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# Libertarian Strategy Gazette

Volume 4 Number 2

February 2004

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## Advancing Liberty in Massachusetts

### With Lessons for Other States

As transmitted from Liberty for All! libertyforall.net

Here I set forth plans and policies that our State Party could follow that would tend to strengthen the Libertarian Party of Massachusetts:

1) Successful politics is local. The State Party should encourage and support the development of local organizations covering cities or groups of towns. To succeed, these organizations must cover enough area that every meeting has a reasonable attendance. Town committees can't do this-- there are not enough Libertarians in one town. Local organizations can help with candidate petitions. They can distribute lawn signs, go door to door with palm cards, and assist in get out the vote efforts. Local organizations can provide moral support to potential candidates.

How does the State Party support local organization? It honors and praises local organizers. It propagandizes through its party newsletter for local organization. It supplies local organizers with material support, notably contacts with local members. These are all rather different than current policy. The last point is the reverse of the current policy, under which lists of LPUS members and contacts are viewed by the state committee as a treasured asset, an asset not to be shared with people trying to do local organization.

2) Successful political organizations are built from the bottom up, not the top down. A state party and its newsletter and convention speaking slots should be used to recognize and help many local and regional party figures, not be used to showcase a few favorites of the state leadership. The State Chair should be the person who knows parliamentary procedure and runs meetings, not the State Lord Leader with supreme executive power.

"Bottom up" starts within the state committee. Last January, there was the the entirely sound proposal that the state committee should do fundraising phone calls, to raise money for a ballot access effort. Of the fifteen or so members of the State Committee, precisely six volunteered. The rest were willing to say this was a fine idea. A bottom-up effort within the state committee requires that the state committee believe that it is there to do work, not to do parliamentary lollygaging. The rest might consider getting out of the way. That's a needed change.

[A Massachusetts Strategy] (Continued on page 6)

## LPPa Strategic Analysis 2003

### A Working Example of Strategic Planning

(As forwarded us by Tim Crowley; Charles Fourier, co-author)

#### 4. Forward thinking to 2004 and beyond.

The LPPa will always be more inwardly focused than externally focused. But if the percentage is 80% inward and 20% outward, how can we make the LPPa perhaps 65% inward and 35% outwardly focused? We can do this through the growth of county chapters. We could also have someone on the membership committee who goes around persuading people to join the LPPa.

We need to clear the decks for 2004. In 2000, the last Presidential year, inquiries to the LPPa shot up when we had a national candidate. This will happen again. When this happens, we need a program in place to answer all requests for information. This could be mailing them a LibPenn, phoning them, inviting them to a local event, etc. This is what we aren't doing. We need incentive for our members to phone people.

We could beef up the Election Committee before 2004 gets here:

- 1 Election Committee Goals for 2004 and 2008.
- 2- Election Committee structure.
- 3- Election Committee budget.

One basic goal might be to outperform the Greens by 50% in any category that we find out about. Voter registration, votes, money raised, # of candidates. etc.

We need to adopt a time-line approach on the daily, monthly and multi-year levels.

#### UPCOMING RACES BY YEAR

2004

Pa. Rep and Pa. Senate(1/2)

US President

US Congress

US Senator from Pa.

Pa Row Offices (Treasurer, Atty. Gen., Auditor General  
Party Bosses in presidential election years, 2000, 2004,

2005

[Pennsylvania Strategy] (Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) [LP Pennsylvania Strategy]

IoE and JoE  
Mayor of Pittsburgh

2006  
Pa. Rep and Pa. Senate(1/2)  
Pa. Governor  
US Senator from Pa.  
US Congress

2007  
City Council,  
Mayor of Philly  
Allegheny County Executive  
Allegheny county controller  
Pgh controller

2008  
Pa. Rep and Pa. Senate(1/2)  
US President  
US Congress  
Pa Row Offices (Treasurer, Atty. En, Auditor General and  
???) \*no US Senator from Pa. in 2008  
Dems and GOPers elect (at the polls) Party Bosses in  
presidential election years, 2000, 2004, etc.

Perhaps the event horizon should be glued together to form  
a mobius strip?

