

What happened in November? Republicans were probably sitting around punch drunk as the results came in and Obama flew past the 270 mark for electoral votes. It also didn't help that we were getting mopped up in state and local elections as well. After getting out of our daze, as is part human nature, we began to wonder why we lost and subsequently started pointing fingers. Hey, every one does it - that's why I'm writing this piece you are reading right now. However, I would like to think I'm at least being somewhat more objective.

There are certainly many factors to the outcome of any election, and 2008 was certainly no different. Obama obviously came up huge when he got college age kids hooked on his hollow promises of "Hope and change". Now he's talking about changes he's going to make, but I certainly didn't know what he was planning on changing when he started that ploy. Not that it mattered, as apparently change for its own sake is what college kids like (<http://tinyurl.com/92x85g>).

Although the college-age demographic getting suckered into buying a logically bankrupt concept such as change being good for its own sake is low hanging fruit in this discussion, it would be a disservice to pin the election outcome merely on that. After all, our age group normally votes Democratic anyways, so I look at it almost as a wash.

So if that isn't it, what else might there be? One of the things that I've seen is that some Republicans like to blame the people who voted Libertarian (<http://tinyurl.com/8gqsce>). Before I continue, I need to describe the two general castes that would vote in such a way:

- 1) Those who will pretty much always vote for Libertarian candidates (Big-L libertarians)
- 2) Those who may generally vote Republican yet maintain a political philosophy of classical liberalism (Small-L libertarians)

Common sense would dictate that under most circumstances, the Big-L libertarians, just like the college-aged populous, should be irrelevant to the discussion of throwing the election one way or the other. In contrast however, I would argue that the Small-L libertarians voting for a Libertarian candidate very might be the ones responsible for where this election went.

If that's the case, then aren't the Libertarians indeed the ones to blame? Aren't the Small-L libertarians guilty of shooting themselves in the foot by voting for Bob Barr? They may be, but only to the extent that a firearm is responsible for murder or a fork is responsible for making Rosie O'Donnell fat.

If that's the case, then who is actually responsible? These classical liberals aren't stupid – they realize that voting for Barr was going to pull votes from McCain in a race that was going to be close. Something had to have triggered them. So what is this trigger then? I say it's non-other than the Republican party itself.

I've heard many people argue that the party needed to go for the moderate vote in order to win. This type of mentality is exactly why we lost. Republicans weren't being fiscally conservative nor were they pushing for limited government.

What are people going to think when the party's best known protagonist (the president) states that "I've abandoned free-market principles to save the free-market system" and expands government spending and intrusion into our lives at levels not seen since FDR? What are people going to think when the party's presidential nominee was one of the key sponsors of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act – a piece of legislation amounting to nothing less than an assault on the First Amendment? Well I'll let you

know what I thought – I thought the party emblem was changing from an elephant to a bust of Joseph Stalin. Given the evidence, it shouldn't be much of a wonder why the Small-L libertarians voted for Bob Barr this year.

If the Republican party wants to actually regain some legitimacy, they need to stick to free market, limited government philosophies. Months before the election (or the bailout) I had a small hunch this was going to be the doing-in of the party (<http://tinyurl.com/8ttkd5>). It looks like my suspicion was right.

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