



Survival Politics

Asked what he had done in the French Revolution, the Abbé Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès responded, "I survived." That is what Democrats aspire to do as they face a looming tidal wave this year. There are some glimmers of hope.

Democrats have to contend with two different waves of discontent. One is anti-government. The other is anti-politics.

The anti-government revolt, led by the Tea Party movement, is driven by conservative ideological outrage over big government—spending, bailouts, deficits, regulations. The movement is not just going after Democrats and moderate Republicans. It's also targeting the Republican establishment. It bagged its first trophy in Utah on May 8, when third term Republican Sen. Bob Bennett was denied re-nomination by his own party.

Establishment Republican Senate candidates in Kentucky, Colorado and California are facing serious primary challenges from the right. Even Sen. John McCain, the party's 2008 presidential nominee and the ultimate Establishment figure, is fighting a Tea Party challenge in Arizona.

The anti-politics movement is less colorful and dramatic than the Tea Party movement, but no less real. It is driven by frustration over the inability of politicians, particularly Congress, to solve the nation's problems. Problem A: jobs. The frustration is particularly intense among Independents. They are motivated by economic anxiety, not ideology. Their target: incumbents. In both parties' primaries so far this year, incumbents have been underperforming.

Both protest movements are on the ballot this year in Florida.

The poster child of the anti-government movement is Marco Rubio, now the Republican Senate candidate in Florida. Rubio has said his opponents "share the same unhealthy appetite for more government, more spending and higher taxes." Rubio has already achieved a notable victory: he drove the Republican governor out of his own party's Senate primary. How's that for giving the Establishment the finger?

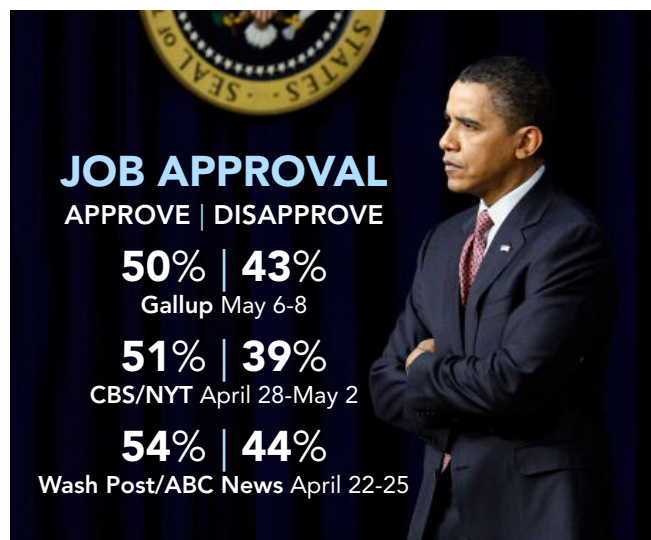
Florida Gov. Charlie Crist, who is now running for senator as an Independent, is aiming to become the poster child of the anti-politics



movement. Which is ironic because Crist is the current governor and former attorney general, education commissioner and state senator. But there he was, announcing, "My decision to run for the U.S. Senate as a candidate without party affiliation says more about our nation and our state than it says about me. Unfortunately, our political system is broken."

The last time we saw this kind of dual protest was in 1992, another election that took place as the country was climbing out of recession. That year, the anti-government revolt was led by Patrick Buchanan. The anti-politics revolt was led by Ross Perot.

Where are those glimmers of hope for Democrats? In two places. One is the Tea Party movement and the disruption it is causing in the Republican Party. Incumbents and mainstream Republicans are under threat from right-wing insurgents. Some, like Bennett, may not survive. Others, like former Indiana Sen. Dan Coats, may survive primary challenges, but with damage. Coats got less than 40% of the vote in the Indiana Republican primary this month.



Pressure from the right could saddle the party with candidates who are wounded or difficult to elect. Addressing the conservative insurrection being spearheaded by Sen. Jim DeMint, Republican senatorial campaign chairman John Cornyn said, "I think as a pragmatic matter, we have to nominate Republicans who can get elected in their states."

The other glimmer of hope for Democrats is the economy. The country has had four consecutive months of job growth—not enough to keep up with the number of workers re-entering the labor force, but enough to persuade voters that there is light at the end of the tunnel. The May CBS News-New York Times poll found that growing numbers of Americans believe the economy is improving (41%, up from 33% a month ago). Democrats

have re-established a double-digit lead over Republicans on the economy (46 to 32% in the ABC News-Washington Post poll).

