

FACTS ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION PARTY

In 1992 a coalition of independent state parties united to form the U.S. Taxpayers Party at its first national convention in New Orleans, Louisiana. Among the notable convention speakers was former Congressman Ron Paul. The party's founder, Howard Phillips of Virginia, Chairman of the grass-roots lobby, the Conservative Caucus, was nominated to be the party's first candidate for President with retired Army Brigadier General Albion Knight of Maryland nominated as the party's first vice-presidential running mate. The US Taxpayer's Party secured ballot position in 21 states. Later, in 1999, the name was changed to the Constitution Party to better reflect the party's primary focus of re-establishing the American Constitutional Republic according to the Actual Intent of the Framers of the U.S. Constitution.

Read the History of the Constitution Party at this link: www.constitutionparty.com/the-party/history/

CANDIDATES

Constitution Party candidates were elected to partisan offices for the first time in 2006, including Montana State Representative Rick Jore. Many Constitution Party supporters hold local non-partisan offices across America, including Alaska and Pennsylvania, among others.

Visit the Election Central page on our website for more information: www.constitutionparty.com/get-involved/election-central

PLATFORM

The Constitution Party is the only party which is completely:

Pro-Life

Pro-States' Rights

Pro-Second Amendment

Pro-Constitutional, Limited Government

Against- illegal immigration and amnesty

Against- U.S. policy being dictated by the United Nations and other globalist organizations

Against- undeclared unconstitutional wars (such as Iraq and Afghanistan)

Against- free trade and all international trade agreements such as NAFTA, GATT, TIPP, TPP

Read more at these links:

SEVEN PRINCIPLES (www.constitutionparty.com/our-principles/seven-principles/)

KEY ISSUES (www.constitutionparty.com/our-principles/key-issues/)

2012-2016 PLATFORM and RESOLUTIONS (www.constitutionparty.com/our-principles/2012-2016-platform-and-resolutions/)

WHY A THIRD PARTY?

1. To encourage voter participation and citizen involvement in the governing process.
2. Competition yields a Superior Product; i.e. better elected officials and better government.
 - 95% of all incumbent candidates win re-election. In recent years, between 50 and 75 of incumbent Congressmen in the U.S. did not face an opponent on the November ballot, allowing them to be reelected without even campaigning.
 - Voter choice is even more limited in state legislative races. 35 to 40% of the 6900 seats in state houses across the US (over 2500 seats) typically have no competition.
3. To address issues ignored by the two parties in power.

PAST THIRD PARTIES CHAMPIONED...

- A Woman's Right to Vote -introduced in 1872 by the Prohibition Party. It wasn't until 1916 that the two political parties in power began to consider the issue.
- Abolition of Slavery-introduced by the Liberty Party (1840/1844) The issue was not fully accepted by the Republican Party even as late as 1860. The Republican Party was itself a third party in 1854 when it was founded. Just a few years later, the Republicans defeated the incumbent conservative party, the Whigs, by running a man named Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln, running in a four-way race, won the Electoral College and the presidency even though he wasn't on the ballot in nine states and received less than 40% of the popular vote.
- A Balanced Budget- focus of Independent/Reform Party (1992/1996) candidate Ross Perot who campaigned for fiscal restraint. By the time George W. Bush became president the budget was balanced. Today both parties give strong lip service to ending deficit spending though neither party is willing to make the tough political choices needed to balance the budget.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THIRD PARTIES

Gary Odom

Former National Field Director

Most Americans have been led to believe that that the United States has a two-party political system. In fact, of course, the Constitution of the United States says nothing about political parties and many of the founding fathers abhorred the very idea of political parties taking root in America. The fact that political parties have developed over the history the United States of America is largely due to human nature—a tendency to congregate with others who have mutual ideas and interests. From almost the beginning there were two competing parties—the Federalists of Washington, Hamilton and Adams and the Democratic-Republicans of Jefferson, Madison and others. This was the beginning of the so-called “two party system.”

Despite this, new parties are not a unique experience in American politics. It wasn't long before there was a change in the original line-up. In 1816, the Federalists were to run their last Presidential candidate and for much of the remainder of the first part of the 19th Century the Whig Party provided the primary competition for the party that came to be known as the Democrat Party. Well known Whigs included Daniel Webster, William Henry Harrison and Henry Clay.

