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4 Ways To Oppose Trump Besides Voting Hillary

Here are the options various #NeverTrump leaders are actively pursuing right now to try to deliver an alternative choice for Americans this fall.

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May 11, 2016

American voters have had about a week now to start trying to get comfortable with living in a world where, barring extraordinary and historic action, they will be faced with a Hillary Clinton versus Donald Trump general election contest.

To many of us, this feels like a choice between being shot or being shot. But if key leaders in the #NeverTrump movement have it their way, there just might be a way for those voters to get out alive—just maybe.

Here are the options various Never Trump leaders are actively pursuing right now to try to deliver an alternative choice for Americans as they head to the polls this fall.

1. Support the Libertarian Party Candidate

Perhaps the most straightforward way to avoid casting a vote for either Hillary or Trump is vote for someone else who will be on your ballot. Thanks to the Libertarian Party's performance in recent elections, this will be an option for a lot of disaffected voters—whether or not they decide to exercise it.

Never Trump forces could easily engage to make that “third way” choice more palatable for pissed-off Republicans who cannot support Trump or Clinton for a whole host of reasons—especially if former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson wins the Libertarian Party nomination later this month.

Some in the Never trump movement are already planning to help Johnson, should he secure the nomination. Johnson would have strong appeal to record-focused fiscal conservatives (he earned B grades in the libertarian Cato Institute's 1998, 2000, and 2002 editions of its “Fiscal Policy Report Card on America's Governors,” years when scrutiny of gubernatorial records was said by some to be tougher than it is now).

He also might appeal to Democrats with a civil libertarian streak who are wary of voting for Clinton, given her record on government surveillance and foreign policy. A guy who has made a

name for himself by calling for altered marijuana laws could also have special traction with younger voters, who are perhaps the most unimpressed with the choice likely facing them.

A boost from Never Trump donors, operatives, activists, and average supporters could vastly improve Johnson's chances and send a powerful message to both political parties, while giving millions of individual voters a better shot at leaving the polls this November with a clean conscience. That, in sum, is why Never Trump figures are strongly considering it.

2. Keep Working the Delegates

When Never Trump activists committed to doing whatever it takes to stop Trump tell people they're prepared to keep working Republican Convention delegates to get them to do what is necessary to keep Trump off the general election ballot, they tend to get a response that is somewhere between puzzled and bemused.

But there *are* Never Trumpers, including some with ample experience of rules fights, who argue that at the convention, delegates can, should, and will be pressured to throw out the entire rule book and do what *they* want, as members of the Republican Party, a self-governing entity. A lot of the delegates will be tempted, at the least.

Don't forget, Ted Cruz's major victory in this election was in the realm of delegate selection; the convention will be stacked with Cruz loyalists. Also don't forget, if any group of people in the world really, really hates Trump on a deep philosophical, personal, and emotional level, and would love to stick it to him and twist the knife several times in multiple different directions, it's Cruz supporters, including these delegates.

Non-Cruz delegates will be watching, cringing, and worrying about the party they, not Trump, built as Trump says each new unhinged, unprincipled thing that risks the GOP's chances at the Senate, House, and countless other down-ballot races this fall. By the time the convention rolls around, they could be desperate for a way out.

Those two trends collectively give Never Trumpers pursuing this option plenty of ammunition, and some of them are prepared to expend it all in one last fight against Trump.

3. Place New Names on the Ballots in All 50 States

There has been a lot of media buzz about the Never Trump movement's commitment to pursuing this option in the last few days, and rightly so. It has real traction in Never Trump circles, with some conservative legal types, and—it would seem—people like Mitt Romney and Ben Sasse.

On spec, it sounds crazy: Get a recognizable R name on the ballot in as many states as possible—or run a write-in campaign, a la Lisa Murkowski in 2010—to give voters who in any normal circumstance would be voting Republican but cannot support Trump a way to vote at the top of the ticket, then keep on going. (A variation would be to run one well-known and well-liked figure for president in each state, say, Christie Todd Whitman in New Jersey, or Mitt Romney in Utah.)

Backers of this option believe it could help down-ballot candidates with their positioning and voter behavior. They also feel it might just work, depending on what happens with both Trump

and Hillary's unfavorables, which could in fact go up further. It could theoretically result in throwing the election outcome to the House, which gives opponents of Trump and Hillary one last chance to save the day (and, in their thinking, the country). These are the big reasons why major names in the Never Trump movement are actively working on this, and why, as out-there as it may sound, it could actually occur.

4. Form a New Political Party

Yes, it may surprise some to learn this, but there are indeed high-level conservative activists who are all but giving up on the GOP and talking seriously about starting a new political party. Obviously, doing this presents a bunch of challenges that differ from and far exceed those associated with the other options on this list. But as it stands, there is desire to do it, which may prove more enduring than some observers anticipate.

A lot of factors will dictate which, if any, of these options takes precedence in the next few days and weeks. But for the time being, all remain actively on the table, with a late April [Suffolk University poll](#) showing that only 60 percent of Republican primary voters were committed to supporting Trump if he is the nominee, and [rumblings](#) from Bernie Sanders voters about refusing to support Clinton.

The fact that high-profile Republicans like Sasse, Romney, Jeb Bush, and—for the time being, anyway—Paul Ryan are refusing to commit to vote for Trump or Clinton also gives these options legs, at least for the foreseeable future. Then there is the fact that 2016 is manifestly already a very weird, out-of-the-ordinary political cycle—something that is as heartening now as it was disconcerting three weeks ago to people opposing both Trump and Clinton.

Stay tuned: The bottom line is that Never Trump could still play a very significant role in 2016.