

Thwarting majority will

Donald Trump will arrive at the Republican National Convention with the most delegates of any candidate. He will have won the overwhelming majority of the state contests. Were democracy the rule, Trump would be the Republican nominee, but Ted Cruz, John Kasich, and several leading figures in the Republican Party approve of democracy only if they win. Having no chance to win a majority, they instead want to overthrow the democratic will of the people. If successful, that strategy will demoralize and alienate a very large number of Republican voters, and it will decrease the prospects for success of the Republican nominee in November. As Pat Buchanan has observed, if Trump is not the nominee many will stay at home rather than vote in November, but also many will vote for Trump as an Independent candidate rather than acquiesce in the loss of their vote, thereby splitting what would otherwise be votes for the Republican standard bearer and reducing the size, scope, and influence of the Republican Party in the years to come.

Ted Cruz's operatives are working feverishly to obtain delegates through non-democratic means. That pursuit bespeaks a contempt for representative democracy, very unbecoming for a candidate who proclaims himself the only true guardian of the Constitution. For example, in Louisiana, although Trump won the election, Cruz's behind the scenes machinations have enabled him to come away with a majority of Louisiana's delegates. And in Colorado, the Republican Party bosses decided not to allow Coloradans to vote, giving all of the state's delegates to Cruz, who granted favors to pull resistant delegates to his side. Wherever Cruz has lost democratically, he has worked behind the scenes to overturn the will of the voters, obtaining delegates through influence peddling (jockeying to put in place delegates whose real loyalty is to him rather than to the voters' choice). Do those

who support Ted Cruz endorse this approach? Do they really want authoritarians to cause losing candidates to win through cloak room maneuvers? Do they think those tactics consistent with constitutional conservatism? So much for Ted Cruz's insistence that he is the true constitutional conservative.

John Kasich clings to a romantic notion that the democratic will of the people can be thwarted at the convention by party bosses apoplectic over Trump who have nowhere else to turn, enabling him to be the party's nominee. He dreams of the unlikely scenario where no single candidate will reach the magic number of 1,237 on a first, second, or third ballot and where most will turn to him as the party savior. He too favors authoritarianism over democracy if it means he can be declared the winner.

Trump should benefit greatly from focusing on these anti-democratic positions of his opponents, which essentially ask that the majority's votes be rendered meaningless. Trump's opponents may campaign. They may call for votes, but in the end they don't respect any vote except one for them, because they hope and plan to thwart the will of the majority on the convention floor, to achieve victory based on an overthrow of the democratic process.

The best way for voters to reveal their contempt for the anti-democratic subversion of their votes is to vote overwhelmingly against the candidates calling for it in every remaining primary. Any who truly believe in democratic elections must vote against those who seek to derail democracy.

Both the Cruz approach (delegate vote obtained through behind the scenes manipulation) and the Kasich approach (delegate vote obtained through miraculous convention conversion) are based on a contempt for the election process, on a zealous willingness to overturn the democratically elected. In short, they see nothing wrong with making a mockery of the democratic process if doing so gets them the nomination. By hook or by

crook, they want the nomination, and they do not care that most voters oppose them. If they cannot win an election honestly, by the votes, they will win it dishonestly, by subversion, and they expect Americans to do nothing in response and thereby be complicit in the destruction of their votes.

The Cruz and Kasich quest for an undemocratic takeover of the election process should offend all Americans. It threatens to make apathy the rule, by undermining fundamentally representative democracy.

Cruz and Kasich are, however, painfully short-sighted. Do either of them really want a Republican nomination against the will of the voters? Are they naïve enough to believe that if party bosses proclaim either one of them the nominee the millions of Trump supporters will accept the overthrow of democracy as permissible gamesmanship and back them in the general election?

I suppose they count upon Republicans voting for them because they would be the primary party opposition to Hillary Clinton. This is not that election year, however. Unlike Cruz and Kasich supporters, Trump's following is devout and steadfast. Undoubtedly Trump supporters will demand that Trump run as an Independent rather than have their will thwarted by party bosses. Consequently, even if Cruz or Kasich obtain the nomination by contrivance, neither will have the popular backing needed to win the general election. Rather, the Trump majority, which now forms the activist heart and soul of the Republican Party, will reject the party, stay at home, or vote Independent rather than vote for Cruz or Kasich.

That exodus from Republican ranks, involving many who did not vote or did not align themselves with the Republican Party before Trump, will ensure into the foreseeable future that the Republican Party will be an anemic one. Many will not soon forget that the party they entrusted with their vote

overturned the will of the majority; that party bosses turned the primaries in the states into farces where voters were led to believe their vote counted, when in fact it did not.

In the end, we should expose and denounce the authoritarian hedonism that drives Cruz and Kasich to favor upsetting the will of the majority. Despite loss after loss in the primaries, they each have a self-love that is greater than their respect for democracy. Each arrogantly presumes that overturning democratic process is fair play because neither has the humility and grace to withdraw when defeated.

It must be obvious to Cruz and Kasich that bullying their way to the nomination offends the very principles they say they believe in (achievement by merit, representative democracy, and accountability to the electorate), yet neither is willing to abide by those principles if it means suffering a personal loss. That willingness to part with principle for personal gain is precisely the primary characteristic of the establishment enemy that voters detest in this election cycle.

It is that kind of anti-democratic politics that Obama used to justify executive actions to amend the law without following the Article I command that Congress approve of the change first; that brought us Obamacare; that brought us thousands of industry stifling regulations from unelected bureaucrats; that brought us corruption to advance the will of industry leaders at the expense of everyone; and that brought us a deal with Iran in circumvention of the Constitution's Treaty Clause and the requirement of Senate consent.

One would hope that at the convention the delegates would come to appreciate the solemn duty they have to uphold the democratic will of the electorate, that the candidate wanted by the majority must be nominated by the party. If they do not, their undemocratically chosen candidate, having acquired the nomination without merit, will run in the general election without the support needed to win, and will be a figure whose

nomination will long alienate those who voted Republican for the first time from ever voting Republican again.

In all likelihood if the majority vote is thwarted that will mean the Republican nominee will not be elected president. Rather, those whose votes were rendered nullities by machinations at the Republican convention will either not vote at all or will vote for Trump as an Independent.

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