



Among the Ungovernable

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What is the [Libertarian Party](#) up to in inviting former President Donald John Trump to [address the party's upcoming national convention](#)?

The goal of this “third party” may be crystalline in its clarity — a free society as understood by Libertarians — but how this can be achieved by running candidates for office in Partisan Duopoly America is murky at best. The number of self-identified libertarians in the country is small, though polling in the 1990s suggested that about a quarter of the population is of a general libertarian mindset: minimal government; private property; personal freedom as the tolerant community’s ideal; individual responsibility as the chief form of social regulation.

The difference between a self-identified Libertarian and a libertarian-ish citizen at large can be huge, in some ways: no

taxes *versus* lower taxes, for example. These positions play dramatically differently, of course, in elections where most voters are not libertarian at all.

The 2024 convention will be held May 23–26 in Washington, D.C. (of all places). And Donald Trump (of all people) has accepted the invitation to speak (offered to both he and President Biden). The party is [shilling registrations](#) for the event by telling prospects that only registered attendees will be able to cast their votes to establish “the topics President Trump will address during his time at the podium.”*

As a newsworthy event, this is one of the party’s best stunts. The very idea of inviting the presumptive Republican nominee to speak is . . . weird. And, therefore, [newsworthy](#). It might make for an apocalyptic event — encompassing every meaning of “[apocalyptic](#).”

The convention itself is titled, in traditionally flagrant Libertarian fashion, “Become Ungovernable.” While Libertarians mean this slogan in a good (and peaceful) way, its ambiguity and alarming nature is one of many reasons Libertarians get low vote totals.

Trump addressing Libertarians could suggest a more negative interpretation of “ungovernable.”

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.