

Editorial Opinion

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Sanders and Trump: Magic sells amid rubble of Obama years

WASHINGTON — The New Hampshire results have solidified the reigning cliché that the 2016 campaign is an anti-establishment revolt of both the left and the right. Largely overlooked, however, is the role played in setting the national mood by the seven-year legacy of the Obama presidency.

Yes, you hear constant denunciations of institutions, parties, leaders, donors, lobbyists, influence peddlers. But the starting point of the bipartisan critique is the social, economic and geopolitical wreckage all around us. Bernie Sanders is careful never to blame President Barack Obama directly, but his description of the America Obama leaves behind is devastating — a wasteland of stagnant wages, rising inequality, a sinking middle class, young people crushed by debt, the American dream dying.

Take away the Brooklyn



CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER
COMMENTARY

accent and the Larry David mannerisms and you would have thought you were listening to a Republican candidate. After all, who's been in charge for the last seven years?

Donald Trump is even more colorful in describing the current "mess" and more direct in attributing it to the country's leadership — most pungently, its stupidity and incompetence. Both candidates are not just anti-establishment but anti-status quo. The revolt is as much about the Obama legacy as it is about institutions.

Look at New Hampshire. Hillary Clinton had made a strategic decision, as highlighted in the de-

bates, to wrap herself in the mantle of the Obama presidency. Big mistake. She lost New Hampshire by three touchdowns.

Beyond railing against the wreckage, the other commonality between the two big New Hampshire winners is in the nature of the cure they offer. Let the others propose carefully budgeted five-point plans. Sanders and Trump offer magic.

Take Sanders' New Hampshire victory speech. It promised the moon: college education, free; universal health care, free; world peace, also free because we won't be "the policeman of the world" (mythical Sunni armies will presumably be doing that for us). Plus a guaranteed \$15 minimum wage. All to be achieved by taxing the rich. Who can be against a "speculation" tax (whatever that means)?

So with Trump. Leave it to him. Jobs will flow back in a rush from China, from

Japan, from Mexico, from everywhere. Universal health care, with Obamacare replaced by "something terrific." Veterans finally taken care of. Drugs stopped cold at the border. Indeed, an end to drug addiction itself. Victory upon victory of every kind.

How? That question never comes up anymore. No one expects an answer. His will be done, on Earth if not yet in heaven. Yes, people love Trump's contempt for the "establishment" — which as far as I can tell means anything not Trump — but what is truly thrilling is the promise of a near-biblical restoration. As painless as Sanders'.

In truth, Trump and Sanders are soaring not just by defying the establishment, but by defying logic and history. Sanders' magic potion is socialism; Trump's is Trump.

The young Democrats swooning for Sanders appear unfamiliar with

socialism's century-long career, a dismal tale of ruination from Russia to Cuba to Venezuela. Indeed, are they even aware that China's greatest reduction in poverty in human history correlates precisely with the degree to which it has given up socialism?

Trump's magic is toughness — toughness in a world of losers. The power and will of the caudillo will make everything right.

Apart from the fact that strongman rule contradicts the American constitutional tradition of limited and constrained government, caudillo populism simply doesn't work. It accounts in a large part for the relative backwardness of Africa and Latin America. In 1900, Argentina had a per capita income fully 70 percent of ours. After a 20th century wallowing in Peronism and its imitators, Argentina is a basket case, its per capita income now 23 percent of

ours.

There certainly is a crisis of confidence in the country's institutions. But that's hardly new. The current run of endemic distrust began with Vietnam and Watergate. Yet not in our lifetimes have the left and right populism of the Sanders and Trump variety enjoyed such massive support.

The added factor is the Obama effect, the depressed and anxious mood of a nation experiencing its worst economic recovery since World War II and watching its power and influence abroad decline amid a willed global retreat.

The result is a politics of high fantasy. Things can't get any worse, we hear, so why not shake things up to their foundation? Anyone who thinks things can't get any worse knows nothing. And risks everything.

The Washington Post
Writers Group

On this date

Today is the 45th day of 2016 and the 55th day of winter.

Today's history: In 1779, explorer James Cook was killed on the island of Hawaii.

In 1859, Oregon was admitted as the 33rd U.S. state

In 1912, Arizona was admitted as the 48th U.S. state.

In 1929, seven mob associates were shot and killed in a Chicago garage in the St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

In 2005, the video-sharing website YouTube.com was founded.

Today's birthdays: Jack Benny (1894-1974), actor/comedian; Mel Allen (1913-96), sports broadcaster; Herbert Hauptman (1917-2011), mathematician; Florence Henderson, actress, is 82; Michael Bloomberg, business magnate/politician, is 74; Gregory Hines (1946-2003), dancer/actor; Jim Kelly, football player, is 56; Meg Tilly, actress, is 56; Simon Pegg, actor, is 46; Rob Thomas, singer-songwriter, is 44; Steve McNair (1973-2009), football player; Freddie Highmore, actor, is 24.

Today's fact: The U.S. Congress approved the use of voting machines in federal elections on this day in 1899.

Today's quote: "When another comedian has a lousy show, I'm the first one to admit it." — **Jack Benny**

Today's number: \$5 — Hall of Fame baseball broadcaster Mel Allen's per game salary when he became the New York Yankees' radio announcer in 1935.

Bible quote: "Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

— **2 Peter 1:4**

LETTERS

James C. Athanas, *Naples*

What harm?

What harm would befall another candidate if Sen. Ted Cruz were on the ballot and his "citizenship" was in question?

