

Christie's Time Has Passed

If the former governor of New Jersey gets 10 percent of the vote in any Republican primary, it would be a miracle.



by Conrad Black

On the remarks of my esteemed and delightful friend, Peggy Noonan, I comment again only because she is such a fair-minded and perceptive observer, and former participant in the American presidential process, that the intemperance of her antipathy to former President Trump is a barometer of the always febrile state of Trump-hate.

About four years ago, she threw down what had become the threadbare mask of objectivity on the subject and flew out of the closet of Trump-lunatics and referred to the then

president as “a tumor metastasizing in the Oval Office.”

This was a reflection so crude and venomous that no civilized American should ever utter such a statement about any president of the United States. (I made the same comment to the late Bill Buckley when the *National Review* observed the end of the Clinton administration with the cover headline “Goodbye to the Big Creep.”)

Such remarks, emanating from such decent individuals, indicate that political discourse has come off the rails of reasonable opinion, and descended to the level of primal obloquy oozing out of the inaccessible darkness of peoples’ most primitive thoughts.

This last Saturday in the Wall Street Journal, Ms. Noonan [bared](#) the dark side of her political soul once again with a double shriek of blank Trump-hate despair. First, if the Republicans renominate Mr. Trump, “They will have ended the Republican Party.”

Second, this week’s new key to avoiding that draconian extremity is the impending candidacy for the Republican nomination of a former New Jersey governor, Chris Christie. In 2012, Donald Trump, Nancy Reagan, Rupert Murdoch, and Henry Kissinger, were among the first-class box of boosters urging him to make the race; he declined, and as generally happens, that opportunity does not knock again. Feature William H. Seward in 1856, Theodore Roosevelt in 1908, Nelson Rockefeller in 1960.

Mr. Christie was a good governor, but wasn’t popular when he retired, and his time has passed. As he enters the race, his negatives are 47 percent; he is a tainted, half-forgotten figure, and he acknowledges that his only purpose is to attack Mr. Trump, whom he energetically supported in 2016 until Mr. Trump ditched him, allegedly because of his role in the prosecution of Ivanka Trump’s father-in-law.

Whatever happened, if Mr. Christie gets 10 percent of the vote in any Republican primary, it will be a miracle. His opening cannon was that Mr. Trump is a puppet of the Kremlin. Do we have to listen to this? It at least shows the desperation and cognitive bankruptcy of the Trump-haters.

If Mr. Trump is re-nominated, it will be the confirmation of the rebirth of the Republican Party. It will be liberated from the waffling post-Reagan losers who allowed Ross Perot to take 20 million Republican votes in 1992 (President George H.W. Bush), almost blew the election to Vice President Gore in 2000 and sat like suet puddings while President Clinton's housing bubble expanded grotesquely, and then tried to rally the public with the stirring tocsin: "The sucker could go down," as President George W. Bush put it – and choked, as Senator Romney did after winning the first debate in 2012

Even President Reagan, whom I revere almost as much as Ms. Noonan does, and who was a great president because he won the Cold War, rebuilt national morale after Vietnam, Watergate, and the vacillations of the Carter era, and produced low-inflation economic growth in a low-tax economy, failed completely on his promise to shrink the government.

Republican presidents alternate with Democratic ones, but they don't change much; the District of Columbia is a 95 percent Democratic place and the government keeps moving left whoever is in the White House. Mr. Trump saw the extent of discontent in the country, and he broadened the Republican coalition from the country clubs and the suburbs, and installed them like egg-laying hens on top of the traditionally democratic boroughs of the various minorities and the working class districts.

None of these Trump-haters can ever acknowledge, even though the evidence is lurching around the media landscape like Wagnerian monsters, that Mr. Trump has been the victim of more illegal and unconstitutional harassment and demonization than

anyone in American history.

The 45th president was almost immobilized by the scandalous allegation that he was a foreign intelligence asset and the spurious impeachments, particularly that which expressed neutral curiosity to find out about the Biden family's business activities in Ukraine.

It is an outrage that the Justice department hasn't even produced an interim report on the four year-long deliberations of the grand jury on the subject – not to mention nearly three years since the Democratic partisans in the Intelligence community denounced the secret grand jury investigation as Russian disinformation.

There is indeed a Trump problem. But it isn't Mr. Trump; it is the failure of those who should have overlooked his stylistic gaucheries, (that have largely disappeared after eight years of blistering public controversy), and recognized that he was saying what needed to be said, and promising to do what needed to be done, and no one else was.

Instead, they set out to destroy him, and were prepared to condone the most massive assault on the Constitution since the Civil War for that goal.

When tens of millions of unsolicited mail-in ballots were sent out to voters in the 2020 election because of extraordinary measures undertaken supposedly to facilitate voting during Covid, raising concerns of ballot harvesting and other ills, the congressional Republicans and members of Mr. Trump's own administration refused to join in any criticism of the real issues about the validity of the election result.

They ignored the fact that Mr. Trump warned that there could be problems on January 6, 2021, at the Capitol, and attempted to blame him for the misconduct of a comparative handful of hooligans.

Because Mr. Trump threatens the cozy post-Reagan Republican leadership of Democratic fellow-travelers on a treadmill to the left, they attack him and not the Democrats.

Even the fact that the majority support Mr. Trump against the profound corruption of prosecutors, in the Democrats' final bottom-of-the-bag of tricks effort to derail Mr. Trump, does not cause Never Trump Republicans to reconsider their position.

If Mr. Trump is renominated, or if he loses fairly to another plausible candidate, (and there are several, but Mr. Christie isn't one of them), the reorientation of the Republican Party will be confirmed as a serious alternative and not a feeble accomplice in the post-Clinton Democratic lurch to the left.

If Mr. Trump is bloodlessly assassinated again, it will proclaim the triumph of woke American self-hate, and the definitive beginning of America's decline. It is painful beyond my ability to express here to record that those who should be joining Mr. Trump, and assisting in making him a less frightening candidate to his more genteel natural supporters, are instead echoing the Great liberal Death-wish.

We are, at least, finally, coming to the dénouement: either the Trump-haters in their frenzied, St. Vitus' dance will be defeated, either by Mr. Trump or legitimately by a person of similar views, and give up, and possibly return to their senses, or America will become a one-party state that hates itself and abdicates from a position of democratic leadership in the world.

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