

Love Boat or Ship of Fools?

Love is a four-letter word. Love is a Subaru. Love is in the air. Love means never having to say you're sorry and...love is the Joe Biden/Kamala Harris Administration. All of them have one thing in common; they're all clichés that are meant to tug at our heartstrings and the latter is meant to loosen big Democrat donors' purse strings and start building the war chest for the mid-terms of 2022.

In case you haven't noticed, the Democrats are out to trademark *love* and *unity* in the same way that Donald Trump trademarked, "Make America Great Again." In the coming weeks and months and maybe even years, we're going to hear a whole lot more about coming together than even the Beatles anticipated when they recorded their own version in 1969. By the way, Kamala Harris was only five years old at the time. One year later, she was being bused to school. By contrast, in the same year, Joe Biden ran as a liberal Democrat in Delaware for a seat on the New Castle County Council.

Everybody loves love, so promoting love and togetherness is a winning combination for the Bidenites, except when you're trying to sell it to 70 million people who don't trust you and didn't vote for you. The other 75 million that did vote for you (we assume) actually don't love you, either; they just hated Donald Trump more. There were thousands, however, if not millions that did express their love for Donald Trump. We heard them chant it at rallies he held and saw their faces when they said it. These were sincere, un-brainwashed regular people who got the 'Make America Great Again' message and were grateful to Trump for standing up for them and their values. They were, as Trump often said, 'the forgotten Americans' who were told by the Dems that they were stupid or naive or just foolish patriots who clung to their religion and their guns or who were simpletons that were lumped together in one basket...of deplorables.

Americans are fond of love and we search for it all throughout our lives, but we're suspicious of those who throw the word around as a tagline on some ad to persuade us to buy a product. It could be something as basic as a car or even a Presidential candidate. And while we might occasionally be *looking for love in all the wrong places*, we're generally pretty good at telling the difference between honest love and the contrived kind.

Love, itself, can also be a product. The Biden people know that and they're ready to launch their marketing campaign to 'Make America *loving* again.' They will use identity and racial politics and various communities to press their case. Look for come-together moments in the alternative lifestyle/sexual preference communities, among inner-city Blacks, Hispanics/Latinos, the 'innocent' incarcerated, drug users, illegal immigrants AND America's great middle class. All will be considered victims in the Biden/Harris come-together movement.

I look for Kami to get the racial unification portfolio because she's a natural for the job, being half-Black and all AND because it's a place Joe won't want to go alone. After all, he's not necessarily endeared himself to a lot of Blacks who objected to his comments about 'you not being Black if you don't vote Democrat.' Besides, Kami's a gal and as I said a half Black gal at that and nobody would *ever* consider questioning her motives on the subject of love, except maybe journalists who reported on her 'loose morals' when she was dating the married Mayor of San Francisco, Willie Brown in the 90s, and allegedly 'slept her way to the top' by accepting positions because of her relationship with Brown. (Many articles on this topic have appeared in papers/magazines like: Harper's Bazaar, San Francisco Examiner, Reuters, et. al.)

But, it must be said, that one affair does not qualify a person, even someone like Kamala Harris, for a scarlet letter. It does, however, make one wonder about how she regards *love*. Is it a tool one uses like gender or race to gain position or power or is it something else, entirely, AND would her past disqualify her as a role model for younger higher-office aspiring women. It's anybody's guess.

Good ole Joe is another story. He frequently talks about his love in terms of his personal losses, but often expresses a definitely *unloving* temperament. Don't ask him a tough question or a controversial one. He'll forget that he's supposed to love you and will lash out at you, maybe challenging you to pushups or suggesting that you meet him behind the barn. Joe's most comfortable when he can pull on his political face and then give you that crooked snarky grin, showing his pearly whites. It's as if he's saying, "love me, love me do, as I love you." This has worked well for him especially with older Democrats who can see Joe as the friendly Captain Merrill Stubing or the affable ship's doctor, Adam Bricker, on the popular TV sitcom, *The Love Boat*.

Me, I see Joe as one of the conflicted characters in the 1965 film, *Ship of fools*, someone who's come to believe his own PR and has not really done anything of notable personal consequence except survive on the political ship of state, that's destined for nowhere special. NOW, however, Joe has (presumably) won the top prize at the County Fair race. His horse came in first AND he beat out the number one-ranked thoroughbred to do it. Quite an accomplishment. But this win does raise a number of nagging questions. How did he do it? By cheating? Or was it on the up and up? Who's behind the win? Colluding Democrat mayors and party loyalists? Can he claim the trophy or will it be snatched from him after the film from the photo finish is developed?

IF he needs to give back the prize, what will happen to all that love? Will it be re-channeled back into hatred for the 'orange man' and his supporters or can it survive on its own without benefit of a political tether to himself and Kami? Good question, though it's not one that many people are willing to entertain, because the media has already crowned him, and we all know that nobody would ever *dream* of questioning the media's decision. Nobody that is except for Donald Trump, his lawyers, the courts and 70 million of Trump's supporters.

They say that "love conquers all" but can the re-imagined love and unity script that the Joe and Kami show are readying for prime time really conquer hatred, especially the Democrat variety for America's 45th President? Or are they even considering that as one of their goals? The jury's out for the time being, so we're going to have to make do with all those wise sayings about love, like H.L. Menken's: "Love is the triumph of imagination over intelligence." Let's wait and see what the ship's cooks have prepared for us for the long journey home.

Stephan Helgesen is a retired career U.S. diplomat who lived and worked in 30 countries for 25 years during the Reagan, G.H.W. Bush, Clinton, and G.W. Bush Administrations. He is the author of ten books, four of which are on American politics and has written over 1,000 articles on politics, economics and social trends. He can be reached at: stephan@stephanhelgesen.com