



In the midst of our national internecine squabbling, we're missing an opportunity. We are at a historic crossroads, where the dominant party is undergoing a tidal pull. The conservative coalition – ascendant since the fifties -- is sundering before our eyes. Libertarians, Goldwater westerners, paleo-conservatives, fiscal conservatives and the lingering pockets of what's left of Rockefeller republicans are starting to find the loudest tribe in the conservative – the religious populists – a little whiffy.

The problem with this is, of all the components of the coalition, the Religious Populists are the most ideologically sluttish. Big government is quite okay now, as long as big government is in service to their form of idealism and social engineering. And as long as they are the loudest faction, the Santorums of the world are strong arming their pals to repudiating long held ideological beliefs. They've been bullied into signing up for a program of reckless experimentation and bitter populism. It's become an ideology of affiliation instead of ideas, one that can't offer any better authority than they know what's best for us.

Consider this Bill Buckley quote:

“...if one acknowledged the second inaugural address of the President as marching orders, well, that would keep us busy with something to do for all eternity. It's not, in my judgement, conservatism. Because conservatism is....**the acknowledgement of realities.** And this is surreal.”

So here we have the founder of the coalition, looking on the ultimate triumph of his creation... with disdain.

So, what does this mean for secularists, progressives, libertarians, and ideological moderates? Perhaps it's the time to consider building our own Jeffersonian coalition, one built on clearly delineated Federal powers, with government's primary role being the defense of the rights and property of citizens and the idea that our society, our culture, our technology, our government become more vital when experimentation is condoned and protected.

Now this brings us to our other problem: The Democratic Party.

It's a bland, empty husk, riding on the war and Republican scandal. Let's step in. Let's start the ugly business of coalition building in this vacuum. Let's start reconciling our differences, and

Building a New Coalition

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begin building vital institutions. Let's launch think tanks. Hug a libertarian today. Make cookies with a McCainite. Send a mash note to a New England republican. Let's not miss this chance to experiment with new combinations.

As your first mission in coalition building, I'd invite you to check out the [Freedom Democrats](#), a home for Libertarian Democrats.