In the 19th Century new parties continued to develop. In 1832, the Anti-Masonic Party won 8% of the vote. In 1848 the Free Soil Party, led by former President Martin Van Buren, won 10% of the vote. In 1856, the year the Republican Party was born—as a new or “3rd Party—another 3rd Party, the American Party (or Know Nothings as they came to be better known) won 22% of the popular vote with former President Millard Fillmore heading the ticket. Of course, in 1860, Abraham Lincoln of the new Republican Party was elected President. The Republican Party had been born as a “third party” in 1856, as aforementioned, largely in response to the issue of slavery.

Thereafter, the Whig Party, which had failed to take a strong stand on the matter of slavery, faded from the political scene and was replaced by the Republican Party as the second major party in the eyes of most people. Nevertheless, throughout the remainder of the 19th Century new parties continued to burst onto the scene and some met with success. The People's Party (also known as Populist Party) flourished in the latter years of the 19th Century and continued on into the early years of the 20th Century. Its Presidential ticket carried four states in 1892 and it elected candidates to office in local and statewide races in some jurisdictions. Its fortunes were short lived, however, as the Democrat Party co-opted many of its main issues in 1896. It re-organized and hung on to some degree until 1908 when its flame finally flickered out.

In the early 1900's the interest in alternative political solutions had not, however, abated. As the late William K. Shearer noted, in his history of the American Independent Party:

“By the early 1900s, the Republican Party had become thoroughly dominated by a few powerful political bosses, the giant political bosses, and the financial empires which the bosses serve. Farmers, workers and independent businessmen suffered while the power of government was directed only to serve the interests of railroad, banking and other monopolies.”

“Particularly in the Midwest and West rebellion stirred. Dynamic political personalities such as Robert La Follette in Wisconsin, George Norris in Nebraska, Hiram Johnson in California, the Nonpartisan

League in North Dakota, and the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota overturned the monopoly-dominated Republican machines and elected public officials pledged to progressive goals...”

This, generally speaking, was the foundation of what became known as the Progressive Party. In 1912, the Progressive Party, with Theodore Roosevelt as its standard bearer, received over 4,000,000 popular votes (27.4% of the total) and over 88 electoral votes. In 1916, however, Roosevelt deliberately scuttled the Progressive Party, and went back to the Republican Party. That year, the Progressive Party failed to nominate a candidate for President at its national convention. The Progressive Party did survive in some states until the 1940's and again ran a Presidential ticket in 1924 with Senator Robert La Follette as its Presidential nominee and Senator Burton K. Wheeler as its Vice-Presidential candidate. That ticket secured 4,800,000 popular votes (16.6%) and 13 electoral votes, but 1924 proved to be the end for the Progressive Party as a national entity.

In the 20th Century there were more new party efforts, not all of which does space allow mention of here. The 1948 Presidential Campaign featured two “third parties,” the States Rights Democrats, “Dixiecrats” led by South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond and a new Progressive Party incarnation led by former Vice-President, Henry Wallace, though neither effort took on a life beyond the 1948 election year. Two other major third party efforts in the 20th Century must also be noted: The American Independent Party candidacy of former Alabama Governor George Wallace in 1968 and the Reform Party candidacies of Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996.

In 1968, a year of great turbulence in American history, George Wallace secured nearly 10,000,000 popular votes and about 14% of the votes along with the electoral votes of the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. This effort did grow into an ongoing political party, the American Independent Party, though Wallace was never again to be its nominee.

After the Wallace candidacy of 1968, the Republicans and Democrats and the power brokers who support them, were sufficiently alarmed so as to cause them to begin the process of making ballot access laws for new parties—particularly in some southern states—much more difficult around the country. As a result, new grassroots parties such as the Constitution, Libertarian and Green Parties now face difficulties not generally encountered by 3rd Parties in the 19th Century and the early part of the 20th Century in just putting its candidates on the ballot. Many state laws make simply qualifying for the ballot an exceedingly difficult chore. It is, of course, very difficult to compete in an election when one isn't even allowed to be on the ballot!

Another obstacle arising more prevalently in the latter part of the 20th Century has resulted in the dwindling number of competitive news media sources that are willing to provide information about new parties and their candidates. With the vast reduction in the number of newspapers and consolidation of all news media sources into the hands of just a few major corporations, which are closely interlocked with the major financial institutions who have a strong interest in perpetuating the status quo, there is very little opportunity for a new political “brand” to break through the media barrier. In fact, since 1972, after the shock to the establishment caused by the Wallace candidacy in '68, there has been in effect what has been described as a “blackout” concerning new or “third” political parties on the part of the national media.

