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OUR VIEW



A load of Trump

Donald Trump is now clearly, unequivocally, indisputably in line to become the Republican nominee for president.

In the process, he has left quite a wake behind him.

Trump's success on Super Tuesday "started a civil war" in the Republican party, according to *The Wall Street Journal* conservative commentator Peggy Noonan.

With his abrasive and entertaining personality and his knife-sharp barbs, Trump has cleft the GOP into a shape few believe it could form.

On one hand, Trump has excoriated George W. Bush and the Iraq War. On the other hand, he advocated hunting down and killing the families of Islamic State soldiers — a blatant war crime.

On one hand, he spoke glowingly of Planned Parenthood in a nationally televised debate and has a long history of pro-choice statements. On the other hand, he says he is now pro-life and when asked to elaborate by Bloomberg News said: "It's an issue. I mean it's an issue, and it's a strong issue."

On one hand, Trump said he would not let people without health insurance "die on the streets" and wrote in 2011 that he supports universal health care. On the other hand, he called Obamacare a "heat-seeking missile that will destroy jobs and small businesses" during this campaign. He has vowed to repeal it.

Trump has mocked and humiliated members of his own party, from operative Karl Rove — who helped run the Bush machine — to popular Republican governor Nikki Haley, popular Fox News host Megyn Kelly, popular Vietnam War hero John McCain, etc. You get the picture.

He has been vitriolic and violent to the press, even the news stations that have breathlessly given free television time to his supposedly self-financed campaign.

The man got into a Twitter war with the Pope, for heaven's sake.

So how on Earth is Trump, when he is the antithesis of so many supposedly central Republican ideals, doing so well with Republican voters?

We would argue the man is clearly capitalizing on displeasure with GOP officeholders' actions during the Obama administration. Those Republicans told their constituents that the president was

the devil incarnate and out to destroy America. Those officeholders now seem surprised that their constituents became apoplectic when Congress took any action to work with the president to solve problems.

Trump is also a celebrity. And rich. Our culture is currently obsessed with both, conflating them with character traits of merit, morality and competence.

Trump has lifted a veil over a segment of the Republican Party that was always there, but had been mostly relegated to screaming at the establishment from beneath the bleachers.

For decades, a majority of the Republican party have been classic conservatives who want the government to run more efficiently. There was always a wing that wanted less government, no matter the efficiency. And there was also some who claimed to be socially conservative, but their steadfast support of the thrice-married, foul-mouthed, egotistical, materialistic and nonreligious Trump shows that was just a front.

We'd argue it was a front for a political philosophy of opposing progress. Sure, that means opposing gay marriage and opposing health care reform. And it also means opposing immigration reform and tax reform, from creating a national energy policy and modernizing our transportation plan. These anti-progress beliefs are laced with racism, sexism, homophobia, religious hatred and xenophobia. Trump and his crowds have made that clear at every stop on the campaign trail — the support of the Ku Klux Klan is the most straightforward evidence thereof.

This group of has crawled out from under the bleachers and has elbowed their way onto the stage. As the war for the microphone commences, the GOP may just split and crumble. And after listening to Trump, it will be anything but civil.

So how is Trump, the antithesis of so many supposedly central Republican ideals, doing so well with Republican voters?

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

OTHER VIEWS

Hillary Clinton's moment

You can look at Hillary Clinton's path to this juncture and marvel at how difficult she has often made things for herself, creating messes where there didn't need to be any, frittering away advantages, misunderstanding the mood of voters, underestimating the mettle of opponents, and failing to cement an image — and a message — that seemed authentic and right.

That's a legitimate perspective. She's a deeply flawed politician.

But she's also a preternaturally determined, resourceful and patient one. Her path illustrates that just as compellingly. For about a quarter of a century, she has been vilified as loudly as she has been lionized, told that her talents pale beside her husband's, called "likable enough" but seldom lovable, and cast in supporting roles: the first lady, the secretary of state.

She never retreated. Never gave up.

And as the returns from Super Tuesday came in, nudging her closer to the Democratic nomination, I realized that we weren't just seeing greater clarity in a messy race for the White House and the possible approach of history: a first-ever major-party female presidential nominee.

We were seeing the vindication of a fortitude and fierceness that warrant as much notice as her less savory qualities.

She notched important wins Tuesday in Massachusetts, Texas, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, Arkansas and Alabama, echoing her triumph in South Carolina on Saturday.

Let's give her this moment, because she fought her way here. She tuned out the naysayers. She turned a blind eye to all her scars. Her ability to do that may reflect unrestrained ambition, a sturdy confidence in her mission or — more likely — an intricate cat's cradle of both. Whichever the case, it demonstrates a grit that could be her greatest asset in a general election.

But grit won't be enough.

The surprising, impressive success of Sanders, who had his own key wins Tuesday, has made that clear. There's an ire and a disgust in the body politic — they fuel his campaign just as they do Donald Trump's — and they're built on a belief that the system is rigged, the status quo is unacceptable and its guardians are untrustworthy.

