



Some Personal Post-Election Thoughts

Jason Pye – 11/8/2012

Since the election ended on Tuesday night and into yesterday, I've been reading many comments from my friends and family on Twitter and Facebook. They're dejected. They don't see how things could get any worse at this point. Others are casting blame wherever they can to avoid the realities that we now face.

Contrary to my friends, I've been fairly optimistic since the results became clear. But I still have a few quick things to say about the election and the future of the Liberty Movement. Some of what I have to say may burn bridges, however, I feel these things need to be said by somebody. You don't have to agree with my conclusions — some of which are setting the record straight, others are more personal — but I believe we're at the point where throwing in the towel is not an option.

This a little sporadic, but let me start with Gary Johnson.

As I mentioned yesterday, the narrative among Republicans who apparently cannot do math is that Gary Johnson, the Libertarian Party's nominee for president, cost Mitt Romney the election. As I write this, President Obama is over 50% in Colorado, Ohio, and Virginia. In Florida, Johnson's total vote is smaller than Obama's margin of victory. And even if Johnson's total does windup between the margin that Romney lost, Obama still would have won the Electoral College.

I'll note again that 70% libertarians (small-L) planned to vote for Romney. Only 14% planned to vote for Johnson, pulled roughly 7 points from each Obama and Romney. In other words, voters who were casting their ballot for Johnson were not automatic for Romney. He would have lost anyway.

Once again, Gary Johnson did not throw the election to Obama. He was not Ralph Nader. End. Of. Story. Find another narrative.

I have an admiration for Gov. Johnson because of what he accomplished during his two terms as Governor of New Mexico. I appreciate and respect his willingness to stand up for limited government ideals throughout his time in public life, including this most recent campaign. I voted for him in Georgia because Obama wasn't an option for me and Romney wasn't much better. Yes, I wasted my vote, but it didn't matter since my state was going for Romney anyway.

While it's clear that Johnson didn't cost Romney the White House, the Libertarian Party has been touting the 1.1 million votes and just under 1% of the popular vote that its nominee brought in on Tuesday night. The raw vote number is a record for the Libertarian Party. The percentage of the overall vote still runs behind Clark/Koch in 1980.

This was perhaps the most divisive political atmosphere we've seen in a lifetime when just about everyone was tired of the two major parties. The Libertarian Party received 1% of the popular vote. To tout these numbers as some great accomplishment is a celebration of mediocrity. There is no getting around that.

During my involvement in party politics, I've drifted back and forth between the GOP and Libertarian Party. My reason for drifting over to the Libertarian Party in 2005 was because I believed that Republicans no longer represented my limited government, fiscally conservative views. I was right, and I'm not convinced that this has change. Additionally, I didn't agree with the focus on social conservatism and what was essentially the shredding of the Bill of Rights through laws that were passed to supposedly combat terrorism, including the PATRIOT Act.

Unfortunately, the Libertarian Party is more interested in being a social club than trying to educate the public about libertarian view rather than being a viable political party. They're certainly good, smart people who I deeply respect and admire in the party who want win elections, but they seem to be a minority based on my personal experience. We already have the Cato Institute, the Foundation for Economic Education, the Reason Foundation, *Reason Magazine* and many others around to educate the public about libertarian ideals and beliefs.

I'm too libertarian for the GOP, Democrats don't want me because I believe in a free market, and the Libertarian Party isn't a viable option. My home is the Liberty Movement. The people who represent this movement are electable candidates who run on our ideals and principles. They don't backdown when the establishment threatens them.

There are plenty of groups that push what I believe on the issues that face the country, such as FreedomWorks, the Club for Growth, and Campaign for Liberty. I may not always agree with the candidates they endorse or issues on which they focus, but they're rattling the political establishment. That's what is needed right now. I'll spend my time and efforts helping them and other like-minded organization.