

December 1, 2024

It's all over but the shouting and you've already been bombarded with reasons for the outcome. I'll just leave it that Trump waged a campaign better addressing the concerns of the dissatisfied.

I ended my last newsletter saying that even if our candidate loses, it is not the end of the world, not the end of America, nor the end of what to most of us is a comfortable life, the envy of others in the rest of the world, many of whom risk their lives and everything that they own to cross our borders and partake in our blessings.

Well, my candidate did lose and I'll try to put my money where my mouth is.

I'm a little more upbeat than most of those who voted for Kamala. I see a huge opportunity for compromise on key issues for which the democrats could jump the gun and take steps to get bi-partisan support.

Many of us Independents and others voted against Trump primarily, but not solely, based on character issues and the January 6, 2021 attack on the Capitol. Regardless, while we might be opposed to much of Project 2025 that will be pursued, we do support some of it. We don't think Trump will accomplish, or in some cases even attempt to accomplish, some of the most extremes elements. We still, have confidence that Congress as well as a Supreme Court that, while supporting Presidential immunity, will still overturn many of the extreme executive actions based on Constitutionality.

On that basis, let's address specifically where we can see significant opportunities for compromise where we can all play a part---and I

would have done likewise in this letter had the Democrats prevailed with some of their extreme progressive positions.

Starting with Immigration---we need a revised version of the bi-partisan bill that Trump previously turned down, with an added provision focusing on targeted arrests and deportation of those who represent “public-safety threats and national security threats” complying with the plans of Tom Homan, Trump’s choice for “border czar”. Mr. Homan told “60 minutes” “It’s not going to be a mass sweep of neighborhoods. It’s not going to be building concentration camps, ... it’s ridiculous.” He did later make a statement implying that massive deportations per se were not off the books. But, as Dara Lind noted in a New York Times article “How Far Will the Mass Deportation Plan Go?”, “No executive order can override the laws of physics and create, in the blink of an eye, staff and facilities where none existed. The constraints on a mass deportation operation are logistical more than legal.” At any rate, while it’s a long shot, this could be a huge opportunity to resolve one of the two most divisive issues.

Regarding the other, current living costs, primarily the grocery and household goods bills---to date, neither Trump nor the Democrats have offered anything substantial, primarily because there is nothing substantial that can be done. Trump only relies on the fact, or at least the perception, that we were better off under his administration than under Biden’s. The Democrats had relied on a commitment to go after price gouging with no evidence that this really is a problem. Hopefully we’ll have a bi-partisan effort to continue lowering health care costs following what the Biden administration has already done to reduce prescription drug and Insulin prices. There’s not much else that can be done here. But perhaps, if the Democrats continue to tout what the Biden administration did to create more high paying jobs, some hopefully coming on line as early as next year, resulting from the

Infrastructure and Jobs Act, the Chips and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act, the message will get through and encourage more support for a bi-partisan effort to keep inflation under control.

And with the addition of Elon Musk to the Trump team, there could be some much-needed reduction in the wasteful spending of some of the federal agencies, albeit with nowhere near the budget cuts that Musk has been promoting.

There are, of course, many other opportunities for compromise and the times are ripe for the Democrats to take the lead in recommending them, in spite of the tough challenge of the Republican majorities in both the Senate and House. We're starting to see some resolution to the abortion issue that the Supreme Court sent back to the states and we're seeing compromise positions being legislated in some of the states. It would seem difficult for the Supreme Court to back a national abortion ban if it gets to that point, considering that they're on record that this is a state issue.

Trump is serious about stopping the flow of fentanyl and fentanyl precursors across both the northern and southern borders, although the leverage of the threat of tariffs may not be the best solution. Trump and Marco Rubio are serious about getting more of the NATO funding from the European Union. Both of these efforts are supported by Republicans and Democrats.

Now, having said all this, how do we do a better job getting our proposed compromises out to both Republicans and Democrats in middle America? Dan Rather said in a recent newsletter that the political news chain of New York Post, Fox News, Newsmax and its ilk, and two huge social media networks, Truth Social and X seems to have a pretty good lock on their audience, the market that we wish to reach.

As one avenue to compete with this, I could envision a pair of respected newspapers, one leaning left, the other leaning right, e.g., The New York Times and Wall Street Journal, putting their heads together (speaking of compromises) to explore strategies. For example, they could build a consortium, a multi-faceted network devoted to spreading the word on significant issues. Their output could be a limited number of printed pages of “just the facts” news prepared by a team of writers from both newspapers, followed by editorials or opinion pieces reflecting both sides of the issues, perhaps a total of four or eight pages. The same information would be placed in newsletters and social media sponsored by the same consortium. This news chain could justifiably and unarguably be presented as unbiased. And I’m sure this or any other similar pair of respected newspapers could come up with some better ideas.

Whatever they present should be punctuated by hot button terms reflecting good citizenship, informed patriotism, and working for the common good. Trump and his team endlessly and successfully repeated and ridiculed a variety of woke terms, not to mention “pet eating Haitians”, all words or phrases that energize their base. The unbiased consortium must use terms that energize their existing moderate base, and eventually also all Republicans, positive terms that reflect civic virtue that the founders thought key to our republic, the idea that citizens should put aside their own self-interests in favor of the common good of their communities and country--the “shining city,” leader of the free world,” “Lady Liberty,” Old Glory--- and phrases such as FDR used in his 1936 campaign when he said in connection with the Great Depression “I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished.”

Bringing everyone together in today’s political climate is a challenge, but we must do it. We are surviving, but if we are to include our

children and grandchildren in the common good, we and specifically the media must do better. Ideally for the future of America, in addition to the above mentioned current issue compromises, we should make three top priorities.

The first of these is to address the sustenance, shelter and healthcare needs of those left behind, those struggling to make ends meet, those “60 percent of Americans [living] paycheck to paycheck” ... “24 percent of seniors [living] each year on \$15,000 or less” the high percent of children living in poverty, all at a time when housing is unaffordable or unavailable.

And the second and third would be combatting the existential threats of global warming and nuclear proliferation.

Under the 2015 Paris agreement, the goal was to hold global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and preferably closer to 1.5 degrees above preindustrial levels by 2100. At present we’re on track for a 2.7 degree increase. What did we hear about this in the recent campaigns?

Both Iran and North Korea who now have a collaborative relationship with Russia and China in a new global threat are making the development of their nuclear weapons programs top priority. How much attention was paid to this in the recent elections?

If we are to preach to the Trump base choir instead of just to our choir, there must be a consortium of the main street press that leans to the center, that will develop and implement a new campaign using social media to spread the same word now spread for example by the more respected newspapers in the US.

In the next Newsletter, we will be addressing how to permanently enlighten this and future generations in good citizenship, informed

patriotism and civil discourse by focusing on current affairs in middle and high school civics, government and US history studies.

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Step Forward America

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