Clinton is poorly positioned to mollify that rage, and the reason isn't just coziness with Wall Street. It's her familiarity, her celebrity, her crowd. She's political royalty, and she can put the crown deep in a closet; she can renounce it all she wants. There are voters who will still see it there.

And oh, the baggage she carries! Many more Americans have an unfavorable impression of her than a favorable one: In a Quinnipiac University poll from early February, the split was 56 to 39 percent.

She conquers that ... how? By introducing herself better to voters? They know her plenty well. By unveiling yet another new image? It's hard to imagine there are any permutations left.



FRANK BRUNI
Comment

Democrats are aware of that, and have consoled themselves by focusing on who her Republican opponent might be: Trump. He racked up victory after victory on Tuesday, and Clinton's remarks at a celebratory rally in Miami on Tuesday night were a targeted rebuke of him.

Mocking his slogan, she said that the country's challenge was "not to make America great again. America never stopped being great. We have to make America whole."

She added: "Instead of building walls, we're going to break down barriers."

Trump, at his own victory party, was more explicit and more derisive in his invocations of her. Referring repeatedly to the ongoing investigation of her email practices as secretary of state, he said that he'd be surprised if she were even allowed to remain in the presidential race.

He argued that she can't credibly promise America any progress or solutions, given that she's been involved in politics for decades and, in his estimation, has never delivered.

"You look at her record as secretary of state — it's abysmal," he said in a voice dripping with contempt, adding that it would be easy to defeat her and he relished the thought of her as an adversary.

To attain the presidency, a politician needn't be adored — just less loathed than the alternative.

In that same Quinnipiac poll, Trump's unfavorable to favorable ratio was even worse than Clinton's: 59 to 34 percent. Her supporters and advisers are accordingly crafting a strategy of brutal negativity and relentless attacks, as *The New York Times* reported earlier this week. Envisioning that, David Plouffe, who managed Barack Obama's 2008 campaign, said that a Clinton bid would be less "hope and change" than "hate and castrate."

There are several problems with "hate and castrate." One is that Trump already dwells in the sewer and most voters know it; to join him there isn't to expose him but to degrade yourself.

Another is that it doesn't address the ire I mentioned earlier, the yearning to rebel. And a disappointed Sanders voter with that yearning could, in a general election, sit on the sidelines or vote for Trump before siding with Clinton, unless she makes some adjustments defter than any that she has made so far.

Worst of all, an epically nasty general-election campaign would do nothing to unite the country and give the next president much of a chance of governing effectively.

Clinton has the toughness to engage in — and survive — a brutally ugly contest. She also has the smarts to know the cost of it. Has she honed the character and nimbleness to prevail in a more inspiring, unifying way?

As well as we know her, this is yet to be revealed.

Frank Bruni has been a columnist for *The New York Times* since 2011.

STAR TRIBUNE
S&K



LETTERS POLICY

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YOUR VIEWS

Despite survey results, no Pendleton housing shortage

The *East Oregonian* front page on Saturday sported a headline, "City still facing a housing shortage."

The first sentence asserts that "Pendleton still faces a significant housing shortage." The article implies that there is a problem and that city government should try to solve it. This is misleading and mistaken.

About five years ago the city made an effort to solve this alleged problem by zoning seven acres of city-owned, vacant land for high density housing and giving the land to a developer with a plan to build some 70-plus units of "affordable" housing.

The developer initially built 22 units, 2- and 3-bedroom units, and is now adding 10 more. The developer is located in the

Portland/Vancouver area, so the rental revenue is leaving Pendleton

The rents are in the \$900 to \$1,000 per month range, but the units are Section 8 eligible so can be subsidized for low-income residents who cannot afford this much. However, the landlord does not accept people with poor credit histories, felony records or other indicators of potential problems.

If there is, indeed, a significant housing shortage, I wonder why this developer has not rapidly pursued adding another 30 or 40 units to this development? Perhaps there is not really such a shortage?

Your article reports that an estimated 30 percent of those who work in Pendleton live outside the city and that of those, 40 percent would live in Pendleton if they could find "affordable, quality" housing. Of course,

quality and affordability are in the eye of the beholder.

And it is also true that those who live outside the city do not pay \$60 per month real estate tax to the city on a \$120,000 house. Nor do they pay another \$62 per month in city water/sewer charges. That allows more "quality and affordability" for housing outside the city.

The article reports that 156 new units became available in the five years since the city starting pushing for more "affordable" housing. Of those, 22 were those described above. Most other new units were produced by local, private sector landlords.

For those units, the rental income stays here. This suggests that perhaps the city should not promote big, new developments, but concentrate on reducing the housing costs that are driven by the city (taxes, water/

sewer charges, city fees). The city could also focus on making it easier for owners to renovate existing units.

That would mean reviewing regulations and addressing how city staff interact with these local developers, builders and landlords.

The U.S. Census reports that there are about 6,800 housing units available in Pendleton for our population of about 17,000 people (one unit for every 2.5 people). Of these, 57 percent are owner occupied and 80 percent have had the same occupants from one year to the next. Median gross rent in 2013 was \$448.

So let's stop talking about a housing shortage and talk about how to make Pendleton a more affordable place to live.

Betty Brunette
Pendleton