

How to Compromise on the Government Question

The libertarian philosophy posits absolute liberty among consenting individuals. Don't want the government? You shouldn't be forced to pay for it or live by its rules. Want the government? You should voluntarily pay for it and voluntarily live by its rules.

But, per the libertarian philosophy, where governments exist they must be voluntary, via fully informed consent.

A radical libertarian believes voluntary association is required in a free society. A pragmatist libertarian believes the philosophy should evolve to include not only non-libertarians, but anti-libertarians.

So how does a libertarian who's engaged in politics go about political discourse? The bait-and-switch scheme and willful ignorance are in opposition to libertarianism. Libertarian candidates can make the case for voluntary government, but also make the case for voluntary secession from said government.

Policy? It's easy. The government itself can be a public option. In the face of competition, people can opt for private sector or, via a case-by-case basis, opt for a government service, through user fees.

That's compromise. Without compromising libertarian principles. Gary Johnson, Bill Weld, Bob Barr, Wayne Allyn Root, Alicia Mattson, Tim Hagan, Larry Sharpe, Alicia Dearn, etc. are examples of pragmatists who seek to make libertarianism indistinguishable from liberals and conservatives.

That's not to say all radical libertarians are rational, but even the irrational ones understand the philosophy. Want positive change? In the words of Carla Howell: *be bold*.

You can call for the abolition of mandatory payment (theft) for government education and offensive military without the baggage of "anarchism." It's called strategy, without the dishonesty.