

Why, in the Coming Election, the 2020 Result Needs To Be Undone, Not Replicated



by Conrad Black

Initially, and especially after January 6, 2021, President Trump was proclaimed to have been a nightmare that had passed; his complaints about the integrity of the election were proclaimed to be nonsense and had been entirely dealt with in the dismissal of the amateurish bustling about of Mayor Giuliani, and, acting on her own account, Sidney Powell. He was pronounced an extinct volcano.

Gradually there was disillusionment with President Biden, but, after all, he had defeated Mr. Trump and resolved Covid,

and he was a safe pair of hands; until it became clear that he was practically incapable of handling anything without it blowing up in his face. The midterms went well for the Democrats, partly because of *Roe v. Wade* and abortion, and several of Mr. Trump's preferred candidates had done badly.

Peggy Noonan urged Republicans to show courage and abandon Trump, because he really didn't enjoy much support. Brit Hume repeated a determinist notion that Mr. Biden defeated Mr. Trump before, and therefore he would do it again. Never mind that it would be harder to re-purpose unverifiable ballots in the next election or that Mr. Biden would not be able to campaign from his basement invoking a pandemic.

Nor that Mr. Biden had proved incompetent and was deteriorating with years. Nor that Mr. Trump looked better and better. All of this counted for nothing. Mr. Trump did not vanish and the Democrats finally dropped the four criminal indictments of the former president. Three of them were greeted by legal experts as unutterable nonsense unfounded in law and in fact.

The documents case was accorded some credence, even though in practice, ex-presidents are not hassled over such nonsense, and the FBI looked like prurient palookas rummaging through Melania's closet, including her [underwear](#), in search of possible violations of the Espionage Act. In what must stand as one of the remarkable moments of American democracy, Mr. Trump's popularity, instead of plummeting under the pressure of these indictments, continued to rise.

This demonstrated that Mr. Trump would likely win, if, as seems possible, the next election is a referendum between, on the one hand, those who dislike Mr. Trump so much they will overlook the abuse of the prosecution system and, on the other hand, those who are so appalled at the politicized corruption of the Justice Department that they will overlook their reservations over Mr. Trump.

Mr. De Santis was Trumpism without Mr. Trump, but he may have cooked himself by allowing only six weeks for an abortion in Florida, and inexplicably flamed out in his campaign. The last hope of the Never Trumpers is Ambassador Nikki Haley, and she has her good points and has debated well. She's resisted the Neanderthal isolationism of the Republican right and has spoken candidly and without partisanship about the national debt crisis, but she has also been wobbly about gender and trans issues and privacy, but most seriously of all she isn't Donald Trump.

The odds on the reelection of Mr. Trump have been increasing practically every week for two years. The great majority of Republicans believe that he was a good president and the majority believe that in the 2020 election with millions of unsolicited mailed ballots and unverifiable harvested ballots, where 50,000 votes in several of the closest states would have delivered the election to Mr. Trump, the 45th president probably was the rightful winner.

Most Republicans resent that the judiciary at every level declined to hear on the merits the 19 lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of the changes in swing states in voting and vote-counting rules. And they resent the press's airtight stonewall on this subject and the tedious repetition that Mr. Trump's allegations against the integrity of the 2020 presidential election are "lies." In these circumstances, it was always likely that the Republicans would re-nominate Trump.

Most Republicans despise the Never Trumpers and the supporters of the Bushes, McCain, and Romney have practically vanished, except from the left-wing media. Most Republicans reject those who praise Mr. Trump but blame him for the chaos that his supporters believe is generated by his enemies.

As the remaining candidates fall away, most of their convention votes will go to Mr. Trump and not to each other.

Because the Democrats so dangerously overdosed on their prayerful belief that they had buried Mr. Trump, they have not noticed that the Trump of 2024 is not the swaggering and boorish braggart that they caricatured, defamed, and underestimated in 2016.

Mr. Trump is an accomplished former president, who has been the subject of more and nastier dirty tricks and of a greater level of politicized corruption of the intelligence agencies and the Justice Department than anyone in American history. He is now the populist, billionaire, underdog, the proven executive, comedic showman, and political strategist – not the unethical huckster of Trump University and the casino business.

The ingredients of the 2020 Democratic victory: A hidden candidate whom they could represent as moderate and competent, a huge advantage in vote-rigging, extraordinary voting and vote-counting conditions, a press conspiracy to represent the summer of rioting of 2020 as Trump-chaos, accommodation of Americophobic extremists, and a far-left program that has been almost a complete failure in policy and political terms.

The president and the vice president are both evidently incompetent to hold their offices, and it is terribly late and difficult to jettison them now. Lyndon Johnson announced on March 31, 1968, that he would not accept re-nomination but he supported his vice president, Hubert Humphrey, who was ready to go, and Robert Kennedy was already in the race.

Humphrey was able to ignore the primaries and Kennedy was murdered on the night of his victory in the California primary. Johnson and Humphrey were both respected and competent holders of national office, but the Republican, Richard Nixon, won narrowly. It is easy to forget that, in that terrible year of riots and assassinations and Vietnam, those mentioned, as well as Nelson Rockefeller and Ronald Reagan, were at some point running for president and that all

were qualified.

There is no such embarrassment of political riches now; Mr. Biden and Mrs. Harris are manifestly incompetent and replacing them will not only be difficult – it will require the immediate elevation to high public esteem of dark horses who would be called upon to defend in some measure the indefensible record of the outgoing administration.

Donald Trump's secret weapon, which is only a secret because his opponents are often deranged in their perceptions of him, is that the country thinks he was probably cheated last time and this makes a powerful argument for electing him this time. He will be the only successful president on the ballot.

Successful crusaders for the national interest are not sent over by typecasting studios, and most Americans would have preferred someone who looked and sounded much different to Donald Trump in this role. Yet he may be the only person who can correct the terrible errors of the last three years, and the only way to rout and banish the woke forces of anti-Americanism that are a mortal cancer in the Democratic Party.

Only unheard-of feats of electoral skulduggery may be necessary to defeat Trump now. The 2020 result needs to be undone, not replicated, to resolve the nation's malaise and the vacuum in the world left by subsequent American retreat and vacillation.