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Donald Trump: De facto “resistance” leader?

By Steve Bakke  November 9, 2020



The art of the political rally

The presidential election isn't officially decided, but the public “conversation” has changed since the networks took it upon themselves to declare Biden the winner. Perhaps some are moving on, but not those in Trump's corner. There may be some exhaustion, but Trump's team is continuing to pursue their goal of reelecting the President.

Loyal “Trumpers” must now direct their attention to the sluggish process of counts, recounts, and legal challenges. But more importantly, they need to gather energy for taking up the republican cause in undecided senatorial contests in Georgia and North Carolina. As I write this, Republican Candidates are expected to prevail, but anything can happen. We're probably looking at several weeks without final answers, but let's consider some observations anyway.

In response to those whispering “put your ‘big-boy’ pants on Mr. President and admit you've lost.” Those short-memory critics should recall Al Gore entertaining the courts, all the way to the Supreme Court, in 2000. That was also about recounts and contested ballots. The time elapsed was 37 days. And recently, Hillary Clinton publicly told Biden not to concede under any circumstances. Trump has an obligation to his supporters to pursue all potential legal issues. Neither republicans nor democrats dare ignore the 71 million who voted for Trump. Biden's campaign would have a similar strategy were the situation reversed.

While progressive voters are confident of a Biden victory, there have been cries of frustration coming from their ranks. For example, this from former federal prosecutor Michael J. Stern writing in USA Today: “Trump's massive vote total breaks my heart.....Trump ugliness here to stay.” He bemoans the fact that there is no blue wave, no repudiation, and no mandate for radical social change. Stern is frustrated with what he sees as a hollow victory.

I predict that moderate democrats will inevitably experience misgivings about some far-left policy goals coming out of the “agreement” Biden negotiated with progressive leader Bernie Sanders. It's not far-fetched to imagine numerous radical proposals being included in future

draft legislation. I'm referring to things like defunding police, disastrous Green New Deal energy policies, cancel culture measures, soft border control policies, rejection of nuclear energy, court packing, permanently installing more powerful central government, and so on.

In order to limit leftist "damage" from possible legislation, perhaps moderate democrats should quietly hope for a thin republican Senate majority. That would block radical far left agenda items which some moderates quietly reject. Think about the possibilities for bi-partisan cooperation in those efforts.

Republicans have increased their minority representation in the House. If they maintain control of the Senate, even if Trump loses his challenges, republicans can legitimately claim success. While the country may be worn out from his style, it supports continuing many of his policies. I'm referring to: policies supporting record low minority unemployment, smart regulation reform, strong border security, breakthroughs in Israeli/Muslim relations, international trade reform, hardline positions involving China and North Korea, rejecting the Iran Nuclear Agreement, energy policies, energy independence, criminal justice reforms, federal judge and Supreme Court appointments, right to life, school choice, and so much more.

As I think about what's going on, I realize Trump has become the de facto leader of a "resistance" – a role reversal for sure. Recall that Hillary Clinton admitted being part of "The Resistance" when she was unwilling to gracefully accept her loss to Trump. The President's role is to make sure all bases are touched as they follow-up on reports of miscounts, duplicate counts, rules changes, and "you name it." He had to become a "resistance leader" to defend his presidential turf as Biden prematurely stepped into "pretend policy making." While it's the President's right to assume that role, let's hope all of this is decided sooner rather than later.

Trump's outrageous style and four years of democrat bombardment didn't obscure the fact that his presidency has been consequential and enjoys energetic support. Even with Biden as president, with republican strength growing in the House, and assuming a republican majority in the Senate, republicans can claim a real victory, not merely a moral one.