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September 29, 2009

[A Blueprint for Republicans](#)

Like most young conservatives, I find myself very concerned about the way the country is going. It really kicked in hard for me in the middle of 2006, when it became very clear Iraq was going south. Obviously I didn't expect the blowout in 2008 back then, nor quite the economic circumstances we find ourselves in (though my father was predicting the worst recession since the Great Depression in 2005, due to the housing market and artificially low interest rates), but the concerns were building.

Since November, many liberals and Democrats have declared the Republican Party dead — and one could find reasons to agree with them, starting with the clear minority support for President Obama and Democrats and ending with Representative Joe Wilson's public relations disaster yell of, "You lie!". I, however, have great hope for Republicans. As Ed Feulner, The Heritage Foundation's president, said when I was an intern at Heritage, "...there are no permanent victories in Washington." Below is what I see as at least part of the path back to power for the Republican Party.

1) We need a leader— not necessarily a hard right-wing conservative (which is my preference- I refused to vote for Senator McCain in the general election because of his liberal policy viewpoints and his support for the TARP), but a qualified, successful leader who is at least conservative in the traditional fashion of small government, low-spending, low-tax, strong national defense conservatives (two examples are Tim Pawlenty and Jon Huntsman) who is against abortion. Few Republicans agree completely with either man, but they have both been very successful governors, and of course Huntsman is eminently qualified on the foreign policy side of things.

This part will happen eventually- I just hope sooner rather than later.

2) We need to stay away from gay marriage. If asked, we should be honest about our opinions, but most of the moderates and independents that we must attract disagree with us on this issue, and many young people (including myself) who are against it believe it's the 50th or 100th important

issue facing the country. Why should we put on the forefront a losing issue that's not going to solve the greatest problems facing the nation, especially when it's nearly impossible to say, "I'm against gay marriage, but still think a gay person is no less of a valuable person than I am." It's how most conservatives feel, but it's incredibly difficult to get that across effectively to a public that is [increasingly in favor of, or neutral towards, gay marriage and gay-friendly policies](#), particularly with younger voters.

3) We need to change our rhetoric. In particular, we need to do so in three areas: illegal immigration, race relations, and the role of government.

Regarding immigration, we need to get the Hispanic vote, and we won't do it by talking like former Congressman Tom Tancredo (whom I supported for president during the last primary before he dropped out). Many or most illegal immigrants are here to work, not take our welfare, health care, etc. We need to stop talking about a wall on the border — it's alienating, and not as effective as economic prevention such as diminishing or eliminating the illegal immigration welfare program in America and punishing sanctuary cities and businesses. We need to streamline the legal immigration process while still making certain that immigrants speak English and will be productive members of society. We also need to stop the drug cartels, gangs, and other criminals that want to cross the border by policing with more troops that are allowed to shoot. We need to show Hispanics, who tend to be socially conservative, how our view on immigration is better for them — after all, illegal immigrants badly affect the legal immigrant Hispanic population's public image, as well as take their jobs and endanger their families.

Regarding race relations, we need to show how affirmative action is bad for everyone, particularly minorities — talking about how bad it is for whites is an old, tired argument that just won't win minority votes. We need to use statistics like Stuart Taylor did in the February 28th edition of National Journal, which stated (among other things) that "more than half of entering black law students never pass the bar and never become lawyers" because affirmative action puts unqualified candidates into classrooms. We need to show how this helps maintain negative race relations, as whites will feel they are being ignored for a less-qualified candidate (for example, the New Haven, CT firefighter case), and blacks will feel whites are trying to keep them down (as, unfortunately, we all know happens still). We also need to make sure we push for voucher systems like the one in D.C. to show minorities we ARE the better party for them, on issues from schools to families to employment.

Lastly, we need to stop saying "small government." Though the current economic crisis was caused largely by government intervention — Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, low interest rates, government housing programs, high government spending, mark-to-market accounting regulations, Democratic refusals to reign in Freddie and Fannie, etc.— the general population feels like Republicans caused it. Whatever we conservatives may think actually happened, we have to think about how the populace views us. We need to change the rhetoric to "effective government" and show how we can use government more effectively than liberals and Democrats. The time for privatization of Social Security, for instance, is definitely not now, despite how great a concept it is. (20 years from now, who knows? Maybe people will be ready for it, assuming the program isn't completely bankrupt...)

