



10 Questions Separating Liberty Candidates From Counterfeits

It is, of course, true that the Republican Party has positioned itself as the party of conservatives while the Democratic Party has appealed to liberals. But the difference between the two major parties has been much more rhetoric than substance. Consider the last presidential race, when Senators John McCain and Barack Obama appeared to take opposite positions on the question of whether the government should redistribute wealth (remember Obama's response to Joe the Plumber and McCain's embracement of Joe?). Yet during the heat of the fall campaign both voted for, and lobbied fellow Senators to vote for, the now-infamous \$700 billion TARP bailout.

It is also true that liberal Democrats also seem to outdo conservative Republicans in the amount of government they recommend. This may make less-liberal Republicans look conservative by comparison, but it doesn't change the fact that both establishment Republicans and Democrats are headed in the same general direction leading ultimately to national suicide. It is as if Democrats want to plunge the country into an abyss and the molten lava below while Republicans are content to climb down the mouth of the volcano and into the lava. Either way, although Republicans may be considered the lesser of two evils, the country's fate is the same. Which begs the question: Why vote for either Republicans or Democrats?

One reason to consider such a vote is the fact that not all Republicans and Democrats follow the establishment script. But among those who deviate from the script, how many really mean it? And how would they vote if elected?

Many tea partiers and even constitutionalists were hoping for a better Capitol Hill performance from Scott Brown, the Massachusetts Republican who took Senator Ted Kennedy's seat in a special election earlier this year in the first nationally covered Tea Party victory. Election of Brown promised a radical change from the liberalism of Teddy Kennedy, but Brown actually had a liberal voting record as a Massachusetts State Senator. Once he became a U.S. Senator, Brown voted to kill the Audit the Fed provisions of Obama's financial regulatory bill before voting to pass the final, disastrous bill. Brown also voted against requiring a timetable for withdrawal from Afghanistan, extending the once-important retribution against al-Qaeda nine years ago into an open-ended and pointless U.S. occupation of Afghanistan. In fairness, Brown also voted against the ObamaCare healthcare reconciliation bill (a key part of his campaign) and voted against confirming Elena Kagan to the U.S. Supreme Court. But it is far from clear that Brown will actually work to reverse our present plunge into the volcano, as opposed to simply supporting a slower rate of descent.

One need not back a perfect candidate in order to help restore the freedoms and economic prosperity of American citizenry, but when deciding whom to vote for it should be kept in mind that the lesser of two evils is still evil. It is this writer's view that the appropriate question to consider in the coming election is not Are they better than the Democrats? or Are they better than the Republican? but will they move us in the right direction? For most candidates, Republican and Democrat, the answer to the last question is no.

But a new movement is afoot, the Constitution candidates (or Liberty candidates) movement that has arisen out of the Tea Party movement. All candidates recently seem to be claiming they favor the Constitution, a movement first popularized in the 2008 presidential campaign of Congressman Ron



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Paul. But how can a voter be sure these new liberty candidates would lead us in the right direction? Is there a litmus test battery of questions for candidates to separate constitutionalists from the warmongering neocon phonies and establishment Republican toadies?

While there is no sure-fire way to tell which candidates are telling the truth, vigilant citizens can separate many of the phonies with tough questions. The real questions to ask are those regarding issues that will take the citizens away from the precipice of the volcano and back down the mountain, i.e., questions about issues that will move the nation in the right direction. The following questions should separate the genuine liberty candidates from the counterfeits:

1. *When should the federal budget be balanced?* (If they have a deadline any time later than the next two-year election cycle the term for which representatives are currently seeking election suggest that the candidates should suspend their current campaign and run for office later when they'd fight for a balanced budget. They're as phony as a \$3 bill.)
 2. *How would you balance the federal budget? Other than cutting waste and pork, something even liberals claim they want to do, what programs costing more than \$1 billion per year would you vote to eliminate entirely in order to balance the budget?* (This is an especially relevant question if the candidate says he or she is for tax cuts, as many Republicans do. If a candidate cannot name a single program of \$1 billion or more head cut out entirely such as foreign aid in the face of an annual deficit of \$1,400 billion, he is lying when he says he wants a balanced budget or that he wants to reduce the size of government.)
 3. *Would you balance the budget based on the current level of federal revenue or reduce taxes while also cutting spending? Congressman Ron Paul says he would eliminate the federal income tax and replace it with nothing. Do you think this could be done, and if so, how?*
- Budget issues are not the only questions relevant to the liberty movement. In addition there are some other relevant questions, the majority of which the candidate should affirm if he would indeed move the nation in the right direction:
4. *Would you vote to abolish the Federal Reserve and replace it with a gold standard?*
 5. *Do you believe the U.S. Supreme Courts Roe v. Wade abortion decision, which took the issue of abortion out of the hands of states, was a direct assault on the Constitutions 10th Amendment?*
 6. *Would you pull U.S. military forces out of Iraq and Afghanistan?*
 7. *Would you also pull U.S. military forces out of South Korea and Germany, and in general support a non-interventionist, mind-our-own-business foreign policy?*
 8. *Would you end all foreign aid, including aid to Israel, Egypt, Afghanistan, and Iraq?*
 9. *Would you insist that the NSA and the rest of the federal government abolish all warrantless wiretapping and honor the Fourth Amendments requirement that all searches have a warrant and probable cause? Would you seek to get the executive branch to punish violators with prison sentences?*
 10. *Would you insist that the federal government not engage in torture, which violates the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and vote for a law banning waterboarding and extraordinary rendition? Would you insist that the Fifth Amendment be vindicated and the right to trial by jury be upheld, even for terrorism suspects?*

As noted above, no battery of questions is perfect proof of candidate honesty. The best policy is to ask



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tough questions, weigh the answers, and vote accordingly. And just as important, the next step is to monitor how candidates actually vote when they reach congressional office, with voting guides such as The New Americans Freedom Index.



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