## What if the Republicans Nominate a Conservative?

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## **Constitution Party of Washington**

(The following was written on behalf of the Constitution Party National Committee to address a question that has often been posed regarding the fielding of a Presidential candidate.)

The question has been raised in the past, and I'm sure it will come up again, as to what the Constitution Party would do should the Republican Party choose a "true conservative" (ie, constitutional) Presidential nominee. Would the Constitution Party still field a Presidential candidate, and if so, why?

The Constitution Party does not have an official policy on this matter, i.e. a resolution or a clause in the party constitution or bylaws. So far this has not been a problem and with each passing election cycle it appears less likely to ever be a problem.

As a state party chairman, I can say that it has been the practice of our state affiliate to avoid running a Constitution Party candidate in opposition to a constitutionally sound incumbent whose performance in office comports with our platform. However, in cases of a constitutionally sound candidate who is not an incumbent, we view the ballot as belonging equally to all candidates and parties. We feel no compulsion to drop out of a race just because some people think that a candidate with a different party initial after his name is more likely to win.

In the case of a Presidential candidate, one major – and deeply limiting – factor to consider is this: Minor party and independent candidates have been given different ballot access requirements with which to comply than do the two major parties that make the rules! Ballot access laws vary from state to state. Some states determine ballot access by the performance of state level Constitution Party candidates during the previous election cycle while others allow filing of ballot access petitions as late as a few months prior to the election. To ensure the ability to provide the public with an alternative to the Republican/Democrat duopoly candidates, the Constitution Party has to commit to and aggressively pursue Presidential ballot access months, and even years, before the major parties hold their conventions. In 2016 the Republican

convention will he held July 18-21. In many states our ballot access needs to have already been achieved by that time and, in some cases, it would likely be too late to withdraw our candidate from the ballot even if we wanted to.

Once the major parties have chosen their candidates and the minor parties have already secured their ballot access, about the only variable left is the possibility of one candidate choosing to publicly endorse the other. For the party to officially endorse or throw support behind another candidate would require holding another convention as our candidate is chosen at a national convention. Only a second national convention would have the proper authority to alter or overturn the determination of the first convention. As you can see, this would require difficult maneuvering.

All of the foregoing aside, I would be inclined to run a Constitution Party Presidential candidate, even if one of the other parties did happen to select a nominee who appeared to conform to our platform. One reason for my position is that far too often we have seen candidates running on the "R" party ticket who spouted the right rhetoric to convince voters that they were "conservative," only to have their performance in office prove otherwise. A candidate would need to have a substantial track record as a committed Constitutionist in order for me to be swayed.

The chief reason that I would support carrying through with fielding a Constitution Party Presidential candidate regardless of whom the other parties nominate, is that to throw support behind a Republican Presidential candidate inherently lends our name and reputation to the entire Republican Party. I do not see a way to endorse a Republican Presidential candidate without inadvertently conferring a degree of credibility upon the entire Republican Party.

I view the Republican Party of the past few decades as inherently corrupt and an enemy of Biblical presuppositions and original constitutional intent. Rank and file members and the party's platform aside, the Republican Party has become an entity guided by secular humanist philosophy and a statist worldview. It is the presence of a conservative platform (which has not for a long time been observed) and the rare "true conservative" candidate that serve to keep Christians and conservatives continuing to have faith in a party that has become far more detrimental to their professed values than it is beneficial.

I am compelled to encourage alternative candidates to enter the "fray" – Constitution Party or even Independent candidates – not so much for the purpose of opposing the other parties' candidates, but for the purpose of providing by juxtaposition a comparison of the ideologies embodied in the different parties.

A final consideration is the fact that the Republican Party is known for withholding support from overtly Christian and constitutional candidates when they do, on rare occasions, get through the primary election and/or nomination process. The establishment powers that control the Republican Party would rather see a Democrat elected than a true Constitutionist who would present a threat to the unconstitutional agencies, programs, policies and power structures that have been erected to aggrandize and centralize power. The Republican and Democratic Parties would work equally hard to keep out of office anyone seeking to abolish the Federal Reserve, repeal the 16th Amendment, dismantle the military-industrial complex, do away with the Federal Department of Education or extract America from the institutions of the New World Order.

With this final point in mind, I expect that even if a constitutionally sound candidate did get the Republican nomination, his campaign would be sufficiently undermined by his own party so as to be prevented from winning in November. Therefore, running a Constitution Party candidate would not only do no harm, but failure to do so would deprive the American public of a Biblical and Constitutional standard by which to compare the other political parties.