The majority of Americans who depend on the national media for their information are now completely unaware of the existence and efforts the so-called “minor parties” such as the Constitution Party, the Libertarian Party or the Green Party. Only in unique circumstances, when its hand is forced, does the

national news media even acknowledge other parties or independent candidates, in any kind of a serious way. Such a circumstance did arise in 1992, when well-known billionaire Ross Perot ran as a candidate on his newly established Reform Party. It was clear to the news media that if it ignored his candidacy he could bypass any blackout by simply buying all of the paid advertising that he needed. In addition, his money would allow him to overcome ballot access barriers which provide difficult obstacles to grassroots party movements. Therefore, the national news media didn't even try to ignore him. Because of his folksy manner and the fact that he was hitting on important issues, ignored by the other parties, such as the national debt and trade policies which were causing the loss millions of American jobs, Perot actually led all candidates in the polls for quite a while in 1992 and finally ended up setting a record for an independent or third party popular vote total, though he received no electoral votes.

It should be noted that in 1992 there were several other well organized third party efforts including the US Taxpayers (Constitution) Party, Libertarian Party, and Natural Law Party. These parties did not have millions at their disposal to spend and were ignored by the national news media, despite the serious messages propounded by their candidates.

That only two parties have dominated the American political scene for most of the 20th Century and early portion of the 21st Century can be attributed to the fact that this "two-party paradigm" has served the established economic powers very well. While this was to some extent true throughout history, the consolidation of media sources and the mergers of major corporations and financial interests have made the effect more pronounced since the latter part of the 20th Century.

Dr. Carroll Quigley, a professor at Harvard, Princeton and Georgetown Universities wrote a book entitled "Tragedy and Hope" which amounted to an "expose," albeit an affectionate one, of the international "roundtable" network which, working with "the 'powers of financial capitalism, has the aim of establishing world system of financial control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole." Certainly in the 20th and 21st centuries, there is little room for doubt that we have seen the consolidation of financial power into fewer hands and that these power brokers exert greater control over the media and the political system than ever before.

In examining the "two party system" prevalent in the United States, Professor Quigley noted:

"The argument that the two parties should represent opposed ideals and policies, one, perhaps, of the Right and the other of the Left, is a foolish idea acceptable only to the doctrinaire and academic thinkers. Instead, the two parties should be almost identical, so that the American people can "throw the rascals out" at any election without leading to any profound or extreme shifts in policy."

One doesn't have to subscribe to a "conspiracy theory of history" to understand that this "pendulum-style political system" serves the big-monied special interests and the entrenched parties, whom they control, quite well. The powerful special interests, sitting, figuratively, at the fulcrum of the pendulum, contribute to and exert tremendous influence and control over both, the Republican and Democrat parties. While the voters feverishly push the political pendulum back and forth from one side to the other, election after election, under the impression that they are making significant changes, there is actually almost never any significant change made at all when it comes to real policy. In fact, those who exert the real power and influence behind the scenes (or at the fulcrum for the purpose of this example) rarely, if ever, care which candidate or party is elected. While the names sometimes change,

and the rhetoric may be passionate and seem significantly different between the parties, policy almost never changes because the big money power brokers who effectively control most of what happens in both major parties remain the same and so do their interests.

History demonstrates that new parties, despite the “conventional wisdom” that America has a two-party system, have existed almost from the beginning of our nation’s history. Rather than being a strange anomaly, they have been a natural and frequent political occurrence. On two occasions previously dominant national parties were replaced by newer parties. First, the Whigs replaced the Federalists and later the Republicans replaced the Whigs. In both 1968 and 1992, similar re-alignments nearly occurred. As dissatisfaction with major party politicians has reached an all-time high, it would certainly appear that some new re-alignment of political parties is highly possible, and would be extraordinarily appropriate. It will be necessary however, if this is to occur, for American voters to begin to think for themselves and to cease being slaves to “pendulum politics.” The American voter must break from the habit of voting for the lesser of two evils out of fear, and begin voting for what, in their heart, they know is right and for those candidates who they know will do right, according to the Constitution of the United States of America.

If the American people are ready to take this courageous step, the Constitution Party is prepared to be that new broom that will sweep clean and give the American people a real chance to reclaim their nation.