GENERIC CONGRESSIONAL BALLOT

Democrat **45%** | **45%** Republican

Gallup April 26-May 2

Democrat **39%** | **35%** Republican

Allstate/National Journal April 22-26

Democrat **48%** | **43%** Republican

Wash Post/ABC News April 22-25

"The storm is receding," President Obama told business leaders in New York. "Last year the economy was in free fall. Now it's growing again. In fact, we've seen the fastest turnaround in growth in nearly three decades."

The President's job approval ratings have edged above 50% in several polls. Perhaps most important is that for the first time since last fall, the Post reports that a majority of Independents give President Obama a positive job rating.

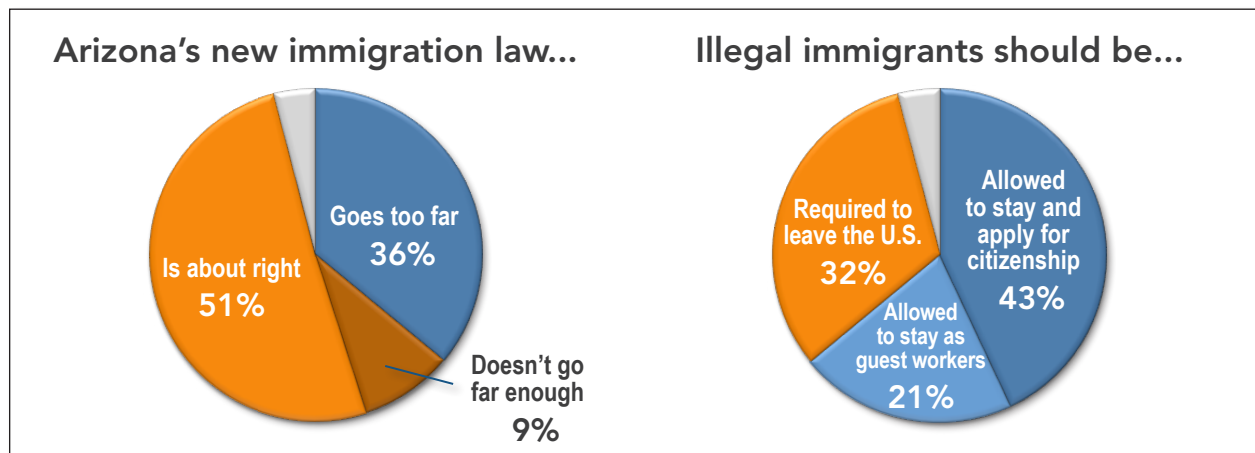
Both protest movements share disaffection with Democrats, but for different reasons. Tea Party activists see Democrats as the party of big government. Anti-politics Independents see Democrats as incumbents who control Congress and the White House. That's why the Democrats are in so much trouble. The two movements have been converging against them.

Now, for the first time all year, there are signs that the two movements may decouple. Especially if Independents become convinced the economy is improving and the Republicans are becoming too extreme. Expectations are growing that Republicans will win a majority in the House of Representatives. If they don't, Democrats will have done "better than expected." ■

Immigration

Democrats are warning: the federal government had better pass a reasonable law to deal with illegal immigration or else. Or else what? Or else Arizona. More states could pass immigration laws that turn America into a police state.

Does the American public support the Arizona law? They do, even though most Americans believe it could lead to racial profiling. In the May CBS News-New York Times poll, 51% said the Arizona law is "about right," and an additional 9% said it doesn't go far enough. That's a total of 60% who favor Arizona's tough approach.



What do Americans think should be done with the nearly 12 million illegal immigrants now in the U.S.? In the same poll, 43% said they should be allowed to stay and apply for citizenship, while an additional 21% would allow them to stay temporarily as guest workers. That's more than 60% who reject the idea that illegal immigrants should be required to leave the U.S.

Sounds like . . . compassionate conservatism.

Two-Party Politics

Two-party politics is not working the way it's supposed to in either the United States or Britain.

In theory, both major parties are supposed to compete for swing voters in the center. In both countries, however, the parties have come to be dominated by their extremes. So voters are losing faith in the rotation of power as a way to ensure moderation and balance. Instead, it's producing politics that lurches from left to right.

In theory, two-party politics is supposed to produce conclusive outcomes by giving the winner an exaggerated majority. But it failed to deliver a decisive result in Britain this year. The same thing happened in the U.S. in 2000.

In theory, two-party politics eliminates the unseemly spectacle of wheeling-and-dealing among parties after an election. But that's exactly what Britain experienced after the May 7 election. And what happens in Congress every time a major piece of legislation is passed.

