

**🤨 THE GOP PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND DEBATES!
- SCARY AND DEPRESSING? NAH! NOT TO ME!**

Stephen L. Bakke 🤨 March 4, 2012

We are a couple days shy of "Super Tuesday" when 10 states go to the primary poles in the process of selecting over 400 convention delegates. It's the busiest primary day of the campaign. As depicted in the above illustration, the republican primary season has been preoccupied with all of the contenders, one at a time, chipping away at what was thought to be a presumptive Romney victory at the Republican Convention.

So true! So true! This has been an incredible venture into spins and half truths presented by a group of candidates whom I believe to be much better gentlemen and leaders than they have demonstrated on the campaign trail. Pettiness and "mudslinging" have been widespread. There are ethical issues in all of that aren't there? There are leadership issues in all of that aren't there? And there must at least be some decency issues which much be pointed out by any objective observer from the republican or conservative side of things.

And a number of people who read some of my "stuff" are understandable turned off by it all and have even suggested I somehow lay waste to the participants, or at least their candidacies. Actually I may disappoint many with my reaction. Please be gentle with your criticism!

Mallard Fillmore by Bruce Tinsley













Gosh! I Can't Work Up a Lather! But Why!

I'm not totally sure why I'm so unaffected by the hoopla and infighting, so this "sidebar" is not really informational – rather, an attempt by me to explain (mostly to myself) why I'm missing that terribly gratifying feeling of "working into a lather and lettin' go with a major RANT!" Am I becoming a wimp? Am I just numb? Don't I care? Am I foolish and full of "wishful thinking? Hmmm?!

Battle Hardened and Ready?

None of the above! I wouldn't have drawn up a campaign like this has been, but nonetheless, it's here and let's make the most of it. Some weeks ago, before things really got "cookin'," I actually made a note to myself that a "bloody republican campaign may not be all bad." But I didn't explain why I said that and now I'm playing "catch-up."

Here is what I believe has been my thought-process:

-  Like it or not, we are stuck with the existing process of selecting candidates and winners.
-  While the spin and half-truth innuendo is boorish and disgusting to the max, there is actually an element of truth in the charges and countercharges.
-  While I'm upset with the "presenters" of all of this negativism, I'm more upset with the bloodthirsty public (Yes, "We the People") and the press who bate the "combatants" into personal attacks which lead to counterattacks and hard feelings.
-  "We the People" have, by our actions and reactions, encouraged ever more of the same!
-  Why? Because it works. I'm more upset by "us" and our insistence on hearing this kind of banter than I am of the politicians themselves.
-  What do I mean by "it works"? As soon as a candidate takes off the "gloves of civility" and points out certain of the opponents' past political actions and statements, the new aggressive candidate's popularity does seem to improve. And popularity translates into improved chances for victory.
-  As time passes and as we think about some of the rhetoric, with bitterness removed, the elements of truth in the debate will become more evident. And I think most of us can do a fair job of sorting out the really relevant information.
-  And if one watched the last debate, the candidates seem to have settled into a reasonable comfort level in acting and reacting during the "close up and personal" battles. I think the candidates even seemed to be enjoying it, in a strange sort of way.
-  The candidates have had to deal with almost all types of charges, true or not, and the nature of this battle, with vicious attacks and emotion, is not unlike what the ultimate victor will experience when going up against Obama in the elections this fall.
-  Am I proclaiming the republican battleground for the presidential nomination is actually "good practice" for what's inevitable in the fall? **I most certainly am!**

I'm sorry if I have disappointed anyone with this thought process and my conclusions. The political process is what it is – and not for the thin-skinned! I am confident most of the bitterness will be set aside, memories will be short, and the politicians working to unseat Obama will cozy up to the task of unseating Obama from a job he should never have been handed! Forces will, for the most part, once again be joined. Anyway, that's my story and I'm "stickin' to it"!