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The Right's Cannibalism Problem

By Matt A. Mayer

The right has a cannibalism problem. It gleefully attacks and eats its own. The left silently watches Republican after Republican do their dirty work for them. John Bolton is just the latest example of this problem. Sitting astride their high moral horses, establishment Republicans talk wistfully about the integrity of the presidency and the perceived damage Donald Trump's personality and style are doing to it — as if Bill Clinton had not already defined the presidency downward.

The left never attacks its own leaders in this way, which is why they've managed to enact far more of their policies over the last 30 years. The left knew that a morally repugnant Clinton allowed for the placement of thousands of political appointees who got their wish list done. Republicans focus far too much on Trump and far too little on those doing the real work of his administration.

While Establishment Republicans in Washington have spent the last few years sipping expensive wines at Georgetown parties and lamenting Trump's presidency, the Trump administration worked tirelessly to enact historic tax reforms, to tackle the federal leviathan by substantially reducing regulations, to spur the economy to drive unemployment for every demographic to historic lows, to renegotiate trade deals to be fairer to America's workers and farmers, to finally make America energy independent, to get America's military out of pointless quagmires, to protect our religious freedom and right to bear arms, to get our allies to increase their share of defending the West, to remake the federal judiciary by appointing hundreds of conservative judges who will uphold the Constitution, to defeat a pandemic unleashed on the world by China, and to unabashedly defend American exceptionalism and liberty.

American conservatism is far stronger today than it was four years ago. Not one of these accomplishments, not one, would have occurred under Hillary Clinton. In fact, Clinton would have done exactly opposite of what the Trump administration has accomplished.

Over four years ago, I penned an [‘Open Letter to Establishmentarians re Donald Trump’](#) in which I made the case for Trump based on the simple idea that he gave inside the Beltway Republicans and conservatives the best chance of enacting the policies they had championed, yet failed to pass, for decades. At the time of my letter, the good folks at the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute — both entities in which I have served as a Visiting Fellow — had raised well over a billion dollars since Ronald Reagan left Washington with little to nothing to show for it except very

impressive headquarters, amazing conferences, and forests full of white papers.

In addition to the navel gazing think tankers, many others on the right, including former retired generals wholly supportive of the military industrial complex, resided comfortably in the National Capital Region where they collected millions in fees lobbying, preening for government contractors, and serving on corporate boards, as they jumped in and out of Republican presidential administrations. Given the dismal track record of the federal government, clearly their tenures hadn't produced the results voters expected.

Into this swamp stepped hard-charging and brusque Trump. From my perch smack dab in the middle of America, I sensed something many inside the Beltway missed: a growing tide of citizens tired of the same old empty words and promises from both Republicans and Democrats.

Since Trump's win, the progressive left has taken even greater control of the Democratic party so a Biden presidency most certainly would be to the left of Clinton. Think Medicare-for-All, Green New Deal, healthcare for illegal immigrants, higher taxes, greater regulations, and more left-wing judges and justices.

I made an analogy about Trump four years ago that ‘perhaps, like a forest with layers of undergrowth, a lightning strike that causes a massive fire will lead to a more vibrant and healthier ecosystem’ because I believed Trump might be able to drain the swamp with his style. He's certainly made progress, but much work remains to be done.

Whether it is Bolton, George Conway, Mitt Romney, John Kasich, or any other big-name Republican wanting their 15 minutes of fame and a media deal, the inescapable fact is that a Trump administration will be far better for America than a Biden administration over the next four years. Trump's presidential record surpasses even Reagan's when it comes to getting conservative policies enacted. Trump may be a bitter pill to swallow for some, but if his team can continue to get vital stuff done for America then it will have been worth every tweet, insult, or thin-skinned reaction.

If the right continues to cannibalize Trump, it won't be his corpse the left will feast on after November, as he'll simply head back to his billionaire lifestyle in Florida. It will be America's.

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