

A Republic – If You Can Keep It

JOHN J. BASTIAT / NOV. 9, 2020

Doing so will require that conservatives become as involved as devoted leftists.

According to American lore, a woman asked Founding Father Benjamin Franklin, who had just adjourned from the Constitutional Convention, what sort of government the august body had just created. His answer was blunt, accurate, and cautionary: “A republic, Madam, if you can keep it.” Whether accurately portrayed or not, the truth of this vignette survived Franklin’s life and will continue to remain true: A democratic republic cannot exist without an informed, politically active people. Otherwise, its people are subject to “intrigue,” to borrow a word from Franklin’s era.

The Dems’ Playbook

As if to foot-stomp Franklin’s warning, the scenario playing out in the 2020 election is gridlock in Washington – assuming Republicans do end up winning the Senate and Joe Biden does hold on to his declared victory in the presidential contest over President Donald Trump. That victory was initiated in part by the Democrats’ standard playbook of voter fraud and deception. This “intrigue” is now poised to undermine the very legitimacy of our government, with unpredictable, dramatic consequences.

Of course, Democrats are experts at intrigue. Their figurehead leader, Joe Biden, counseled calm and used the book of Ecclesiastes to declare, “This is the time to heal in America.”

Yet his party’s operatives are undermining the constitutional process through widespread voter fraud, lies, and deceit. Meanwhile, the media is so in the tank for the Left that it is seemingly unaware of its own bias, though this ignorance is more accurately characterized as willful blindness than naiveté. None of that will bring healing. And the “process” Biden told us to trust is more likely the party’s faithful working behind the scenes to fix election results.

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This isn't the Democrats' first rodeo by a long shot, either. Long before they were radicalized by the postmodern-Neo-Marxist Left, they were old hands at ballot-box-stuffing. It's not for nothing that their unwritten motto – sourcing from Al Capone and a host of corrupt Democrat Chicago mayors – is "Vote early and vote often." We underestimate the determination and depths of deceit backing that motto at our nation's peril.

The only thing that can be counted on is that the Left will do everything it can to gain power. The so-called "national popular vote" movement – the goal of which is to undermine the Electoral College through multi-state voting pacts – is one example of this aim. These pacts are gaining in popularity, especially in the West, as more Californians flee that state like locusts, leaving behind decimated fields for greener pastures.

Having never learned the fundamentals of individual freedom, these fools vote in the same manner in their new state, metaphorically turning those new pastures into dust fields, never stopping for a moment to consider why every place to which they migrate eventually turns into barren soil. Ironically, such mass migrations may one day render such pacts irrelevant.

But regardless of the ultimate outcome of this contested election, we must drag this sleaze into the light so it can undergo the full scrutiny it deserves. We the People have perhaps been negligently blind to the Democrats' underhanded strategies under the theory that refusing to go to the doctor to find out whether "that lump" is cancer will render it harmless. It can't hurt you if you don't know about it, right? We're finding out: Yes, it can.

At least one ray of sunshine remains: Regardless of the outcome of the presidential election, and despite pulling out all spending stops, the Democrats did not seem to gain the Senate. As Tucker Carlson aptly stated in the wake of learning the Senate election results, "If Democrats had won the Senate, the country as we know it would have ended."

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Carlson is right. Had the Democrats possessed the Senate, the House, and the presidency, there would exist no end to the damage they would inflict.

Here's looking at you, Georgia.

A Wake-Up Call

Like Franklin, albeit more directly, President Ronald Reagan warned about the danger of taking freedom for granted: **“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.”**

Fortunately, it's not in President Trump's character to roll over and take it, or else none of these despicable acts of voter fraud would have seen the light of day. But the real problem he has exposed, albeit indirectly, is one of philosophy. As a generalization, Republicans see government as a necessary evil and involve themselves in it only to the extent required by their civic duty. They're out working, raising families, living meaningful lives, and providing others the space and opportunity to live their own lives in peace and freedom. In contrast, Democrats view government as a vehicle to implement change, to “make the world a better place,” and to solve every perceived societal problem – regardless of the actual will of the people.

As a result, Democrats throng to government-associated venues while Republicans generally eschew them, beyond the basics – national defense, the courts, public works, and the like. That means a lot more volunteers and workers from among the Democrat ranks are likely to be found administering activities like balloting, polling, and all things political than from their counterparts among Republican ranks. But since the Democrat Party has become totally coopted by the Left, and since the Left's most fundamental goal is power – not truth, integrity, or

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any other competing attribute – the ascendant motto of these government-knows-best acolytes has become, *If you're not cheating, you're not trying hard enough!*

President Trump is right to challenge the Democrats wherever they've evidenced use of their go-to playbook. But Trump has a pick-your-fights problem that may ultimately prove insurmountable: The extent of the Democrats' deceitful tactics is clearly widespread, but suing in every state to fix it, let alone fix it within a contingent timeline, is simply untenable.

Thus, this election has been a wake-up call. If we ignore that call, we have no one to blame but ourselves: This is not Trump's problem; it's *our* problem. But how to respond? The best course, for now, is to get the word out and to encourage others to do the same. Text and call friends, use social media to the extent it's not censored, and engage government representatives to the extent they'll listen. As for the impact of "getting the word out" on the present crisis, public outrage has value – especially when it's well-earned, as it is here. And to the extent this debacle raises awareness that the Republic is in real jeopardy and that more, not less, involvement in the process is needed, that's a good thing.

Longer term, getting involved in city councils, school boards, and other local venues to discuss and debate good ideas – and equally importantly, to bring *bad* ideas to light – are all good things to do. So are learning about state voting processes, city council plans, voter registration criteria, and a host of issues impacting local politics, where tomorrow's leaders will most likely get their start.

While it may be true that conservatives are at a systemic disadvantage when we value simply being left alone instead of meddling, contrary to most conservatives' affinity to stay out of politics and to live and let live, saving the republic may mean getting at least a little more involved in processes we would otherwise naturally withdraw from. If nothing else, this election will have taught that valuable lesson.