The major parties are no longer what they once were—broad-based majority coalitions. They're more like tribes, with exclusive faiths and fetishes. That's why Britain is seriously considering electoral reform that would force coalitions across party lines.

2010 Governors' Races



Governorships up in 2010

18 Republican (11 open)

19 Democrat (12 open)

State	Incumbent	Running?	Handicap				US House Seats		State Leg. Control		Redistricting by
			Cook	Rothen	CQ	RCP	R	D	Lower	Upper	
Alabama	Riley	OPEN					5	2	D	D	Leg & Gov
Alaska	Parnell	YES					1	0	R	†	Leg & Gov
Arizona	Brewer	YES					3	5	R	R	Independent Comm
Arkansas	Beebe	YES					1	3	D	D	Leg & Gov
California	Schwarzenegger	OPEN					19	34	D	D	Leg & Gov
Colorado	Ritter	OPEN					2	5	D	D	Leg & Gov
Connecticut	Rell	OPEN					0	5	D	D	Leg & Gov
Delaware	Markell	—					1	0	D	D	Leg & Gov
Florida	Crist	OPEN					15	10	R	R	Leg & Gov
Georgia	Perdue	OPEN					7	6	R	R	Leg & Gov
Hawaii	Lingle	OPEN					0	2	D	D	Bipart Comm w/Leg Appr
Idaho	Otter	YES					1	1	R	R	Bipart Comm
Illinois	Quinn	YES					7	12	D	D	Leg & Gov
Indiana	Daniels	—					4	5	D	R	Leg & Gov
Iowa	Culver	YES					2	3	D	D	Independent Comm
Kansas	Parkinson	OPEN					3	1	R	R	Leg & Gov
Kentucky	Beshear	—					4	2	D	R	Leg & Gov
Louisiana	Jindal	—					6	1	D	D	Leg & Gov
Maine	Baldacci	OPEN					0	2	D	D	Advisory Comm
Maryland	O'Malley	YES					1	7	D	D	Leg & Gov
Massachusetts	Patrick	YES					0	10	D	D	Leg & Gov
Michigan	Granholm	OPEN					7	8	D	R	Leg & Gov
Minnesota	Pawlenty	OPEN					3	5	D	D	Leg & Gov
Mississippi	Barbour	—					1	3	D	D	Leg & Gov
Missouri	Nixon	—					5	4	R	R	Leg & Gov
Montana	Schweitzer	—					1	0	D	R	Bipartisan Comm
Nebraska	Heineman	YES					3	0	*	*	Leg & Gov
Nevada	Gibbons	YES					1	2	D	D	Leg & Gov
New Hampshire	Lynch	YES					0	2	D	D	Leg & Gov
New Jersey	Christie	—					5	8	D	D	Bipartisan Comm
New Mexico	Richardson	OPEN					0	3	D	D	Leg & Gov
New York	Paterson	OPEN					2	27	D	D	Leg & Gov
North Carolina	Perdue	—					5	8	D	D	Leg & Gov
North Dakota	Hoeven	—					0	1	R	R	Leg & Gov
Ohio	Strickland	YES					8	10	D	R	Leg & Gov
Oklahoma	Henry	OPEN					4	1	R	R	Leg & Gov
Oregon	Kulongoski	OPEN					1	4	D	D	Leg & Gov
Pennsylvania	Rendell	OPEN					7	12	D	R	Leg & Gov
Rhode Island	Carcieri	OPEN		Lean Ind		Lean Ind	0	2	D	D	Leg & Gov
South Carolina	Sanford	OPEN					4	2	R	R	Leg & Gov
South Dakota	Rounds	OPEN					0	1	R	R	Leg & Gov
Tennessee	Bredesen	OPEN					4	5	R	R	Leg & Gov
Texas	Perry	YES					20	12	R	R	Leg & Gov
Utah	Herbert	YES					2	1	R	R	Leg & Gov
Vermont	Douglas	OPEN					0	1	D	D	Leg & Gov
Virginia	McDonnell	—					5	6	R	D	Leg & Gov
Washington	Gregoire	—					3	6	D	D	Bipart Comm w/Leg Appr
West Virginia	Manchin III	—					1	2	D	D	Leg & Gov
Wisconsin	Doyle	OPEN					3	5	D	D	Leg & Gov
Wyoming	Freudenthal	OPEN					0	1	R	R	Leg & Gov

* Unicameral, non-partisan, 49 seat Senate. † Coalition

Races Handicapped by: **The Cook Political Report**; **The Rothenberg Political Report**; **Congressional Quarterly**; and **Real Clear Politics**.