

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

Libertarian National Committee, Inc. ♦ 2600 Virginia Ave, NW, Suite 200 ♦ Washington, DC 20037 ♦ Phone: (202) 333-0008 ♦ Fax: (202) 333-0072
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The New Future of Libertarian Politics

By Brian Doherty

Excerpted from *Reason*

Published on November 12, 2013

Robert Sarvis, a former tech entrepreneur and lawyer involved with the free-market think tank Mercatus, won a surprising amount of the vote as the Libertarian Party's candidate in last week's Virginia governor's race—6.6 percent, or around 145,000 votes.

That was the third largest vote percentage any Libertarian has ever won for any governor's race. The two who did better, Dick Randolph in Alaska in 1982 and Ed Thompson in Wisconsin in 2002, had, unlike Sarvis, held elective office in their states before. Sarvis copped the best third party result for any party in the South for a gubernatorial candidate in 40 years.

Many Republicans reacted to Sarvis' strong showing, combined with Republican Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli's narrow defeat by Democrat Terry McAuliffe, with accusations that Sarvis caused Cuccinelli's loss.

Said bad feelings are based on some misunderstandings.

Blaming Sarvis for Cuccinelli losing presumes that naturally Republicans rightfully own the votes of all believers in liberty and smaller government.

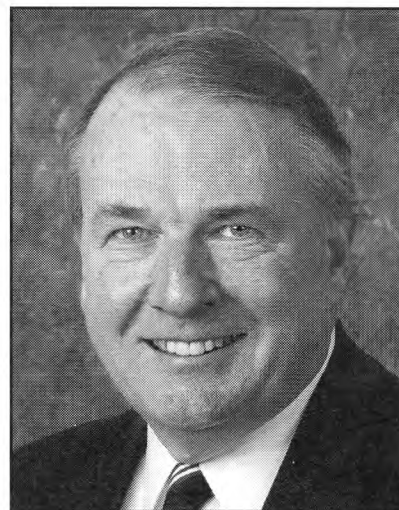
But exit polls show that if Sarvis were not in the race, McAuliffe would almost certainly have won by a larger margin than he did.

A second reason many "liberty movement" types hate Sarvis is a story that broke the morning of the election in *The Blaze* which claimed Sarvis was a deliberate Democratic Party plant meant to help McAuliffe win the election.

This conspiracy theory is extremely unlikely because it would've been a counterproductive strategy for Democrats.

Chris Stearns, a 26-year-old liberty movement member of the state Republican Party's central committee, worked briefly for Cuccinelli's campaign. But Stearns understands and respects those who feel they need to pursue liberty activism through the LP, and thinks Cuccinelli should have been open to letting Sarvis in the debates. "The vast majority of those supporting Sarvis never operated within the infrastructure of the Republican Party anyway."

Sarvis came to the LP not through the machinations of the Democratic Party, but by being a disaffected former GOP candidate for state Senate in 2011. Virginia state LP chair Chuck Moulton remembers attending meetings of the state's Republican Liberty Caucus back then and "they didn't



Former Libertarian Party Chair Ed Crane founded a PAC in 2013 that spent \$300,000 on ads for Virginia LP candidate for governor Robert Sarvis

seem to care so much about social issues. I asked each candidate in a Q and A about those issues and Sarvis stood out as the only truly libertarian candidate there."

Sarvis' team ran a professional media contact operation and managed to get more earned media than almost any other state-level libertarian candidate ever, winning genuine respect for his seriousness from many local papers and TV stations. Being so close

to D.C. national media, he got big national play as well.

Moulton of the Virginia LP thinks both locally and nationally that Sarvis' attention and success will inspire other serious people to run, and maybe inspire some who might have otherwise run as independents to run under the LP banner.

Sarvis' campaign manager, John LaBeaume, was especially delighted by the uncoordinated fundraising from Purple PAC, a SuperPAC for libertarian-leaning politicians of any party run by former Cato Institute president Ed Crane, who famously stopped supporting the LP 30 years ago. Purple PAC announced it would spend \$300,000 on Sarvis ads late in the campaign. LaBeaume thinks with that, and with inroads Sarvis made with a younger wave of student libertarian activists, that the Libertarian brand as attached to the LP itself may see a renaissance.

LaBeaume says, "We got more of the large libertarian policy and donor community interested in a substantive way in a mainstream but principled Libertarian candidate, and that is very encouraging in moving forward for the whole movement, in the electoral realm, in student activism, and the think tank policy realm."