This question goes to the heart of being a "natural born citizen" to be president. It boils down to one's mindset, dedication, devotion and love of country.

If one were born and raised in the United States, the culture, the heritage, the awareness of just how great our country is would have been instilled since birth.

Yes, someone born and raised abroad can learn to love the country. But that same person can "divorce" the country. In marriage one basically "falls in love" or "learns to love" the man or woman of his dreams. But they also "fall out of love."

Our country is not the politicians, our country is an idea, turned ideal, turned to a love of what our country represents. We may argue with those charting our course.

Many politicians want to change our core beliefs, the principles laid out in the Constitution — not for love of country, but rather for political gain. Those who embark on this course are not serving to preserve our republic, but rather their own interests.

Our current politicians have forsaken our country for their party. The "natural born" clause was supposed to address this, because our Founding Fathers could not foresee anyone turning against their country after gaining freedom at such great sacrifice.

Our current politicians have become

blinded by greed, not guided by love of country. The revolution is about ideals, not party.

Jim Allen, *Bonita Springs*

Inching along

Sitting in front of Bonita Springs City Hall on Bonita Beach Road, I'm waiting on my third light to turn onto U.S. 41.

I have to wonder what the City Council was thinking when it turned down WCI's bid to build four condos off Coconut Road. The added revenue to the city from taxes would have gone a long way to improving our roads, adding about eight cars an hour to Coconut Road.

Instead, they approve 275 units just off Bonita Beach Road that will be adding about a tenth of the revenue as WCI's towers, but will surely add, along with all the new homes east of Interstate 75, total gridlock at U.S. 41 and Bonita Beach Road.

Oh well, enough of this. Time to stop writing, my car just moved another 10 feet.

Inching my way along in Bonita ...

Bob Dimond, *Naples*

My next president

Delusion abounds when righties such as letter-writer Bob Jacobs downgrade President Barack Obama's legacy and pretend that the Keystone Kops comedy that represents the Republican lineup for the nomination deserves our admiration.

Guest commentary

Teen dating violence more sweeping, costly than many realize

By Linda Oberhaus

Naples
Executive director,
The Shelter for Abused Women
& Children

Three years after the murder-suicide that took their lives, the faces of Immokalee teens Coby Martinez Deleon, 18, and Natalia Trejo, 17, still look out from their Facebook pages, a testament to the tragic reality of teen dating violence. A final post on Coby's page reads, "Nat loves coby," followed by a heart symbol.

Today in America, as we celebrate loving relationships with Valentine's Day gifts, 1.5 million teens are experiencing some form of abuse at the hands of a dating partner. The goal of

February's National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is to raise awareness, promote prevention and reduce those numbers.

If you think teen dating violence does not affect you, think again. The economic impact of domestic violence in America is approximately \$8.3 billion per year in medical costs and lost wages. By investing in adolescent awareness and prevention programs, we will save thousands of lives and billions of dollars.

Many parents believe they would know if their child was in a violent relationship, but statistics show that 75 percent were unaware their teen had been physically hurt by a dating partner, and only 33 percent of teens suffering such abuse ever talked to anyone about what was happening to them.

Dating violence is any

situation in which one partner purposefully causes emotional, physical or sexual harm to another. Unhealthy relationships can start early and last a lifetime. In a study commissioned by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, 72 percent of "twens" (ages 11 to 14) reported that boyfriend/girlfriend relationships usually begin at age 14 or younger. With technology at their fingertips 24 hours a day, teens are more vulnerable to dating violence than ever before.

Here at The Shelter for Abused Women & Children, we believe prevention and education are key in addressing and reducing incidents of teen dating violence. Last year, thanks to a strong partnership with Collier County Public Schools, the shelter's school-based programs reached more than 17,000 teens, helping them

to recognize and avoid unhealthy dating relationships.

Because the abusing partner is most often male, the shelter offers the Raising Gentlemen program, which encourages boys and young men to challenge macho stereotypes that equate masculinity with control and physical aggression. The curriculum focuses on empathy and understanding of others, social skills, increased self-esteem, problem solving, sense of personal power and belonging, respect and tolerance, and healthy lifestyle choices.

According to loveisrespect.org, statistics for female victims is much higher than their male counterparts, with as many as 1 in 3 girls suffering some form of teen dating violence.

Girls often fail to seek help because they feel responsible for solving

problems in their relationships. They may see their boyfriend's jealousy, possessiveness and even physical abuse as "romantic." Some girls may see abuse as "normal" because their friends and/or family members are also being abused.

Through its Expect Respect and Healthy Relationships programs, the shelter helps girls recognize different types of abuse, the dynamics of dating violence, characteristics of unhealthy and healthy relationships, and how to set boundaries in a relationship.

Signs to look for in an abuser include excessive jealousy, constant checking in, isolating the victim from friends and/or family, controlling behavior, name calling, explosive temper, and refusal to take responsibility and blaming others for his/her actions.

Signs that a teen may be

a victim of dating violence include physical injury (often hidden by clothing), skipping school, failing grades, changes in mood or personality, emotional outbursts, and isolation.

If you have noticed these signs or behavior changes in a teen, it is important to speak up and get help.

Coby and Natalia are dearly missed in their community. It is hard to say whether early intervention would have changed the terrible ending of their short lives, but their story can be a lesson to us all. You have the ability to save lives by recognizing the signs, reaching out and reporting any activity that you feel may be abusive.

If you or someone you know needs help, call the shelter's 24-hour crisis line at 239-775-1101. For more information on the shelter and its services, go to www.napleshelter.org.



Linda Oberhaus