**5. Provide Member Services and reward growth.**

In general, the LPPa should exist partly to empower the dif-  
ferent counties. How can we do this?

1. serve as a clearinghouse of information.
2. handle some tasks such as newsletter writing, press releases, etc.
3. Change the bylaws so that counties have incentive to get more organized.
4. another idea is to give individual LPPa grassroots mem-  
bers an incentive to sign up additional LPPa members. Per-  
haps something like this? If an LPPa member 'sponsors' a  
new LPPa member (someone who has never been part of the  
LPPa before) then they get \$5 off on their membership re-  
newal. This way, every member has an incentive to sign up  
his mother, brother, sister, wife, boyfriend, tennis partner,  
etc. This will increase revenues. Each new member is a new  
revenue stream.

If someone sponsors two people a year, then their \$25 mem-  
bership is only \$15. Additionally, the two new members  
bring in \$50 more to the LPPa. So, for a cost of \$10, the  
LPPa gets an additional \$50. There are many variations to  
this idea, but you get the point.

The growth of individual counties is not built into the by-  
laws. Neither is the growth of individual members. We need  
a county growth policy and an individualized mentoring

policy.

We should also promote the idea that local members can so-  
licit orders for campaign signs or million dollar bills, etc in  
bulk. We get several counties to agree to purchase some,  
then lump their orders into a bigger order. This allows us  
to take advantage of lower per unit cost for buying a large  
quantity of printed material. Perhaps we could combine our  
order with those of nearby states and distribute the materials  
at meetings and state conventions? the net result would be  
a lot more flyers and signs available to the grassroots as a  
low price.

**6. Mentoring should be built into the system**

Board positions have no staff. Staff could be used to  
mentor the next generation of LPPa leaders. We could  
make more use of task forces.

The proposed bylaws change where the B counties can form  
a confederation and elect a voting member to the LPPa  
board should open up a lot of static situations and allow for  
mentoring opportunities.

**7. Keeping an Eye on the National Party**

The LPPa wants the national party to succeed. Few if any  
LPPa members want the national party to stray from its cur-  
rent course of increased fiscal responsibility. Different situ-

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**Libertarians.**

ations are best handled at the national, the state and the local level. We need a healthy national, state and local party structure across the board. How to accomplish this?

We can provide a lower overhead alternative to the national party -- the LPPa. the LPPa does not pay salaries, have an office, etc. Yet we still offer quality candidates to the public. Making the LPPa more dynamic and outwardly-focused will force the national party to be competitive with us.

We need clearer mandates and expectations for our district 5 rep to follow.

We need to keep a 'fair and balanced' scorecard on the votes of the LNC. This information needs to become common knowledge.

**General Strategic Paradigms**

I see it as a pyramid with counties on the bottom, states in the middle and National at the top. The state party is uniquely situated to influence the entire pyramid because we are in between the local and the national parties. We have to keep an eye on both.

First, look at what the LPPa actually does. Then look at what it supposed to do on paper. Are there any discrepancies?

Also, look at what the LPPa ideally should be doing. How can the LPPa's structure more closely approximate its ideal function? The expression "form follows function" comes to mind.

The LPPa bylaws were probably put together haphazardly. It would be a good idea to examine the bylaws sentence-by-sentence and see how it impacts on the operations of the LPPa. How do they hinder us, how do they facilitate us?

I see the LPPa as a black box. inputs (political news, upcoming events, the campaign calendar, convention deadlines, etc) come in to the black box. They are (sometimes) evaluated and outputs (people showing up at meetings, rallies and events, press releases, candidates, local chapters etc ) come out.

How can the black box improve the quality of its inputs, analyze them better and faster, and cause higher quality outputs to happen?

Here's an off the wall idea. Why not get the help of some business school or the service corps of retired executives to look over our organization? When I went to Pitt's MBA program, they were always looking for local businesses, etc to advise for free. Students would be assigned to some bakery or something to get real world experience. The students would write a term paper about the organization and how it could be improved, using the latest MBA lingo, etc. We could have some business schools use the LPPa as a business model case study for its classes. then we look at

what the students came up with.

