

**Leif Smith to Harry Browne**  
**Politics of Liberty – A Strategy**  
**October 2, 2000**

**Problem:**

Many people who prefer your views above those of all other candidates will nevertheless cast their votes for someone else.

They fear that their vote, cast for you, may be the vote that gets their least favored of the front-runners elected. In the coming presidential election they fear that a vote for Harry Browne is a vote for Al Gore.

In addition, there are people who share your views who will not vote at all because they believe you cannot win.

And the fact that any libertarian candidate is likely to get only a small part of the total vote reduces the interest of the press in covering libertarian views.

There is a way to change this.

**Solution:**

Declare now that a few days before the election you will make an announcement requesting those who favor your views to vote for one of the two most likely winners. State that you do not wish to suggest that you are in agreement with your opponents, but that you have concluded, as widely expected, that you are not likely to win, and that you wish to direct your votes to the probably least harmful of the prospective victors.

In addition, request that everyone who intends to, or who has cast their vote as you have suggested, send in a note, or register on the LP web site, indicating that they will do so or have done so, and that in future they will probably vote as recommended by the libertarian candidate.

Count and collect these “registrations”. They will be a persuasive tool in future campaigns. As the number grows, contending politicians will seek more and more to please the libertarian candidate, knowing that their fate may depend on it.

If anyone confused by this tactic claims that they thought you were running for president, respond that you are running for liberty and will do all you can for that cause, even when it means directing votes to an opponent. But remind them that the day may come when it will be no longer a practical necessity to re-direct libertarian votes.

In a close race, which the upcoming presidential election seems to be, the votes you command may be decisive. Your opponents, and members of the press who favor them will become aware of this.

At that point you may expect attention, previously difficult to obtain, suddenly directed to you and to your views. People will ask you, "Mr. Browne, what would we have to do to gain your favor?" You will answer, "Give me a substantial reason to believe that you understand liberty better than your strongest opponent, and give me reasons to believe that you understand how to put your understanding to practical use if you attain office." This should yield interesting, and possibly amusing responses.

If you are asked, "What if neither of the favored contenders can come up with anything credible?" You say, "That's possible, perhaps likely. In that case I will decide who is the least dangerous to liberty, or if that is impossible, I will simply work on the principle that it is always worthwhile to unseat a current office holder who has proved useless or worse."

### **Results:**

This strategy disposes of the "throwing away your vote" issue. And it gives the Libertarians real power in any close race.

I believe that should you do this you will find many of your supporters delighted because, at last, they will feel politically effective. Registrations in the Libertarian Party will increase rapidly as the many who are disgusted with the ideas and actions of the Republicans and Democrats realize this is a winning strategy.

And someday it may be that the number of people who have registered with the Libertarian Party as inclined to vote according to our recommendations will be sufficiently large that our candidate can say, "The day has come when I do not need to recommend one of my opponents. Cast your vote for me and we will win!"

There is more to be said, but this introduces a strategy to powerfully influence current political outcomes.

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If you have not emailed me before, please start the subject line with: \*\*\*\*\*Browne to make sure your email is seen. - Jan 28, 2024