

Remarks by Jack Painter
Indian Hill Tea Party
September 13, 2010

Since this is our first meeting since June, I'd like to take a few minutes to discuss what our group stands for and what we're trying to accomplish.

The starting point is the central idea behind our movement

- It's the core principle on which our country was founded ó the idea that all men are created equal and are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.
- In other words, we're equally human and therefore equally free.
- By that I mean we have the right to be free from coercion and free to choose as long as we're not harming anyone.

Our founding fathers realized you have to establish boundaries on government to safeguard liberty.

- Without boundaries, government tends to grow more powerful over time.
- Eventually, it encroaches on liberty and makes some people servants of others.
- As Gerald Ford said, "A government big enough to give you everything you want is a government big enough to take from you everything you have."

Our movement is a reaction to the fact that in many ways our federal government has escaped its boundaries.

- This has happened over many decades.
- It has accelerated in recent years.

Our response is to promote three principles that we believe are key to reestablishing boundaries for our government:

- Limited government
- Fiscal responsibility
- Free enterprise

If you want to learn more about these principles, I recommend you visit our Web site at www.indianhillteaparty.org.

The key question is how to best promote these principles.

The Executive Committee of the Indian Hill Tea Party has considered that question and has reached some conclusions. I should say at the outset, that I'm speaking tonight for the Indian Hill Tea Party, not the Cincinnati Tea Party.

We've identified three options, and each involves influencing our elected leaders:

- First, we can be part of a third party movement.
- Second, we can work within one or both of the two major political parties.
- Third, we can stay out of party politics and limit our involvement to protest, lobbying and education.

We don't think being part of a third party movement will work. It will just split the vote and elect progressives and liberals.

We like the idea of protest, lobbying and education, but we think that doesn't really take full advantage of the energy of our movement.

That leaves the option of working within the two major parties.

In thinking about how to do that, we've also identified four key principles:

- First, we think the key to success is being part of a coalition that takes the gavel in the legislature.
 - In our political system, the party in power in the legislature has the gavel.
 - For example, in the U.S. House, the majority party elects the Speaker, and the Speaker controls who can speak and what bills are voted on.
 - Without the gavel, we can't implement our principles.
- Second, we can't support candidates in both parties and expect to take the gavel.
 - The vote for Speaker is always along party lines.
 - The personal views of an elected official in the legislature don't matter.
 - In the next Congress, all Democrats (including conservatives) will vote for Pelosi, and all Republicans (including liberals) will vote for Boehner.
- Third, we can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good.
 - The party we help take the gavel won't necessarily meet our standards at the outset.
 - But we have to start somewhere.
 - The idea is to move it towards our views over time through continuous improvement.
- Finally, we think continuous improvement is a two step process that has to occur over several election cycles.
 - The first step is to take the gavel away from people who are an immediate threat to our principles.
 - The next step is to reform the party that has taken the gavel with our help.
 - This requires different tactics at different times.
 - In the general election we will support the party we have chosen, even members of that party who don't support us.
 - In between general elections, and especially in primary elections, we need to work to change the party we have chosen so it moves towards us.

So what does this mean in practical terms?

Basically, it means that even though the principles I've outlined are neutral and non-partisan, their application requires us to take sides.

In the short-term

- We have to take the gavel away from the progressives and liberals who currently have it.
- We have to stop them before they destroy our country.
- This means we need to defeat all Democrats this November, even those we like.

Let me illustrate this idea with an example. If Ronald Reagan were alive today and were running as a Democrat (not as a Republican, which he was, but as a Democrat) against Jeanne Schmidt, I'd vote for Jeanne Schmidt.

I say this even though I'm a Reaganite. The reason is that as a Democrat, Reagan would have to vote for Nancy Pelosi as Speaker, and our goal is to take the gavel away from her.

Our long-term goal is to reform both parties.

In other words, we need to defeat the political class.

This starts with the Republicans, but it also involves the Democrats.

I like the way Sue Hardenbergh of the Anderson Tea Party describes our goal for the Republicans: Extreme Makeover, Republican Party Edition. Maybe someday they'll make it a reality T.V. show!!

The process will take longer with the Democrats, but we have Independents and Democrats in our movement who are up to the task.

Anyway, that gives you an overview of what we stand for and what we're trying to accomplish.

Before we hear from our speakers tonight, I'd like to introduce the key people working on achieving our short-term goal in November.

This is our Project Vote team.

I'm going to ask each person to stand as I call you name and explain what role you play in our Project Vote effort.