

Who's the real adult in the room...or voting booth?

The Democrats just can't stop trying to force open the back door to America's voting booths. Their recent suggestions about lowering the voting age to sixteen is just the next predictable step in their efforts to pack the ballot box and stack the vote in their favor. It was July of 1971 when President Richard Nixon certified the 26th Amendment to the Constitution giving 18 year-olds the right to vote. The Amendment was necessary because Oregon and Texas had challenged the constitutionality of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that gave 18 year-olds that right. Looking back, there was a compelling argument for lowering the age: if young men could be drafted at 18 and be sent to war then it was only fair that they could also vote.

The Constitution didn't make any provision for an official voting age, so from 1787-1870 it was basically up to the states to decide who should or shouldn't vote. There are three Amendments to the Constitution that deal with voting: the 15th 19th and 26th, and lowering the age to 16 would require a new Amendment just as it did in 1971. But that begs several questions about voting in general. Why do we allow people to vote in the first place? Because we believe that people should have the right to influence the laws that affect them and because we're a constitutional republic that sends representatives to Washington to make the laws that affect us and that the citizenry should be allowed to cast votes for them.

Without spending too much time in ancient U.S. voting history, we have always had a lively discussion about who should be able to vote. There's the 'only property owners' argument that basically says that only those who have an investment (property) in America should be able to vote, the thought being that only those with something to lose should be allowed to protect it. Contrast that with the argument popular in some liberal circles today that everyone (even illegal aliens and those who are living here legally but are not citizens) should have the right to vote and you can see that voting still is a volatile issue.

What should the legal age of adulthood be and should it be the same as the legal voting age?

THAT'S the \$64,000 question. The 'National Minimum Age Drinking Act of 1984' makes it unlawful for persons under the age of 21 to purchase alcohol, but if you're 18 (the age of 'majority') you can be drafted into the military. At 18 you can also sign a legally binding contract (in most states) and get married (or divorced), but there are exceptions. AND you can vote in local and national elections. At the age of 16, you're considered a minor - a child - not having achieved 'majority.' You can't sign a binding contract, be drafted, drink alcohol, or get married on your own without parental consent. Why, then, should 16 year-olds be allowed to vote when society says they're not ready to be regarded as adults who can be solely responsible for their own actions?

The short answer is that the Democrats want more voters and they know that younger voters will vote their way. Two-thirds of 18-29 year-olds voted for the Democrats in the 2018 midterm elections. Only 32% voted for Republican candidates. This is the largest voting gap in the last 25 years, but while the Democrats won the younger vote, they lost the over-45 vote. That says it all. To win future elections will either require more over-45 voters voting Democratic (or hope that many of them who would vote Republican will die) or Dems must stimulate a larger youth voter turnout (or gain more voters if the voting age is lowered to 16).

This is part of the Dems' voter demographic strategy that includes absolving illegal aliens of their crime of entering the U.S. (amnesty) AND then registering them to vote. Should this happen, Republicans would suffer a haymaker to the voter solar plexus: illegal aliens would be allowed to vote PLUS their children would be allowed to vote, too! We all know that those new 16 year-old newly-amnestytized voters would be voting Democrat because their parents will and because the Democrats have historically been perceived as the party of the 'little guy', the downtrodden, the persecuted.

No matter that the Democrats' voting record on civil rights legislation has been a blemish on their party. For most people that's ancient history and water over the dam - and long forgotten.

I don't know about you, but I remember what my sixteenth and seventeenth years were like. Politics and civic responsibility weren't even in the footnotes of my teenage lexicon. Had I been able to vote then (in 1960) I probably would have voted for the 'cool' guy, John F. Kennedy. He had the looks, the girl and the money - the political candidate's trifecta. While those things qualified him for celebritydom, I'm pretty sure that nobody should have voted for him because of them. Seen in the rear-view mirror of my life, I'm really glad that my government said that while it valued my opinion I should really keep it to myself and let it ferment a little until I reached the age of reason. Matter of fact, considering how high school and college-age students are acting today, we might even want to consider returning the age to 21. It's just a thought.

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