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## Cato Institute's Ed Crane on limited government vs. the parties

Posted By [Wayne Crews](#) On November 6, 2009 @ 12:00 pm In [Agenda for Congress](#), [Economy](#), [Personal Liberty](#) | [No Comments](#)

[Ed Crane writes today in the Los Angeles Times](#) <sup>[1]</sup> that "limited-government conservatives have been undermined by big-government neoconservatives," and that "it is difficult to find noninterventionists in either party."

The Democrats demonstrate a disdain for capitalism, free trade and the validity of contracts. They cheer the restriction of certain types of speech on campus and in federal law....Lately, the Democrats have been popularly associated with principled opposition to waging war in far-flung corners of the globe. But evidence on the ground today tells a somewhat different tale.

As for the GOP, it has outwardly abandoned the limited-government principles of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan. Little other evidence is needed than the Medicare prescription drug benefit — with its \$13-trillion unfunded liability — passed with a strong-arm campaign by the Bush White House and a Republican congressional majority.

Crane put some of the blame for the GOP's shift on the supply-side movement's emphasis on tax cuts and economic growth: "Supporters of those ideas didn't talk about spending cuts, much less the proper role of government. They had the effect of replacing 'liberty' as the motivating force behind the GOP with 'growth,' a somewhat less-inspiring ideal." Indeed a gigantic government may still periodically balance its fiscal budget (as occurred in the U.S. from 1998-2001); so it's important to maintain liberty itself as the goal, rather than "good government."

It's not clear how one votes for limited government anymore, so I enjoy [my "Abstain" shirt](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. But Non-interventionism—how nice a platform that would be, from *either* party.

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[1] Ed Crane writes today in the Los Angeles Times : <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-oe-crane4-2009nov04,0,277258.story>

[2] my "Abstain" shirt: <http://www.bureaucrashcontraband.com/abstain.html>

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