Libertarian Party in the News

Libertarian Party Leader Calls Allegation That Va. Candidate Was a Dem Plant an 'Outright Lie'

By Bridget Johnson

From *PJ Media*

Published on November 7, 2013

The Libertarian Party's national director fought back this afternoon against allegations that Robert Sarvis was a Democratic plant intended to help Terry McAuliffe in the Virginia gubernatorial race.

"I realize that, no matter what I say, paranoid right-wingers will think I'm a sneaky operative trying to help Democrats beat Republicans. This message is for the rational people out there," Libertarian National Committee Executive Director Wes Benedict said in a statement.

The statement included links to stories in right-of-center outlets that pointed to a bundler for President Obama helping pay for the petition circulators that got Sarvis enough signatures to get on the Virginia ballot.

The expenditure was financed by the Libertarian Booster PAC, founded by Benedict in 2011.

"In 2012, the PAC focused solely on non-federal races in Texas. With satisfactory accomplishments, and no partisan election happening in Texas in 2013, I looked to expand to other states where permitted by law. Virginia was one of two states with a gubernatorial election in 2013 plus state legislative elections, so it was an obvious choice," he continued.

"Back at the end of 2008, a man contacted me expressing interest in the Libertarian Party. It turned out he was a successful high-tech entrepreneur. One of his comments was along the lines of, 'What could the Libertarian Party do if it had a million dollars?' Naturally, I contact this man whenever I think I have a good idea that needs funding."

He seemed to be alluding to Austin-based software billionaire and Obama bundler Joe Liemandt.

"I've raised \$300,000 from this donor for the Libertarian Booster PAC. He has provided very little in the way of instruction or advice regarding use of the money. The one strong suggestion he made was that we should try to build the Libertarian Party by recruiting Hispanics. He thought Democrats were taking Hispanics for granted, and Republicans were often hostile, and perhaps a massive wave of Hispanics could be convinced to join the Libertarian Party since we have a pro-immigration platform," Benedict continued, adding that the suggestion influenced the inclusion of a "Liberty for Latinos" plank in Texas.

"Most political experts would probably say that recruiting Hispanics into the Libertarian Party would hurt Democrats rather than Republicans, since Hispanics lean more

*"Our liberties will not be secure until
Republicans, Democrats, and Libertarians are
all fighting over the best ways to implement
libertarian principles."*

— *Wes Benedict, Libertarian Party Executive Director*

Democratic than Republican. So I'm skeptical that this donor is trying to use me to hurt Republicans," the director said. "It was my idea, and my decision, to have the Libertarian Booster PAC help recruit Libertarian Party candidates in 2013 in Virginia."

Benedict called Rush Limbaugh's assertion that an Obama bundler "bought and paid for" a "fake Libertarian candidate" an "outright lie," and called on Limbaugh to "retract his claim."

"My strategies and tactics have never been secret. They are common strategies in the Libertarian Party, and they are the same strategies promoted at the founding of the Libertarian Party. I try to publicize them any way I can. I've even written a book about them and included a chapter about PACs," said Benedict. "I want Libertarians to win elections. But I also want them to run for office even when they're unlikely to win. Why? To get the public to discuss and consider libertarian principles. Our liberties will not be secure until Republicans, Democrats, and Libertarians are all fighting over the best ways to implement libertarian principles."

"If I wanted to hurt the Republican in Virginia, I would have supported a right-wing candidate who sounded like a Tea Partier — who only talked about cutting welfare, Obamacare, and how bad Democrats are. I would never have helped someone like Robert Sarvis, who talked a lot about social issues that appeal to liberal voters. As it turned out, polls show that if Sarvis weren't in the race, McAuliffe would probably have won by a slightly bigger margin."

The party earlier touted their third-best showing in any governor's race. McAuliffe had 47.7 percent of the vote to Ken Cuccinelli at 45.2 percent. Sarvis, a software developer and attorney, pulled in 6.52 percent.

"My hope with the Robert Sarvis campaign was for the election to be close between the Democrat and Republican, with the Libertarian getting more votes than in previous elections, and lots of press to follow. Imagine my excitement when the results came in with Sarvis getting 6.5 percent (eight times the previous record in Virginia for a Libertarian for governor), and a narrow spread between the Republican and Democrat," Benedict added. "With Robert Sarvis's outstanding campaign for governor, mission accomplished."

