

The Trump haters cackle too soon

The presumptive Biden administration is already shaking, while the president's populist policies will endure no matter who is in the White House

by Conrad Black



Contrary to the purring and preening in the American and Canadian media that a buffoonish Donald Trump despotism has been “repudiated” in a triumph of reform democracy, we are moving slowly toward the climax of another crisis of American democracy. Trump was elected in 2016 because he tapped into a profound discontent whose existence and extent were not remotely suspected by the American political establishment and media. Undetected, half the country thought that the United States was being incompetently managed by a bipartisan clique of permanent federal officeholders and financial and celebrity and academic elites, for their own benefit, indifferent to the welfare or opinions of middle America, and oblivious to the damage done by the 2008 economic calamity, disadvantageous

trade agreements and immersion in fruitless Middle Eastern wars.

A political death struggle has ensued between that formerly complacent elite and a populist mass of people presciently rallied by Trump, which agrees with his bluntly expressed views and policy prescriptions. The contest between these closely matched forces is straining the American political system. From the outset, Trump has been running against the entire political establishment and promising to “drain the swamp”: radical changes of policy and personnel. The battle of his opponents to preserve their incumbency and repel the barbarian (Trump) has been fanatical, ingenious and absolutely ruthless. Trump is the first American president never to have sought or held any public office or a high military command. He pioneered a technique of promoting his own name recognition in all echelons of American society, changed parties seven times in 13 years looking for his moment and exploited an unsuspected depth of public discontent.

When the clapping stopped: On solidarity and the second wave

From the start, Trump singled out the national political media elite as almost uniformly biased and a corrupt resident of “the swamp,” and they have fully returned his contempt. The White House changes hands every eight years and the separate houses of Congress approximately every four or six years, but with practically all of them holding indistinguishable opinions and the senior government people almost all liberal Democrats. The Bushes, John McCain and Mitt Romney didn’t vary far from the Clintons and Al Gore, though Barack Obama was a significant nudge to the left. Trump enacted drastic deregulation, reduced the taxes of almost all personal and corporate taxpayers, maintained anti-pollution standards but suspended efforts to reduce fossil fuel use and denounced climate change as unproved and an insufficient excuse for radical economic dislocation. He renegotiated America’s principal trade arrangements, sharply raised awareness of the

Chinese challenge, imposed tariffs in response to unfair Chinese trading practices and currency manipulation, directly threatened Iran and North Korea with military intervention if they persisted in the deployment of nuclear missiles, made more progress toward Middle East peace than there has been in over 40 years and required America's NATO allies to raise their defence budgets closer to the previously promised levels that were being almost universally ignored.

Trump also ended the immense bipartisan scandal of permitting the illegal entry across America's southern border of between 500,000 to one million unskilled immigrants every year; a terrible burden to the welfare, education and justice systems of the southwestern states, which was tolerated by Democrats who harvested their (illegal) votes, and Republican employers who like to exploit the cheap labour. He ended once-huge American oil imports, effectively ended unemployment, incentivized investment in economically disadvantaged areas and caused incomes to rise among the lower third of American income earners (their first increase in purchasing power in 15 years) more quickly in percentage terms than the incomes of the wealthiest 10 per cent of Americans. He was well rewarded by minority and working-class voters in November.

The establishment ignored his policy successes and focused on fanning Trump-hate, which his often garish behaviour frequently incited. His policies were effectively ratified in the congressional and state elections last month. Prior to the onset of the coronavirus in March, it was generally conceded that Trump would be re-elected. The virus reinvigorated the Democratic resistance. In 2016, to defeat Trump and then undo his election, the Democrats had politicized elements of the intelligence services and the FBI, circulated to the press a wildly spurious pastiche of lies they were able to represent as legitimate intelligence and promoted the total falsehoods that Trump's election had been enabled by the collusion of the Russian government, and that was impeachable because he asked

the president of Ukraine if the son of former vice-president Joe Biden had committed financial improprieties in his country. He only asked for the facts, not a condemnation, unaware that a criminal investigation of this subject had been underway in Delaware for over a year.

The Democrats won the public-relations battle over COVID-19; Trump shouldered his vice-president aside as head of a special commission and handled the daily press briefings personally for many weeks, allowing himself to be baited by nasty reporters and sometimes flippant about the virus. He inherited a completely deficient public health emergency response system from Obama and in a few weeks made the United States the world-supplier of ventilators and other necessary medical paraphernalia, and he was personally responsible for advancing the timetable for a vaccine by years. The Democrats and their 95 per cent-supportive media terrorized the country and stigmatized the president as glib and callous. The COVID-revived Democrats ditched socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders, and retrieved defeated Joe Biden but adopted Sanders' left-wing platform. They outspent Trump two-to-one in the election campaign and their media allies suppressed anything negative about Biden. They could not run on the real issues.

They may evict Trump from the White House, though the Texas lawsuit against evident election irregularities in four states under cover of dubious COVID-related executive orders and questionable legislation, is a good deal more serious than the Trump-hating media admit. The Democrats are now a hodgepodge of miscellaneous Trump-haters and far leftists who played footsie all summer with well-organized and heavily armed rioters masquerading as civil-rights crusaders. Their platform is far too socialistic for the American public, they are unlikely to win the Senate, almost certain to lose the House of Representatives in two years, and Biden is a spavined old milk-wagon horse who couldn't lead America across the Brooklyn Bridge. His running mate, Kamala Harris, is an authentic

leftist, but she's no world-beater either, though she may well finish Biden's term. The presumptive Democratic administration is already shaking; half of Biden's cabinet nominees will not be confirmed by a Republican Senate and most are tainted by the failures of Obama. The criminal investigations of Biden's family are already very serious and were banned from the media and social media during the campaign and dismissed as Russian disinformation. The revelation that one of the chief congressional hyenas of Trump impeachment, Rep. Eric Swalwell, had an intimate relationship with a Chinese spy is a piquant expose of his sanctimonious hypocrisy.

The Biden administration, if it takes office at all, will be a clangorous "Gong Show." Either Trump, or a Republican approved by him and continuing his policies, will be the Republican candidate in four years. Then we will have the final round in this battle for the political soul of America. What we are hearing now is the Trump-hating goose cackling too loudly and too soon.

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