

Who is The Lesser Evil?

It appears likely, assuming that neither one of them is indicted, that the Presidential election will pit Donald Trump against Hillary Clinton. Hillary is still under serious investigation in connection with her emails, and the Donald Trump University scandal may yet sink the Trump candidacy. One thing is certain with both candidates: uncertainty and unpredictability may dictate the final outcome. One can only be amused by the fact that the Republican establishment is freaking out over Donald Trump, in part because he is not conservative enough. They also do not like his New York brashness, unpredictability, and the “embarrassment” factor. For many Democrats, Hillary Clinton is propelled by her gender, because she is not sufficiently liberal on a cascade of other issues.

The response of both candidates to dissenters within their own party is worth noting. Trump keeps gaining votes based upon his repudiation of the Republican Party bashing that he has endured. Republican voters are rebelling not on ideology. They are truly revolting against their traditional leadership. Democrats in large measure see Bernie Sanders as the real deal. They want a Democratic Socialist and a restructuring of society. Bernie Sanders is much more likely to deliver a European-style mix of capitalism/socialism that Hillary Clinton never could. For Democrats, Bernie Sanders is more an ideological decision and less a revolution against Clintonian supremacy.

What the two likely candidates really believe and how they can work with others to accomplish their goals remains a head scratcher. Trump, the celebrity star bad boy will need to convert himself into a mainstream, “get'er” done kind of character. Hillary Clinton will have to become more approachable and credible. What each candidate has to accomplish will be no easy task, given their history and the TV clips that each will be confronted with in a general election cycle.

The Trump campaign has already decided that the battle against Hillary will be a fight against crony capitalism and Washington-insider corruption. Clinton's people will simply paint Donald Trump as a lunatic. Just as Lyndon Johnson's people asked whether the voters would want Barry Goldwater's hand on the red telephone, the Clinton forces will ask whether Donald Trump should have his finger on the nuclear arsenal.

The 2016 election may be determined by who the electors fear the most. More people will fear Donald Trump, but more people will trust in his ability to accomplish the nation's business. Hillary Clinton will be the candidate of those who depend upon government largess, and see her as a safe pick on niche issues like abortion and civil rights.

The reality is, for those who enjoy the election as a reality show, that Trump does not know exactly what he thinks, and Hillary Clinton is beholden to a variety of constituencies. No candidate is truly free. People who serve as President of the United States, as our outgoing President can testify to, will succeed or fail by who they select to work in government and how

well they work with others. President Obama overplayed his hand when he thought that he had total congressional support his first two years in office. He tried to run the government out of his hip pocket, and showed little respect for some very capable people. What President Obama did best was to articulate the needs and frustrations of those low on the American totem pole while essentially creating a stable national platform for American domestic policy. In the foreign policy field, the President struggled to find a policy that he and American allies could live with.

How do either of the current candidates for office of President of the United States measure up to President Obama? George Bush? The current crop of candidates might make both prior Presidents look very good. Stability, understandable policies, respect for others, and articulate verbal conceptualization are the hallmarks of presidential success. They seem to be the qualities most lacking in Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. Can either one of those candidates grow into the job? The voters will likely have some difficulty deciding that question.

If Hillary Clinton gets the Democratic nomination, many Bernie Sanders supporters will either stay home or vote for her holding their nose. Donald Trump's candidacy reminds us of when Teddy Roosevelt and William Howard Taft split the Republican Party so that Democrat Woodrow Wilson won. With many Republicans angered by Trump's lack of class and deportment, it is likely they will help make a Hillary Clinton victory more decisive. When the Chairman of the Republican National Convention indicates that he is willing to step aside so that Donald Trump can appoint his own chairman, and when Past Presidents apparently will not support their standard bearer, something very strange and weird is going on. It is likely that Republicans are more afraid that Trump will not adhere to party rigor and discipline than the purity of his conservative views. That is and will continue to be the appeal of Donald Trump; he is the guy the bosses hate.

World leaders are now beginning to weigh in, as though it is any of their business. The overwhelmingly liberal American State Department is able subtly to generate foreign support for Hillary Clinton and to trash Donald Trump. That should help Trump's candidacy modestly, since most Americans really do not care what foreigners think.

Stay tuned. The reality show promises to get more interesting with the passage of time. Hopefully our great country will survive the latest Presidential battle of the egos.

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