

# What Will Republicans Do With Control of Congress?

By Roy Minet (Rev. 11/19/14)

It would be wrong to think that Republicans won big last November 4<sup>th</sup> and are now ascendant. Not very many people like Republicans. Gallup regularly samples voters' political affiliations and those choosing the Republican Party have declined steadily to only 24% this year. Arguably, Republicans have atrophied into just a minor political party.

The Democrats aren't far behind.

At the same time, those not associating with either of the two old parties have steadily grown to a whopping 45% in 2014. Assuming the trend continues a little while longer, a majority of voters will not be represented by either of the two old parties.

How, then, did Republican candidates garner so many votes in the recent mid-term election? They did it simply by being the lesser of two evils – not a particularly impressive accomplishment.

In a few years, the Democrats will likely be seen as the lesser of two evils again and their candidates will then win most elections. Wake up, everybody, this cycle has been repeating for many decades! The power shift was exceptionally dramatic this time because Democrats, especially at the national level, have exhibited pervasive and astounding wrongheaded incompetence and corruption for several years running.

The best way to break this depressing cycle would be free and open competition. Healthy competition always drives improvement. Unfortunately, true competition cannot flourish as long as the two old parties conspire to rig the political system in so many ways to suppress their competitors.

With the significant power they've just won, it's intriguing to consider how it *might* be possible for Republicans to break the vicious circle before our country spirals completely down the drain. They'd have to be principled, united, serious and persistent. They might not be able to make significant progress until after 2016, but they need to get started now to have a shot at winning the presidency. Here are some of the major things they'd have to work hard to accomplish.

**Balance the budget** in two or three years by cutting spending significantly, not some smoke-and-mirrors 10-year "plan" that never happens. Of course, that means actually having a federal budget and we have not had a budget for six years – only "continuing resolutions." Stop hoodwinking the public by saying spending was cut when spending *increases*, but a little less than some straw-man projection. Cutting spending means you actually spend less this year than last year. Our bloated, inefficient, out-of-control government simply must be made much smaller and less intrusive.

**Reform taxes.** The current income tax code is tens of thousands of pages of complex special breaks for some and penalties for others. It costs about a quarter of a trillion dollars each year to operate and collect. There are thousands of other hidden taxes. Consolidate taxes into a simple, broadly-based federal sales tax that exempts only food and clothing. Abolish the IRS and save its 12-billion-dollar budget.

**Get government out of all health care.** Attempting to “tweak” the Obamacare monstrosity is futile. It must be completely ripped out, roots and all. Tax reform would remove the perverse tax incentive that locks employers into providing health insurance. There is no reason we can’t buy health insurance in a free market exactly like we buy our automobile or homeowners insurance.

**Maintain a strong defense, but shift to a non-interventionist foreign policy.**

**Drop the so-called “social issues.”** Individuals have the right to manage their own affairs. No government should define, license or restrict social institutions such as marriage. It is completely up to individuals and groups of individuals like churches to define social institutions for themselves. Everyone has the right to treat their bodies however they see fit. Live and let live.

There’s more, but that’s enough of a Libertarian agenda for now. If Republicans make significant progress toward accomplishing these things, they may gain enough respect to win future elections without having to depend upon the Democrats to make them the lesser of two evils. Perhaps then they would no longer fear competition.

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