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## THE LIBERTARIAN MOMENT?

By Harvey A. Silverglate

Disgust for two parties fuels search for an alternative

CATHY YOUNG'S intriguing column on whether "the libertarian moment" is upon us comes at a crucial time for our republic ("The logical rise of the libertarian," Op-ed, Nov. 19). The two major political parties appear to have become dysfunctional. Some say that this is because the Republicans and Democrats have become too deeply entrenched in their polar-opposite positions. Others might argue that the problem is that both parties have adopted positions - often the same position - that are not consistent with any governing principle peculiar to the party.

For example, the left is divided on free speech, believing that it should be granted to anti-Wall Street protesters but at the same time imposing politically correct speech codes on college students and opposing speech for corporations in elections.

The right berates the left on this score, but then wishes to treat unpatriotic and violence-glorifying speech as rendering "material assistance to terrorism" while seeking to put "under God" back in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The reason that libertarianism has attracted a serious following is that many are quite fed up with the major parties' flim-flamming the voting public by claiming adherence to principle but betraying principle when it becomes expedient. And so Young's assertion that libertarianism "has a whiff of utopia" because to some extent it "disregard[s] messy paradoxes of life" might be selling the libertarians short.

The nation is currently laboring, it seems, not so much under the paradoxes of life but, rather, under the ever-increasing hypocrisies of the major political parties.

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Don't like the government? Rule by big corporations is just as dangerous

IT IS a pleasure to see a column in the Globe that gives the perspective of the right with logic and intellectual honesty ("The logical rise of the libertarian," Op-ed, Nov. 19") rather than the rehash of Fox News propaganda that often passes as conservative ideas.

However, the column fails to point out the basic flaw in the logic of the libertarians and their anarchist cousins: We do not have a choice between individual freedom and domination by the government. We may have a choice between regulation by the government and domination by corporations.

Sadly, and especially since the the Bush administration took office, the corporations have had unchecked influence over the government.

Melrose