More Political Groups Join Marriage Amendment Debate

By Jashin Lin

From *Indiana Public Media*

Published on November 8, 2013

Two more political groups have jumped into the fray over Indiana's proposed constitutional amendment that would define marriage as only between a man and a woman.

Both are independent parties, and they are on opposite sides of the debate.

Northern Indiana Tea Party group Kosciusko County Silent NO More announced its support for the marriage amendment Wednesday. Cofounder Monica Boyer frames the group's stance on the issue around religious freedom and individual rights.

"Currently, in all 50 states, homosexuals are free to buy property together, they're free to share assets, they're free to do all of that. What they should not have the right to do is change the definition of marriage for the rest of Indiana," Boyer said.

The Libertarian Party of Indiana announced its opposition to the amendment Friday. Chairman Dan Drexler goes so far as to say that the Tea Party group is misinterpreting religious freedom.

"If they truly would like to look at religious freedoms, they would be expanding this and allowing any church that wants to recognize same-sex marriage to be joined in their church," Drexler said. "That's the definition of religious freedom."

Groups that have expressed support or opposition in the last few months range from pastors to universities to corporations. Legislators have already approved the measure once. If they approve it again this year, it will be placed on the November 2014 ballot.

New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

Victor F. Aagaard	Elisabeth S. Larsen
David Adsit	Tom J. Laurent
Cliff Avant	Kathleen LaVallee
Jase Baese	Chris Leaman
Nathan S. Barnum	Lindsay J. Ledwich
Emma Belfort	Ione Maldonado
Rex Bell	Matthew Manser
Matthew S. Bowden	Mark McCauley
Frank J. Bowman	Jean McCrady
Nathan D. Brady	Justin McGee
Tom M. Brakebill	David M. McGrew
John M. Brendel	Patricia McNeill
Aaron Brister El	John M. Miller
Christopher M. Brookover	Mark A. Miller
Bill H. Burch	Carl Minie
David Burks	Jason G. Morgan
Jonathan Burton	Stan L. O'Dell
Andrew Buschbacher	Michael Peter
Corey Calvey	Jeff D. Pizanti
Gary Capik	Thomas Plock
Ryan Carey	Pamela E. Potter
James Carrera	Robert E. Rayner
Tim Carrico	Dan Raynes
Aaron M. Chandler	James A. Ream
Aaron Cherr	Jason Regel
Myles Dance	James Reynolds
Joseph Davis	Jason Rose
Jessica Deepe	Wayne F. Rudolph
Denison P. Diebolt	Heather Schieferle-Preysz
John J. Drew	William M. Schmidt
Glenn S. Eddy	Marvin C. Schneider
Ralph C. Edwards	Christina Schultz
Scott L. Eighmey	Christopher Seyer
John England	Joshua Shawnee
Andrew T. Ewers	David Sherman
Mark Fila	B. Sandy Smith
Frederick Ford	Frederick Snoy
Andrew Foster	Cass Snyder
Steven Gabbert	George Stuart
Allen Gambrel	Olga Svirsky
CJ Grisham	Carolyn Swanson
Matthew Haag	John D. Swanson
Daniel E. Hayes	Shelby Tiffin
Jens L. Helquist	Lance Udell
Michael Higgins	Jason Varner
Brian W. Holk	Mark Walker
David D. Hudson	Gene Weeks
Paul Jabber	Kipp Welch
Travis Jantz	Irving B. Welchons
Forest Johnson	Harlan E. Young
Todd Johnston	Mark W. Zacharias
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Libertarian Party in the News

NSA Spy Scandal Boosts Libertarians' Fortunes

By John Gizzi

Excerpted from *Newsmax*

Published on October 29, 2013

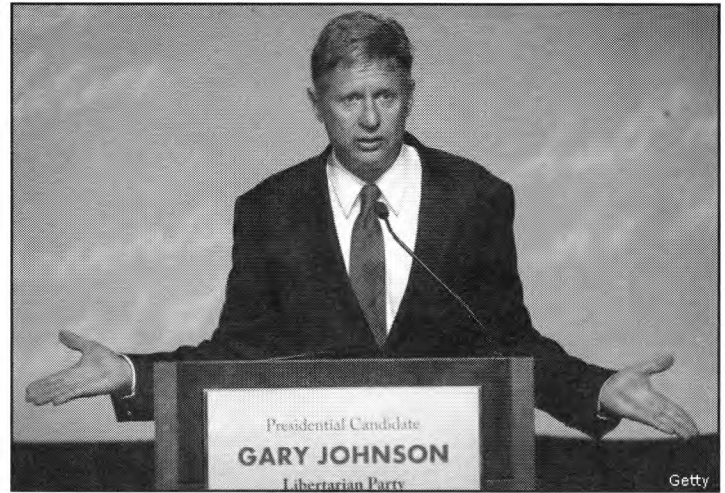
The continuing revelations from renegade National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden have been a huge boon for the Libertarian Party, its leaders are saying, resulting in a doubling of the number of potential candidates in coming elections.