Also, I have read books by Al Ries and Jack Trout ("Marketing Warfare" is one of them) that turn the top-down goals, objectives, strategies and tactics pyramid on its head. Ries and Trout basically say that in marketing, you must find a successful tactic and build your strategy around it. ex) Domino's Pizza will deliver in 30 minutes or its free. Ex) Burger King will use Flame Broiling instead of frying. ex) Pepsi will seek out younger soda drinkers with Michael Jackson, etc. In these cases, the tactics drove the strategies and goals.

We also have to keep both the Libertarian activist pipeline filled with new prospective Libertarians. We need to get them to our meetings, to make them feel welcome and a part of things, and to gently mentor them so that they can be volunteers and officers.

The basic way it is usually expressed is GOST  
 Goals-at the top  
 Objectives-these help you to reach the goals  
 Strategies (how to reach the objective)  
 Tactics (to implement the strategy)

Ries and Trout will reject any goal which does not lead to a successful tactic at the bottom of the chain of reasoning. IMO our main strategies (regardless of our goals or objectives) will revolve around party building.

**Recruiting an Army of Candidates**

"Timothy Crowley" <timcrowley@worldnet.att.net>  
[www.lp.org/campaigns/crm/three.html](http://www.lp.org/campaigns/crm/three.html)

You're ready to turn your local LP into a credible political force by fielding a team of candidates. But before you begin recruiting, it pays to do your homework to identify in which races a Libertarian candidate can be the most effective.

Think about every elected position at every level of state and local government, including county commission and school board races. This process is called "political mapping."

Focus on open seats.

They offer the best opportunities for electoral victories. It can also be a good strategy to run LP candidates in races left unchallenged by the non-incumbent party. If the Democrats won't bother to challenge the entrenched Republican candidate, the race needs a Libertarian.

Two-way races against an entrenched incumbent, while they may be even more unwinnable for us than for the major party that has already given up on that seat, provide avenues for extra exposure, and increased vote totals over what we could expect for the same effort in a three-way race. They also get people in the habit of voting Libertarian.

Find out what's important to voters in the district. Research the area's demographics, including voting patterns, socioeconomic status, ethnic groups, etc. You may discover weaknesses of your opponents, or come across a race that would be perfect for a particular candidate.

OK, you know which races to target. Here, then, is a suggested strategy for preparation, recruiting, and follow-up in putting Libertarians in the race for our country's future.

The state leadership must lead. It is much easier to recruit candidates if you are already a candidate yourself (assuming, of course, you meet whatever legal residence requirements prevail in your area).

The state leadership must prepare. The preparation process includes:

Getting maps of all the appropriate electoral districts.

Identifying which districts have possible candidates (subject to the guidelines below). This is done by matching the addresses of your people with the appropriate spots on election maps. In Utah, the party's database has five informational fields that relate to candidate recruiting purposes.

Each member's information includes: district number, state senate district, state representative district, congressional district, and county. The membership list can be sorted by any of these items to facilitate candidate recruiting.

Selecting a first, second, and third choice (if possible) for each office.

Plenty of lead time is required. If the candidate filing period opens in March, potential candidates should get their first recruiting letters by January.

Putting together a candidate recruiting team. Depending on your circumstances, three or four people may be enough. If your state is large and spread out, you may want to assemble local or county level recruiting teams. The definition of an effective county party includes their ability to recruit their own candidates, apart from the state effort.

Any help you can get will allow you to concentrate on weak areas.

Prepare a timetable and quantify your goals. For example: Preparation and homework will be done by X, letter will be written by X and mailed by X. Second letter will be sent on X and a follow-up meeting or telephone call will be completed by X.

The person(s) responsible are X, X, and X. A total of \$X will be required to complete this process. This money is already (a) in the party treasury, or (b) must be raised by X date. A rough draft of a candidate recruiting timetable is

outlined later.

Quantifying your goal is a most important part of the recruitment process. If people are going to put their names on the line for us, we have to prove to them that simply filing for an office will do something useful for the party. Thus, "Your commitment is important because we are trying to field candidates for 100% of the legislative seats up for election this year. This will bring the party credibility and help us become a threat to the special interest parties." Set this goal high -- low enough to be within reach (at least theoretically) but high enough to make you work. Publicize this goal and create a bandwagon effect.

