and secretary of state than [does] the Republican establishment's new boyfriend, Ted Cruz.



When Cruz is pitted against Clinton, he pulls just 32 percent against her 37 percent.

For me, the biggest silver lining in this dark cloud of an election is the interest in third parties, which I read as "The Libertarian Party" (LP) since it's the only alternative that will be on the ballot in all 50 states and whose 2012 candidate pulled over one million votes and around one percent of all ballots cast.

The NBC/SurveyMonkey results show consistent double-digit interest in voting third party due to the folks at the top

of the major-party tickets. The poll asks who Trump and Cruz supporters will vote for if their guy doesn't get the GOP nom, and in either case about one-quarter say they'll go for a third party.

If the LP pulls even in the high single digits in the general election, it will have a major influence on how each major party reconstitutes itself after this election. Yes, the Democrat or the Republican will win, but unless Clinton and Cruz or Trump all get personality transplants between now and then, we're going to see a winner with less than 50 percent of all votes.

Because it can appeal to both conventional liberals and conservatives (read: Democrats and Republicans), the LP will become a natural place for the major parties to turn, to woo new voters. Libertarian voters (whether registered in the party or not) are the easiest voters to win every time: Just be socially liberal and fiscally conservative in your policies and attitudes; shrink the size, scope, and spending of government by getting it out of the boardroom and the bedroom; be against elective war and pot prohibition, for immigrants and marriage equality (or getting the government out of such things), and argue that the government should do fewer things better. As each party drives toward the low-20s in terms of voter identification, they should be looking to see how they can placate the vast and growing libertarian middle without alienating their own wingnuts.

FFS, major-party types! The Libertarian Moment is so fricking over that libertarians are now the single-largest ideological bloc in the country, according to Gallup. We're not coy. If you tack in our direction, you'll pick up more votes and the only cost will be that once you're in power, you'll have less power to wield. That's a bargain we can all live with, isn't it?•

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

- \$5,000
- \$1,000
- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
- \$50
- \$25
- _____ Other

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

- \$2,500
- \$1,000
- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
- \$50
- \$30
- _____ Other (minimum \$10)

(Please make checks payable to **Libertarian Party**.)

Please bill my Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover

Card number: _____ Exp.: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Occupation*: _____

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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.

Libertarians to benefit from Trump fears?

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Prominent Republicans such as 2012 presidential nominee Mitt Romney and Nebraska Senator Ben Sasse have suggested they would choose a third-party candidate if faced with the choice of Mr Trump or Mrs Clinton.

Johnson believes Romney and Mr Sasse are implicitly suggesting he is that candidate.

“They’re not saying ‘Gary Johnson,’ but they know that it’s the Libertarian Party,” he predicted. “They haven’t said it. They know that the leading contender for that nomination is Gary Johnson, and they’re not saying that either.”

Prominent Republicans have suggested they would choose a third-party candidate if faced with the choice of Mr Trump or Mrs Clinton.

Fiscal conservatism and social liberalism are the LP’s hallmarks, and Johnson believes that many Republicans—especially young conservatives and those who despise Trump—are at least “socially tolerant.”

“Talk about setting the table for the Libertarian nominee—this is it,” Johnson said. “If people collectively don’t have a head jerk and ask, ‘Well, what’s the alternative?’ I don’t know if they ever will.”

Johnson, who briefly ran for the Republican presidential nomination in 2012 before becoming the Libertarian candidate and garnering 1% of the vote, understands the real anger that voters have.

When he first ran for governor in 1994, Mr Johnson made a similar pitch to New Mexicans that Mr Trump is making to the country—a political outsider who built a successful company and wants to apply those business principles to

government. But that is where the parallels end.

“I never said anything as crazy” as Trump’s proposals on immigration and foreign policy, he added. “To me, it alienates more than half of Republicans.”

Johnson has repeatedly said in recent years that most Americans are Libertarians—but they “just don’t know it.” He even believes that the party would rake in millions of dollars if voters perceived the LP nominee to be a competitive candidate.

The key to that viability, however, is visibility. The Commission on Presidential Debates has determined that in order to qualify for the general-election debates, a candidate must reach at least 15% in an average of five recent national polls—a threshold the Libertarian candidate has never met.

A recent Monmouth University poll, however, offered a ray of hope—putting Johnson at 11% nationally in a hypothetical three-way race with Mr Trump and Mrs Clinton.

The LP has filed a lawsuit against the commission in conjunction with the Green Party, alleging that the 15% rule is not legal on antitrust grounds.

Johnson argues that if a candidate has at least the mathematical possibility of winning 270 electoral votes, he or she should be allowed on the debate stage.

Kyle Kondik, an elections analyst at the University of Virginia Center for Politics, told BBC he could envision a candidate such as Johnson receiving a “significant number of protest votes—probably not enough to win a state, but just enough to deprive Trump of votes in certain places.”

“If there is no other third-party Republican or third-party conservative, maybe [Johnson] gets more attention and more votes,” he added.

Regardless of the scepticism surrounding his chances, Johnson does not worry about what’s next for him or the political process he seeks to revolutionise.

“Whatever it ends up to be, I sleep at night because I was the voice of reason in the whole process,” he said. •

Why more votes

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lose jobs, but more gain work, and better work, because free trade helps Americans expand businesses—here.

Republicans and Democrats also talk about “creating jobs.” Trump promises, “I will be the greatest jobs president that God ever created!”

God has yet to speak up, but Clinton says not only will she create jobs, she’ll create “good-paying jobs”!

That’s why Johnson was so refreshing in the debate. He said that in eight years as New Mexico’s governor, “I didn’t create a single job! *Government* doesn’t create jobs. The private sector does.”

Right. But government sure can get in the way.

“To start a business, I have to fill out a thousand forms and report to OSHA,” said candidate John McAfee during

the debate. “If we remove these barriers, industry will take care of itself and jobs will improve.”

The candidates were also skeptical about government imposition on drug users, on cell-phone owners who don’t want their phones hacked into, and on people trying to accomplish things without first begging for approval from bureaucrats.

I liked how McAfee put it: “Some fundamental principles are all that we need to live together in a sane and harmonious fashion. We cannot hit one another. We cannot take each other’s stuff. We must keep our agreements....”

That’s right. And that’s enough. Government should enforce those contracts but otherwise stay out of our lives. I nodded in agreement when McAfee said, “Personal privacy and personal freedom are paramount to any society in which I would want to live.” •