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Incrementalating 101

For those of you who have worked Operation Politically Homeless booths, or done any other quiz-based outreach, I have some questions for you: How many pure liberals (100,0) did you detect? How many pure conservatives (0,100)? How many pure totalitarians (0,0)? If your results were anything like the ones I have gotten, then the number of purists of the competing ideologies was considerably less!

And even when we drop the requirement of “pure” down to “radical” (80+), libertarians are still quite competitive or even ahead of the the other ideologies. I have observed this even using the Enhanced Precision Political Quiz in 2D.

Granted, some of this bias is due to the fact that radicals of other stripes are less likely to approach our booths, but I still think this observation has significance. *When it comes to number of hardcore radicals, we are competitive with the other extremes of the Nolan Chart.* Where we are dreadfully behind is in the number of mobilized moderates.

Much of the failure of the libertarian movement stems from defining it too narrowly. If the Democratic or Republican parties were to filter membership with as strict an oath as the Libertarian Party membership oath, they would be out of business overnight. The DP would have the membership level of the Communist or maybe the Green Party and the RP would be down to the size of the Constitution Party.

Conservatism is Natural

If it works, don't break it. Or at least, be very careful when breaking it. This is especially true for the important things in life. For frivolous matters like movies and clothing fashions, these rules do not hold.

These rules are built into our genes! They are a powerful survival reflex. People are naturally conservative, not in the Republican Party sense, but in the sense of aversion to dangerous radical change. The ideological center is almost always going to be close to the status quo no matter where that status is on any absolute political scale. (The main times that this rule has broken down was after the conclusion of major wars, when people still remembered how to live with the smaller, pre-emergency government.)

Let us do a thought experiment: suppose the Libertarian Party were to have achieved power with a landslide victory in 2000. Washington fills up with political appointees who have no experience governing, and the president is a person with zero executive experience. (You cannot get much worse than being an author for having no experience in how a large organization runs!) Assuming that this didn't lead immediately to WW IV, let us look at the ramifications of a Browne

administration carrying out what was promised, along with Libertarian state governments making similar radical changes.

- The national park system ends up in the hands of Disney and the other entertainment conglomerates.
- Millions of old people are kicked out of nursing homes, lose their own homes and experience other losses as their Social Security checks disappear, their government bonds lose their value and they lose their Medicare and Medicaid benefits.
- The U.S. government loses the credit rating that it had built up since the days of Alexander Hamilton.
- The stock market crashes along with many major banks.
- Bankrupcies everywhere.
- The welfare ghettos explode in violence as the handouts end. This ends after shop owners use machine guns in self-defense.
- Unskilled workers find their wages plummeting as they have to compete against immigrants willing to live in shacks.
- Third World shantytowns spring up around the major cities as the immigration floodgates open.

In short, the United States would be well on the way to becoming another banana republic.

Rapid change, even toward a beautiful idea, can be horrible. The people were *right* not to vote for certain Libertarians!

Conversion by the Sword

I am not advocating that we drop our radically different view of where the U.S. should *eventually* be (though I do have some disagreements with the LP Platform...). I am advocating that we run candidates who focus on what can be beneficially carried out over the term of the office for which they are running. Replacing the income tax with nothing is not a viable 4 year plan when most of the federal budget is debt service and already promised entitlements. Duh!

If we implement part of our vision, many will see the wisdom in that part after seeing the results. Some will then be ready for more of our vision. If we make marijuana legal, then people will think better of legalizing cocaine after seeing the benefits of legalizing marijuana – especially if we have a tax on marijuana. If we get the middle class to pay for their education directly while giving school stamps to the poor, we will raise a new generation that hasn't been brought up by government employees. Surely, this will lead to a change in attitude.

Eli Israel referred to this process as “conversion by the sword”, and I think he deserves a round of applause for doing so.

More to Come

There is more to incrementalating that what is in this essay. But that will wait until another issue.

For now, check out the newly upgraded Tools for World Liberation site (www.quiz2d.com/tools). I have lowered some prices (including the shipping fees as I have acquired some cheaper and lighter boxes) and made the order form less cryptic. All this, in time for the midwinter spending orgy.