4) We need to bring back some of the intellectuals who believe the Republican Party is void of such thinking. Republicans have always been charged as being anti-elite, but we have scared away some of the very kinds of people who formed the core party ideals that created the last 40 years of Republican successes. With due respect to the strengths of former President Bush, Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck and Governor Palin, they are not going to bring the intellectuals back. We need to bring back to the forefront the William Buckley's, Ed Feulner's, etc. of the world, as well as encourage young people like Heritage researchers Rachel Sheffield and [Thomas Qualtere](#) to take up the intellectual conservative standard.

5) Opportunities arise periodically, and we must take advantage of them. For example, right now is a great opportunity for conservatives to help

with race relations, the education system, and showing the weaknesses of unions. The D.C. School Voucher debate has conservatives defending empirical data showing education for poor minorities improving against the powerful teacher unions and Democrats in Congress. This is a great opportunity (and the [CATO Institute](#) and [The Heritage Foundation](#) are taking full advantage) for us to show how we have better ideas for fixing our terrible education system through vouchers, getting rid of tenure and teachers unions, and specifically for improving the education of poor minorities, who will thereby put themselves on the path to greater employment, family, and other opportunities.

Another great opportunity we have is energy policy. [Paul Krugman](#) believes only government can do what is necessary to save the planet- however, he is wrong, and conservatives have some great opportunities to prove it. Whatever one may think of global warming, it's never a good idea to have black smoke and other effects from oil drilling going into the air and into the water and ground- however, as Charles Krauthammer [wrote last year](#), better to have it done here, with our standards and technology, than overseas. Heritage's Ben Lieberman also had a [good Web Memo](#) last Thursday that included this statement: "State-of-the-art technologies have a proven track record for reducing the environmental impact of energy exploration and production. In fact, the risk of offshore oil spills has been reduced to such an extent that natural leakage of oil from the sea floor is responsible for far more contamination than is drilling activity." Too, David Frum points out that nuclear power- a favorite whipping boy of the left- [works great in France](#). Lastly, Cape Cod has been battling over a proposed wind farm for years, one that [the late Ted Kennedy was against](#). According to a college report I saw a few years ago, the wind farms would diminish 80% or so of Cape Cod's electrical usage, *the highest per capita in New England*. The issue Kennedy had? The farms would be about 1/8 of an inch high on the horizon on a sunny day. Given the current gas prices, as well as the fact that we are beholden to terrorist-supporting and United States-hating nations for our energy (Venezuela, for example), conservatives should push hard for the kind of job-creating, energy-producing, environmentally-friendly policy combinations that only the free market can support.

6. We must continue to battle for pro-life policies while working to create an environment that encourages less pre-marital sex and fewer pregnancies (such as more comprehensive sex education programs that include abstinence education in addition to what is already taught in public schools). We are already [on the cusp](#) of a major win on the abortion debate- we just have to push a little harder. A number of liberals and moderates have claimed abortion is a side issue right now- however, saving over 1,000,000 lives per year is never a side issue, and on abortion the secular, scientific data is increasingly matching the theological arguments made by the Catholic Church and other religious institutions against abortion. Most abortion opponents won't even say it's not a life anymore, where conservatives have never compromised the fact that a fetus IS a human life.

Conservatism is not dead, and nor is the Republican Party — like liberals did after 2004, we need to find effective leaders, an effective local, state and national strategy and take advantage of the opportunities the natural sway of politics, economics, and societal circumstances will offer us.

(This piece was originally posted on [NewMajority.com](#) on May 5, 2009. It was revised and updated for this post.)

by Dustin Siggins @ 8:09 am. Filed under [Republican Party](#)
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1. *joe* Says:

[September 29th, 2009 at 8:46 am](#)

agree with most of this. where do you stand on legalizing marijuana? i dont believe trying to outshoot drug cartels at the border is the answer.

2. *Alex Knepper* Says:

[September 29th, 2009 at 9:03 am](#)

Oh no! I have competition! A fellow Race-NM writer? Next thing I know, you'll be on the Independent Gay Forum, too!

3. *Kristofer Lorelli* Says:

[September 29th, 2009 at 9:31 am](#)

Palinizing Alex (Knepper)

<http://texas4palin.blogspot.com/2009/09/palinizing-alex.html>

4. *Kristofer Lorelli* Says:

[September 29th, 2009 at 9:33 am](#)

Stunning Reversal! Young GOP Social Moderate, harsh Palin critic, now one of her biggest Fans
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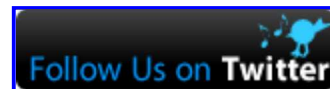
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