

Idea That Trump Was Finished as a Political Force Is Put Paid as the First Votes of the Election Are Set To Be Cast



by Conrad Black

We now seem to be only a few weeks away, at the most, from the final evaporation of what began around Inauguration Day 2021 as the triumphant certainty that Donald Trump was finished as a viable political force. This conviction has gradually receded into a wishful hope ever more nervously advanced by his enemies.

Barring a completely astonishing turn of events, the 45th president will win an absolute majority of the votes in the Iowa caucuses, a four candidate race, which will demonstrate the falsity of the overindulged argument that if Mr. Trump only had to face the strongest of his Republican rivals, he would lose.

The problem with the coverage of the Trump phenomenon these last three years has been the absolute refusal of his opponents to acknowledge that where millions of unsolicited ballots were mailed out to an obsolete voters' list and millions of ballots that could not be verified were collected and cast, raising concerns of ballot harvesting and other malfeasance where a flip of only 50,000 votes in three states would have changed the outcome, there is greater doubt about the integrity of the 2020 election than any in American history except that of 1876, which was at least resolved by agreement between the candidates.

This refusal to contemplate the possibility of a stolen election was compounded by the abdication of the judiciary from any of the constitutional challenges to the changes in the voting and vote counting procedures in the swing states. This was in conformity with the unwritten practice that the courts will not challenge the apparent result of a presidential election, as the Supreme Court demonstrated, in 2000, in *Bush v. Gore*.

These facts created great genuine anger in the Trump camp, and on January 6, 2021, Mr. Trump attempted to demonstrate the extent of the anger in the country but specifically without any recourse to illegalities, as he advised the large audience of his aggrieved supporters. There is no evidence whatever that Trump attempted an insurrection and if he had done so he would have made a much more threatening effort than a riffraff of hooligans wandering around the Capitol.

Mr. Trump wanted to demonstrate that the anger was real and

widespread but not to give his enemies the ability to accuse him of being lawless or a threat to the Constitution. Not content with this, his enemies produced the most ludicrous and demeaning mockery of a congressional investigation in American history in which the Republican nominees to the House select committee on the events of January 6, 2021, were rejected, other than Trump-haters led by Representatives Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger, and there was no minority right to cross-examine or call witnesses.

The burlesque was an insult to the entire population of the United States. As the Biden administration faltered and floundered in every policy field and the physical and mental condition of the president visibly deteriorated and support for the regime collapsed, there has been a lengthy Saint Vitus' dance of the Trump-haters, twitching and scrambling and retreating from trench to trench.

Other Republicans were admonished to show their courage and recognize that Trump support was evaporating and that he was a paper tiger within his own party. The primaries have not yet begun but the current probability is the Republican nomination process will be effectively over within two weeks.

The party had a number of presentable alternative candidates. Governor DeSantis is a capable man and would probably be a good president, but he made the catastrophic error of attacking Mr. Trump from the right where there is inadequate political room, and of stitching himself into a six week deadline for an abortion.

Governor Haley of South Carolina, a former ambassador to the United Nations, puts a more traditional Republican case articulately. Yet in trying to poach Trump votes while courting anti-Trump votes, as she said in her town hall with Fox News last week: "Rightly or wrongly, chaos follows Trump and we cannot repair Democratic chaos with Republican chaos."

What she meant was that the Democrats are afraid of Mr. Trump and in their hysteria they concocted a completely fraudulent story of his collusion with Russia and represented it as legitimate intelligence, perpetrated two spurious impeachment trials against him, and now four separate indictments.

Mrs. Haley implies that she believes that Mr. Trump is innocent of all these charges but blames him for provoking them. We do not customarily blame those who have been defamed for the defamation. Mrs. Haley deserves credit as the only candidate who has seriously raised the debt bomb and entitlement reform. She would be a good vice president.

No other Republican is Donald Trump. None had already been president and, despite unprecedented harassment, been a president whose policies the majority of Americans approved. None of them benefited from the natural support that accrues to someone who millions of people believe has been cheated out of the presidency.

It is unlikely that any other person that we have seen on the presidential landscape for many years could have conducted a successful campaign in the teeth of the frenzied and spurious legal assaults that have been hurled at Mr. Trump by a corrupt criminal justice system directed by his political enemies. What was to have been the ultimate weapon to demolish the Trump campaign – as was presaged by an email of Peter Strzok to Lisa Page in the Trump-Russian collusion hoax of 2016, a politically motivated indictment of Mr. Trump – has failed.

Historians will see that it is one of the inspiring and restorative moments of American political history that Mr. Trump's popularity has risen with each of these odious political indictments and that the number of people appalled by this corruption of the American criminal justice system steadily exceeds the number, though it remains considerable, that is horrified by the prospect of a second Trump presidential term.

The Trump that the Trump haters hate, a boorish and boastful bully, has been replaced by a self-confident man certainly, an ex-president and a billionaire, but yet an underdog defending his right to equal treatment under law and avoidance of disqualification from the nation's highest office because of insultingly implausible allegations hurled at him in a fugue of hate and terror by officious persons bringing the entire American political system into disrepute.

The success of this initiative would be the end of the United States as a constitutional democracy and the majority of Americans sense that. The Democrats have now left it too late to have a serious primary process to dispense with President Biden and Vice President Harris. They are on a political suicide mission. An unambiguous Trump victory is now almost ineluctable.

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