Create an environment supportive of running a lot of candidates. The farmer plows before he plants. Every time you communicate with your party members, talk about this numerical goal and how important it is to run a lot of candidates. Run articles in your newsletter -- mention it in fundraising letters -- write about it in your "Chair's Column." Build the bandwagon effect -- and when you think everyone has heard enough about it, keep on truckin' and talk some more.

Make a full slate part of your party strategy. Filling ballots with Libertarians should be part of a larger plan for victory. In turn, more candidates will be attracted by an organized effort that supports their own efforts.

Once you have finished your preparation, completed your homework, agitated the pot, plowed the field, run it up the flagpole, and counted the number of salutes, implement the recruiting process. Get everyone out of the frying pan and into the fire and see how things hop. The implementation phase should look something like this:

Ninety days in advance of the candidate filing period opening, the first letter goes out from the state chairman, inviting the person to consider running for office.

This letter will be two or three pages, to allow enough space to explain why the candidate is important to the campaign and may include a one page "recruiting flyer" prepared by either the national HQ or your state party. The one page flyer is to address general questions of strategy. Follow-up letter encouraging the candidate to run for office.

Personal follow-up. This phase is crucial. It's a good idea to telephone the potential candidate to get a sense of his or her feelings. If they don't say yes right away:

Find out exactly what their objection is. Attached is a list of common objections and suggested responses.

Secure a commitment to "keep thinking about it." Above all, on this first telephone call, avoid an outright "No." As long as they are still on the hook, you have a chance to get them in the boat.

Set up a time to meet with them personally. If they are resistant to this, don't push it. Tell them you will call them back in "a few days." At all times and at all costs, don't let them say "No" to more follow up. Remember: As a major survival skill in 20th Century America, we all have strong and effective defenses against people who are trying to talk us into doing something new, strange, unusual, and possibly risky. Included with the objection list are a couple of ideas for breaking through those defenses.

Immediately, send them a letter (same day!) thanking them for the opportunity to speak with them and answer -- again! -- their main objections. Mention your progress to date ("of the 120 candidates we are trying to recruit, 35 have said yes").

Depending on the circumstances, you may want to contact someone else in your local party to follow up with another telephone call or another letter. If they are acquainted on a friendship or business basis with someone already committed to run, have the friend contact them. This can be very effective, as it is harder to say "No" to a friend than it is to some faceless party official on the telephone.

Follow up a second time with a telephone call. At this point, you'll find that about one-third sign up immediately, having thought about it a second time. For those still holding out, remember that "the third time is a charm." Send them another letter of thanks and explanation (these follow-up letters should never be more than one page) and a third call.

If they are still sitting on the fence -- and assuming you have a backup -- ask if they mind if you fall back and talk with your "second choice" for the office. "Understand, Mr. Smith, we want you to run -- you are our first choice -- but we do have some deadlines that are fast approaching, and since running a full slate is so important for us this year, we have to talk with a couple of other people to see if they are interested."

Some will sign up at that point. Others will be relieved that they are "off the hook" for the moment. Complete the recruiting process with your second and third choices. If you still don't have success in filling that slot on the ballot, return to the original candidate and try again.

Once the candidate filing period has opened, send another letter out to the "final holdouts" for races you still haven't filled and give them another phone call. If you have time, call them on the last day of the filing period -- give them the current statistics, and turn on the emotion -- "We really need you -- you can be more help to the cause of liberty than ever before, and it's for doing nothing, really, just going down and putting your name on the ballot. You won't have to do anything else -- we'll handle it." You may get one or two more candidates that way. Never give up until the filing period is closed.

Frankly, the success rate after three follow-ups is not that great -- but it has occasionally proven useful, particularly when you are just short of a goal.

Once committed, send them a letter of thanks. Include with this letter any of the legal information (such as candidate reporting requirements) etc., and how the state organization is going to help the candidate handle this requirement. For line candidates, you should offer to file the required reports for them. You may want to offer a monthly class for active candidates.

All the preparation in the world does little good without follow up and follow through. Candidates have been lost simply because they didn't make it to the filing office by 5 PM on the final day the period was open.