The latest scandal — that the United States has been spying on German Chancellor Angela Merkel's phone for a decade — has only boosted the party's fortunes still further.

In an exclusive interview with *Newsmax*, former New Mexico governor and 2012 Libertarian presidential nominee Gary Johnson said the affair that is starting to be known as "Merkel-gate" should "by all objective measurements help the Libertarian Party because Libertarians have always taken the lead on the issue of privacy."

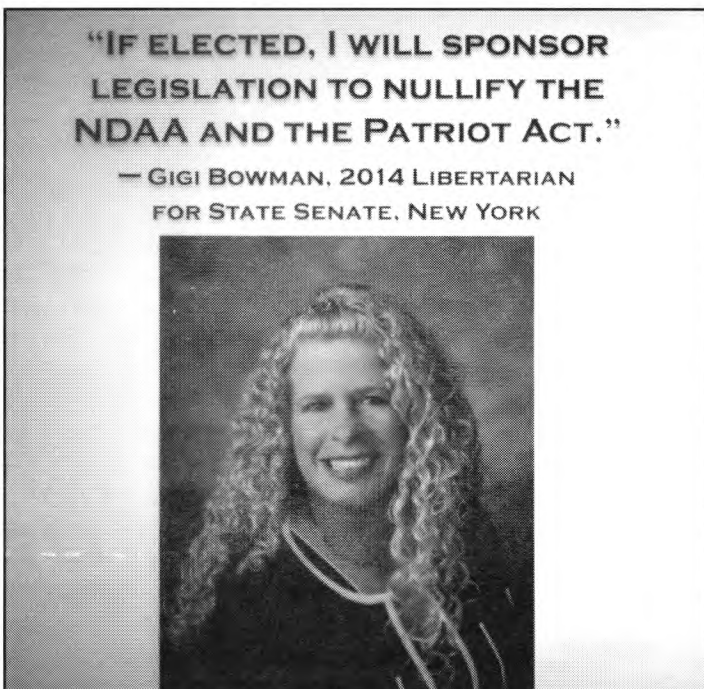
"Since Day One, back when the Libertarians nominated John Hospers as their first candidate for president in 1972, one of the party's cornerstone issues was opposition to government surveillance and protection of individual privacy," Johnson said.

Johnson dropped by *Newsmax's* Washington bureau while in town to address a weekend rally that drew thousands to protest the latest revelations of NSA eavesdropping. He also appeared at several events for Robert Sarvis, the Libertarian nominee for governor of Virginia, whom many polls show breaking into double



"Since Day One, back when the Libertarians nominated John Hospers as their first candidate for president in 1972, one of the party's cornerstone issues was opposition to government surveillance and protection of individual privacy."

— Gary Johnson, 2012 LP candidate for president



digits in the Nov. 5 election.

Johnson told *Newsmax* that "Libertarian nominees positions are increasingly reflective of where the American people are politically."

Carla Howell, political director of the Libertarian Party, told *Newsmax* that the NSA revelations surrounding Merkel are "getting a lot of news coverage and are raising awareness of the issue of privacy. Certainly the big turnout we had for the rally on Saturday is strong evidence of that."

Of political fallout from the latest surveillance information leaked by Snowden — whom Libertarian leaders hail as a heroic whistleblower — Howell said, "We're getting a big bump from it. Since he went public, we've had double the inquiries in the last few months from people who want to run for office on the Libertarian ticket in 2014."

Howell predicted there would be more Libertarian candidates vying for office in 2014 "than in any past election year."

Like Johnson, Howell cited the importance Libertarians nationwide place on Sarvis and his performance in the race for governor next week. He is up against Democrat Terry McAuliffe, who has consistently led in the polls, and Republican Ken Cuccinelli.

In Howell's view, "We've already seen a victory in the attention Robert Sarvis is drawing from the press."