

The Thursday Night Fight

The Republican establishment in America is perplexed. Democrats are distraught. A liberal Media is having a hissy fit. Indeed, all of the usual whiners are groping for explanations. Even FOX News is stammering and [sputtering](#) for clarity. Going into the first debate of the 2016 presidential season, the American electorate seems to have awoken from a bovine nightmare shouting, **enough!**

Enough dynasty. Enough promises that cannot be kept. Enough deficit profligacy. Enough foreign policy tomfoolery. Enough body bags. Enough political correctness. Enough PACs. Enough cheap shots. Enough timid generals. Enough treacherous Back Bay diplomats. Enough condescending lawyers. Enough career politicians. Enough lobbyists. Enough, enough of the usual suspects!



Both sides of the establishment and the Media seem to be terrified by the prospect of a president who is not a lawyer, not a professional politician, and not a POTUS controlled by special interests. Front runner, Donald Trump threatens to build an administration based on competence and merit, not patronage. American voters seem to be going off the grid in search of loose cannons.

Indeed, on the Left, Bernie Sanders is sucking the wind out of Hillary's sails. Sanders is the real deal, a red-rumpled socialist. In contrast, Mrs. Clinton, always the slippery free-thinker, is tanking in the polls. She, her followers, and

the Media still don't seem to know who Hillary is. For the Clintons, truth is a kind of political silly putty. Things are slipping away so fast now on the Left that even Joe Biden is back on the bench or at least back on the depth chart.

Mrs. Clinton seems to be going from heir apparent to apparently not.

On the Right, Donald Trump, candor capitalist, is running away from a fractious Republican flash mob of small numbers and also rans.

The stage is being set for a genuine clash of civilizations in America, a real choice between an unapologetic socialist and an unapologetic capitalist. After 50 years of cultural ambiguity and moral relativity, the American voter seems to be seeking clarity, a national vote on Karl Marx or Adam Smith.

At the moment Mr. Trump has the floor. On Thursday night he has the privilege of setting the tone, the vector of the 2016 presidential election. Make no mistake; the only real issue in this first debate is Donald Trump. He doesn't need to cross swords with Republican competitors on issues so much as float above the internecine fray and eviscerate the Obama/Clinton record – or raise the specter of Bernie Sanders as Santa Claus-in-waiting.

With Hillary America might be Spain. With Sanders America would surely be Greece. With Biden the USA might simply be ridiculous – again.

There are several other things Mr. Trump might do this week. To begin, he needs to keep being “the Donald.” So far, authenticity is working. Over the weekend Trump said he would release his tax returns as soon as Hillary releases those Benghazi emails. That's the stuff! No one plays deadly riposte better than Trump. Just ask John McCain or any scorched network reporter.

Donald Trump also says he doesn't use [pollsters](#) to shape his positions. So in the spirit of such creative equanimity; he should remind voters that, unlike most American politicians in both parties, Trump isn't for sale. Indeed, among the host of hopefuls this year, Donald is paying his own way. How refreshing, a political candidate spending his own loot to "make America great again."

Trump might be motivated, in part, by vanity. But he cannot be driven, like the Clintons, by greed or personal gain. Trump's call for competence and a more accountable [polity](#) are sentiments shared by cranks across American. Political altruism is rare coin and Mr. Trump needs to spend it wisely.

Trump might also remind voters again that he is an immigrant from Queens, an outsider. He has made his bones and fortune as a builder and successful manager of large, mostly successful, commercial projects. He creates wealth. He also creates private sector jobs, not government sinecures.

Trump might also point a meaty finger again at an inept Obama confederacy, an incumbency that has failed to bridge the racial divide at home and aggravated national security threats across the globe. The Kerry/Obama surrender to radical Islam at the expense of Israel is a gift that should keep on giving. Who doesn't think theocrats need another bomb?

After seven years of "leading from behind," America is not united, nor safer, and surely not more prosperous. The jolly Obama era racial politics at home and pandering to Muslims abroad is a target rich environment for any candidate with chutzpah.

Trump might also suggest that his administration would appoint cabinet and department administrators other than political hacks, academic shills, or [lawyers](#). The Clintons and Obamas, pairs of breeding shysters, speak to the inbreeding that makes Washington a destination resort for incest. Or to be more

tactful, Trump could simply suggest that true diversity inside the Beltway might demand a broader spectrum of professions and managerial expertise in the national megaplex.

In an era where most federal departments seem to be pathological, a physician or two at the top might be helpful.



To that end, Donald Trump might make some congenial noises about potential running mates, Carly or Ben for instance. A conservative woman or a conservative black on a national ticket would be electric – and every progressive's worst nightmare. After Obama, black America could use a [positive](#) or successful role model. Indeed, the right choice for number two could neutralize the race or genitals arguments too.

Trump has the stage. Trump has the national spotlight. All he needs to do this week is to tweak his favorite themes and keep on doing what he has been doing. Nothing succeeds like a circus.

G. Murphy Donovan writes about the politics of national security.