

This headline over at the Herald Tribune (of southwest Florida) caught my eye:
"Anti-GOP feelings may be affecting local races: Party officials complain that candidates are hard to recruit this year."

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060619/NEWS/606190579/1017/POLITICS>

The gist of the story:

Â County GOP leaders say they have struggled more this year than any other to persuade qualified residents to put their names on the ballot.

"It's volatile out there," said Mark Proctor, a Republican consultant in Tampa. "There's a general fed-up attitude with voters right now."

It's almost enough to make you feel bad for them.

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An interesting piece in the June issue of Atlantic Monthly gives voice to concerns felt by William Niskanen, an economist in the Reagan Whitehouse who now leads the Cato Institute. The Atlantic column is here:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/prem/200606/tax-cuts>

but requires a subscription to view the whole article. It is well summarized in a Washington Post Op-Ed piece here:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/07/AR2006050700924.html>

The gist of the article is that contrary to Reagan era thinking, reducing taxes actually leads to growth in the size of government. In response to John Anderson stating, during a 1980 debate, that "...what I'm going to do is to bring federal spending under control first." Reagan scoffed. "John tells us that first we've got to reduce spending before we can reduce taxes," he said. "Well, if you've got a kid that's extravagant, you can lecture him all you want to about his extravagance. Or you can cut his allowance and achieve the same end much quicker." With that statement, Reagan performed one of the last century's great feats of political prestidigitation.

In his piece, Jonathan Rauch points out that under Reagan's tax cuts and spending increases government grew, while under Bush I and Clinton's tax raises and spending cuts government shrank. Bush II follows in Reagan's footsteps in the government growth department.

Rauch closes his column with the line "The beast is hungry and it has a credit card"

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I recently wrote of quakes within the Republican establishment in Kansas. I have just been tuned in to similar goings on in South Dakota. As in Kansas, several Republicans have recently left the party to run as Democrats, and political extremism in the GOP has even lead to the development of a new MAINstream Coalition:

<http://www.mainstreamsouthdakota.org/index.html>

whose manifesto reads remarkably liberal.

The South Dakota Progressive blog has more on this development here:

http://www.sdprogressive.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=291&Itemid=2

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It's nice to see some more sanity sweeping the country. The Wall Street Journal has even started to notice, as reported in ABC News "The Note":

The Wall Street Journal's Brody Mullins detects a shift in giving among the Republican-leaning insurance, pharmaceutical and tobacco industries towards Democrats, signaling that "businesses believe Democrats will have more sway in Washington after the 2006 midterm

elections or the 2008 presidential contest.”