

Virginia Paves the Way for Trump's Return



There has been a great deal of discussion of the widespread Republican victories last week, many of them belaboring the obvious. Fundamentally, the United States is a political society based on personal freedom, a free market, and on democratically legislated and responsibly enforced laws. The current administration's belief in virtually unrestricted immigration, higher taxes, authoritarian regulation—including COVID vaccine mandates, and a heavy redistribution of wealth from those who have earned it to those who have not—are all antagonistic to the ethos that the United States has had for all of its history. In the circumstances, some sort of reversal was almost inevitable and is the off-year American electoral custom.

Those who were surprised by the Republican victory in Virginia and the near-dead heat in New Jersey had not recognized the extent of the affront to traditional democratic voters of the

Sanders-woke-leftward lurch.

But Terry McAuliffe's comeback campaign for governor of Virginia will have to rank in the future as one of the most inept election efforts in the history of any large American state. He came rampaging out of his campaign bus, clapping his hands mindlessly, lurching about like a great white antelope dancing, literally, to his own drummer. His entire campaign was Trump-hate—the inevitable mantra of the Democratic Party these past five years.

McAuliffe gave no hint as to what he would *do* if elected, other than to prostrate himself before the teachers' unions. He even had the egregious Randi Weingarten, the most prominent teachers' union leader in the country, speak on his behalf—as if to confirm it was his intention to retain the children of America as the charges of the government, regardless of their parents' wishes. He praised Virginia's strength as a place to invest because of its liberal abortion laws, and fictitiously claimed, up and down the state, that Youngkin would finish his campaign with a giant rally with Trump.

McAuliffe has always seemed an overbearing Narcissus, a Bill Clinton without the charm or the twinkle in his eye, an obnoxiously self-preoccupied man, loud and in your face at all times, in person and on television. His loss, in a sense, was the burial of the Clinton era which McAuliffe had done so much to popularize and finance. There was an anti-McAuliffe vote embedded beside the anti-Biden vote, both supplementing a vote against high taxes, deteriorating schools, and ostentatious disrespect for the will of Virginia parents and taxpayers. This last group was stirred to considerable irritation in New Jersey by Governor Philip Murphy's breezy statement, "if you're a one-issue voter and tax is your issue . . . we in New Jersey are probably not your state"—as if taxes were a flavor of ice cream.

Fact is, the Democratic Party—having scratched and clawed its

way to the White House, with 95 percent media support, outspending Trump 2-1, and undoubtedly engaging in industrial-weight ballot-harvesting—has completely broken down. A majority of voters doubt the president has an [adequate cognitive level](#) to exercise his office; a substantial [majority disapprove](#) of his and the vice president's floundering performances in office, and of the direction the country is taking. The process of atomization and the emphasis on race in every conceivable way has divided the country and finally annoyed the majority of Americans; the failures in the economy, immigration, management of the coronavirus, education, national defense, energy policy, and retention of the credibility required to be an effective leader of the Western alliance—in all of these areas the Biden Administration has fallen down badly and often dishonestly, and there are very few prominent Democrats not implicated in all the poor policy wrapped up in Trump-hate packaging. The Democratic regime in Washington is in freefall and most of the state and city Democratic governments are even more heavily compromised by their toleration of violence and promotion of national self-hate in the horribly demeaning and destructive summer of 2020.

Most of the audible Democrats are claiming that the problem was lack of progress on the Biden-Sanders radical legislative agenda and the solution is to accelerate to the Left. It is unlikely that many of them believe that and many others are quietly proposing that the party alter course to the center. The progressive caucus which Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) told us a year ago was only five or six representatives, now numbers 96. They are to the left of Pelosi, and Pelosi is to the left of most of the other 130 or so Democratic members—so it is no longer clear whom she represents. The Democrats will not get anywhere with their obscene nonsense that the Republican successes were based on racism. This is particularly absurd in Virginia where the governor-elect said not a word about race and the lieutenant-governor-elect, a

Jamaican-American woman and Marine veteran, debunked racist wokeism and was echoed by the Republican attorney general-elect, who is Hispanic.

On Election Night, Trump congratulated Youngkin and expressed happiness that his supporters in rural Virginia had been sufficiently steadfast to ensure victory. McAuliffe's blowhardish anti-Trumpism failed, and rural Virginia seemed to have a heavier turnout for Youngkin than it did even for Trump in 2020. Republican NeverTrumpers and non-Trumpers claimed to see in Youngkin the possibility of a non-Trump Republican returned to the White House. This was Trumpism without Trump, which has always been a fraud unless Trump does not seek the nomination. But the facts are that over 80 percent of Youngkin's supporters are also Trump supporters and if primary elections were held in the Republican Party now, Trump would win all of them.

Rabid Democrats such as former Labor Secretary Robert Reich have claimed that Trump is now politically dead: The Democrats have driven the silver stake through his heart, even if it means arming more traditional Bush-McCain-Romney Republicans, whose distinction from the Democrats is frequently blurred, with Trump policy they have so far conveniently evaded. Of course, this is piffle.

Trump had to drive the bulldozer of popular opinion over the Bush-McCain-Romney Republicans in order to get the nomination and ran practically without their support to win the election in 2016. The establishment did its best to undermine Trump in 2020 and many have already taken their positions on the battlements for 2024 by joining wholeheartedly in the chorus that 2020 was a fair election (see [Karl Rove](#) in the *Wall Street Journal* on November 4), and in proclaiming that January 6 was an attempted incitement to insurrection by the former president.

These are both demonstrable falsehoods and most Republicans

don't believe them. In fact, Trump-hate died as a viable political position last Tuesday night and the orthodox Republicans now claim that when there were over 40 million harvested ballots and only a little over 50,000 votes were required to flip from the Democrats to the Republicans in Pennsylvania and any two of Arizona, Nevada, and Wisconsin, to give the election to Trump in the Electoral College, it is impossible to know who the real winner was. This is a reasonable formulation, similar to what Richard Nixon could have said about 1960 and Al Gore said about 2000.

The Democrats are mismanaging everything so badly and have such a complete absence of competent senior personnel, it is almost impossible to imagine their reelection in 2024. The deepening John Durham inquiry into the 2016 election now seems likely to stir up considerable sympathy for Trump in previously improbable quarters, because of the shameful involvement of U.S. intelligence agencies and the FBI in the Clinton campaign to represent Trump as, in the words of former National Intelligence Agency Director James Clapper, "a Russian intelligence asset."

As of now, the Republicans appear to be unbeatable in 2022 and 2024 and Trump appears to be unbeatable among the Republicans. The Durham revelations will inspire many to take a second look at Trump and will help establish the plausibility of his theory of the "Big Steal" in the 2020 election. Trump amended his comments on Virginia to accommodate Youngkin's steady rise; there is no reason to doubt that he will be equally skillful for the next three years in maintaining his roughly 60 million followers and in adding to them. The "Gong Show" in the White House will soften some anti-Trumpers as it shakes American confidence and rattles Democratic loyalties.

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