The week before the candidate filing period is to start, send a letter to each confirmed candidate noting the beginning of the filing period. Give them the place and times that they can file. Schedule two or three "mass filings" where several candidates could get together and go down in a block to file.

For many of your people, this will be the first time they have run for office -- and they may, understandably, be a little uncertain as to the actual mechanics of finding their way through a maze of bureaucrats in order to complete the required paperwork. You can also offer to find a volunteer to go with them, if such support is available. Make sure that each candidate has two phone numbers to call if he or she has problems with the filing bureaucrats.

On the first day of the candidate filing period, meet with your candidate recruiting team. If you have teams in several areas, try to bring them all in for a face-to-face meeting. If this isn't possible, call them on the telephone. Since all of you are running for office (remember?), one good choice for a meeting location is a coffee shop close by the candidate filing office. Every candidate recruiter should file for office on the very first day, unless strategic reasons dictate otherwise. Copies of the "Status Sheet" should be distributed to all concerned and assignments checked.

During the first week of the filing period, contact everyone by telephone to remind them of the deadline.

Someone should check with the appropriate clerks every day and the status sheet should be updated.

On the first day of the last week of the filing period, everyone who has not filed should be personally contacted -- with a sense of urgency -- about filing. Offer to get them a ride, etc., and make sure they haven't changed their mind and are trying to back out. Schedule another "mass filing" for this week.

For the final day, anyone who has not filed should be called the night before and in the morning. Clerks should be checked at 1 PM, following the lunch hour, and more calls made to those who still have not filed. Offer to go and pick them up -- right then -- if possible.

Determine the required travel time for each holdout, and contact the clerks appropriately to find out if they have filed. If not, call them -- immediately -- and get them on the road. It is disheartening to work hard to recruit candidates -- and then have people flake out on you at the last minute. Avoid this by getting everyone filed as early as possible. We do not have so many candidates that we can afford to lose even one.

Honor your candidates. Send them another "thanks" letter once they have filed. Print their names in your newsletter and tell everyone else to thank them. Don't recruit them, file them, and forget them. Keep in touch -- preferably, with a regular party candidate's newsletter of some sort.

Use candidates as a source for suggestions for other candidates. If they say yes, tell them what areas in which you are still looking for candidates and ask if they know anyone who might be interested in the area. If they say no; ask them if they can suggest someone. You may find a lot of apolitical libertarians that way -- principled people who simply are not party people. ...Tim Crowley

*(Continued from page 1) [A Massachusetts Strategy]*

Now, some State Committee members are hard at work. The Newsletter editor comes immediately to mind. There is always a particular task that particular people cannot perform. For example, the PVLA member who is hard of hearing cannot readily cannot phone people. However, he can translate text into Spanish, and visitors to [www.cmlc.org](http://www.cmlc.org) (the en Espagnol section) or [pvla.NET](http://pvla.NET) will see his fine and continuing efforts. He's doing important positive work.

3) Successful political organizations focus on politics. You can tell the focus from the organization chart and the expectations set for the state committee. If the lead working groups within the state committee are electioneering, local organization, recruitment, and candidate development, you have a \*political\* party. If state committee members make it their business to do work for the state party, call local members to meet, greet, incite activism, and perhaps even raise a bit of money, you have a \*political\* party. If most committees are administrative and exist only on paper, you need to change.

The State Party should be pro-active in its candidate support. If you are a Libertarian candidate, you should be able to say that the State Chair or State Political Facilitator \_called you\_, and asked how the State Party can help you. She may not be able to help, but she should have asked. Someday, there will be too many Libertarian candidates for one person to call, but that's not now. Some sorts of support should be ready to go to candidates, without the candidate having to imagine them first.

The State Party should recruit candidates, and support them as possible. Until we get an extensive set of local organizations, candidate recruitment needs a very long lead time so that candidates can prepare the local support groups they need. For the State Committee to be elected in early 2004, it will be marginally possible to affect 2005 local elections, and credibly possible to influence the 2006 partisan elections.

4) Successful political organizations propagandize for their views. State Party press releases should be common, not rare. They should be short, and focussed on serious matters. There is a state legislature. The state party cannot afford a full time lobbyist, but it should lobby with some regularity on significant issues, to create visibility with the press and the public. Internet-supported lobbying, similar to the DefendYourPrivacy site of the national party, can mobilize public pressure on our issues and sides. If funds could be generated, a public oriented Libertarian tabloid would usefully go to public, college, and school libraries around the state, as well as coffee houses and college dormitories. With the propaganda effort, activist recruitment should be central. These are all substantially new programs.

Finally, remember that the objective is to move in a Libertarian direction, not to lament about failures to do so.

The voters are not stupid. The voters do know which issues they care about. If you propose to eliminate a tax, you should show some signs of knowing where the corresponding budgetary reductions can be made. If you present our solutions to issues, be sure that they are issues that the voters care about, and that the Libertarian solutions actually make sense in English. If on most days of most weeks you tell a voter that government just doesn't work, the voter is likely to remember that her mail was delivered this morning, almost all graduates of almost all public schools can read and count, many roads are paved and plowed, and therefore you probably don't know what you are talking about on any other topic, either.

Those of you who have attended the past few Massachusetts and New Hampshire Conventions have heard Michael Cloud give several superb speeches on selling our ideas to the voters: Sell the voters things they care about. Lure them on by stressing how our policies can help them. If the voter does not want our whole policy immediately, perhaps we can sell part today and part tomorrow. This is the approach we should follow.

We may contrast this with the policies advocated by Carla Howell and Rich Aucoin, who are both fine Libertarians. Carla Howell's speech at the State convention was a passionate defense of in your face, bold Libertarian policies, like abolishing the State Income tax and cutting State government income by a third, give or take. Rich Aucoin's Question 1 city referendum in Waltham would have cut city income by a quarter.

These referenda, and the associated campaigns, failed. Howell's referendum got 45% of the vote after it was ignored by

opponents, a mistake opponents are unlikely to repeat. Howell used her referendum as the centerpiece of her gubernatorial campaign, in which she spent large sums of money and had much name recognition from her 1998 and 2000 campaigns. She got a substantially smaller fraction of the vote than did the 1998 Governor-Lt. Governor team of Dean Cooke and Eli Israel, who spent little money and less name recognition.. Aucoin got a small percent of the vote, in an election in which voters could vote for up to six people.

The other approach is more promising.  
 ...George Phillies

## Good News on the National Front Conservatism is Dead

Republican Conservatism is dead on the Federal level.

It may be a while before real conservatives find out.

But some of them already have. From fiscal conservatives to Constitutionlists to the religious right, real conservatives are beginning to realize that the Republican Party is not their home any more. They may not know where to go yet, but they know where not to stay.

Why? Consider what neoconservative Republicans are doing:

George Bush and his Congressional Republicans are running the largest budget deficits in history. The expected deficit this year is a half-trillion dollars. It's up 50 billion dollars this month. That's a bit different from the traditional conservative objectives: a balanced budget and a debt-free Republic.

George Bush and his Congressional Republicans just socialized another huge piece of American industry. They expanded Medicare. The projected cost of socialist drugs has risen from 400 to 540 billion dollars in the space of a few months. Conservatives used to believe in free enterprise and self-reliance. Bush proffers 'if the voters want it, give it to them'. Speaking to the Manchester Union-Leader, his Party National Chair said exactly that.

The new Medicare support was added without new taxes to pay for the spending. We're not talking about a short-term emergency like World War II. We're talking about spending that goes on forever. Bush et al. appropriated large sums of money on top of a budget already in deficit, without any plan to pay those bills other than mailing them to the grandkids. Spending based on borrowing without prospective income isn't even liberal...it's profligate, like New York in the 1970s. (The then-mayor was a Republican, too.)

(As a libertarian, I am not fond of taxes. I'd prefer to reduce them. However, borrowing to pay operating expenses is worse.

Today T-bills pay 4.25%. The dollar is falling against the Euro a lot faster than 4.25% per year. The real rate of return on T-bills, for the foreigner central bankers buying all the new ones, is negative. Eventually, even people as stupid as foreign central bankers are going to notice that they are losing money, and stop buying. Interest rates or the money supply will go through the ceiling. Profligate spending is not conservative.)

Old-line conservative Main Street Republicans avoided ostentatious display. While maudlin, the 'Republican cloth coat' had real meaning for conservative Republicans of a half-century ago. The newest Bush national display will apparently be a manned interplanetary program, complete with moon bases and trips to Mars, all with no possibility of return. Manned space travel used to be a liberal Democrat's theme. When did it become conservative?

Forty years ago, racist southern Democrats were aided by conservative Republicans who believed in a narrow reading of the Constitution. They believed that the Fair Housing Law was Constitutional overstretch. Now a Republican Attorney General, confident that his boys have the guns, has dragged an American citizen, Jose Padilla, from the streets, and locked him up without trial or access to lawyers in a prison camp. Other foreigners are locked up in Guantanamo Bay, hidden behind a legal claim that the American Government can ignore the Constitution in territory it manifestly controls. Conservatives used to defend the Constitution, not drag it through the mud.

Once upon a time, you knew that if you were watching a film about World War 2, and the fellow in uniform came down the railroad car barking "Your Papers, Please!", that you were in the unpleasant part of Europe, and the fellow in uniform was one of the heavies. Now Bush and his Neoconservatives have brought the European state travel permit system into America. That's not conservative, and many conservatives know the truth when they see it.

A half-century ago, conservatives believed that the Constitution was a functional document with working checks and balances. Last fall, a Republican Congress virtually free of those conservatives voted that George Bush could launch a war, if he felt like it, without asking for a declaration.

Once upon a time, conservative Republicans believed there was merit to honesty. The final blow against Richard Nixon was the proof that he had lied about the deeds of his subordinates. It was archconservative Barry Goldwater who told Nixon that it was time to go unless he wished to be voted out of office. Over the past year, we have been subject to claim after claim from neo-conservative Republicans, all to justify war with Iraq. The Iraqis had a resurgent atomic program. They had aluminum tubes for isotopic separation. They had vast stockpiles of gasses and bacteria, and we knew exactly where those stockpiles were. All those claims were lies, are now visibly lies, and are not being called as lies. Not by Federal Republicans, in any event. Conservatives may believe in honesty, integrity, and the value of a man's word. Federal Republicans do not.

At the Federal level, conservative Republicanism is replaced by nationalist Republican socialism. At the Federal level, conservative Republicans are practically extinct. A few stray conservatives may flutter hither and thither, but their numbers are so small they have no hope of progeny.

Fortunately for Mr. Bush and his coterie of neoconservative nationalist Republican socialists, his Party's conservatives haven't figured yet that matters have gone astray. If they do, Mr. Bush's vote totals may suffer. The conservatives who voice suspicions, the Grover Norquists and friends, are subject to gross vilification by neocon ranters. The planted line, some months ago, was that the word 'neoconservative' was an antisemitic smear, that no such movement existed. The lie was put to this transparent falsehood by—an honest and proud neoConservative.

Republican conservatives are not stupid people. Sometimes it takes a while for people to realize how badly they have been conned, or at least neoconned. In the end, Republican conservatives are going to realize that their principles are rejected by their Party, their traditional home has behind their backs been sold to a neoconservative nationalist Republican socialist brothel, and it is time to move to a better neighborhood.

Some of them, the Leave Us Alone Please Republicans, may come to realize that they disagree with some Libertarian ideas on basic social freedoms, but that we offer them a better home than they now have. In a storm, any port may be welcome, even if it will be better to set sail on the bright rays of the morning.

And some others may start a Secular Conservative Party. That Party might sensibly occupy the half of the Nolan chart opposite us.

Season's greetings to all!

George Phillies  
**PVLA MEMBER**  
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Founded 1996.

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Grove Street, Worcester. Contact George Phillies, 508 754  
1859 phillies@4liberty.net for future meeting plans

**Pioneer Valley Libertarian Association**

Meets the Second Wednesday of the Month  
7PM, Bickford's Family Restaurant, Springfield  
Corner of Old Boston Highway and Pasco Roads  
(Mass Pike, Exit 7, south on 21 to Old Boston Highway, and  
three blocks to the Right)

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