

HERMIT HERALD

ISSUE 134

DEC. 21, 2021

QUOTE FOR THE DAY

“Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured.” Mark Twain.

A LOT OF GERD MEDICATION

being taken, more so by Democrats than Republicans. Get these statistics: 38% of Democrats say they could never have a friendship with a Republican. Only 5% of Republicans say that about Democrats.

And the winner: no matter how charming, intelligent, handsome/beautiful, 71% of Democrats would never date a Republican. Only 38% of Republicans return the insult. And you thought the Montagues and Capulets didn't get along.

Conservative writer, Norman Podhoretz, jumps in with his take on our divided nation. “This woke business- critical race theory, Black Lives Matter, all of it- is just pure anti-American hatred. And I think its proponents would admit that. Which is why I keep saying it’s a war. If you don’t understand that, you don’t know what the hell is going on.”

So where are we in this fractious society where political views trump interpersonal relationships? Perhaps it’s because the Democrats have such a miniscule majority that the hatches must be battened down- can’t afford the possibility of poisonous other party views infiltrating what Democrats “know” to the “true way”.

Columnist, Greg Weiner, goes back to president James Madison in search for some clarification. “Democrats do represent a popular majority now. But for Madison, that ‘now’ is the problem. He was less interested in a snapshot of a moment in constitutional time than in a time-lapse photograph showing that a majority had cohered. The more significant

its desires, Madison thought, the longer that interval of coherence should be. The monumental scale of the Build Back Better plan consequently raises a difficult Madisonian question: is a fleeting and narrow majority enough for making history? Has Senator Manchin been taking notes?

But it's not just debate over Build Back Better that has Democrats and Republicans at each others throats, it's the palpable fear/realization that the Democrats may suffer badly in next November's mid term elections and lose their hold on the political trifecta – House, Senate and presidency. Not only is there historical precedence to what happens at mid term in any new presidency, but the Biden administration comes in to 2022 with major baggage; immigration, crime, Afghanistan exit debacle, inflation and covid. Some might contend inflation and covid aren't really the administration's fault, but it's the historic reality for all administrations; they get credit when such things go well and faulted when they go badly.

Given the above, it might seem that the Republicans are rubbing their hands in gleeful anticipation of changes to come. Not so fast folks.

Just as Democrats are in a dilemma regarding whether Mr Biden will run again, the Republicans also have the conundrum of not knowing Mr. Trump's plans for 2024, causing a number of prime Republican candidates to keep their light under a bushel. Further, Mr. Trump may be weakening the party by pushing his own candidates into run offs against other Republicans already in office- perfect example being in Georgia where Mr. Trump is backing David Perdue to run against the incumbent Republican governor, Brian Kemp. Could turn into an act of political suicide, with a fractured Republican state party ensuring that Democrat, Stacey Abrams, becomes governor.

In addition to the foregoing, the hyper contentious topic of abortion will come full front and center in May or June when the Supreme Court is scheduled to rule on a challenge to Roe v Wade.

Regardless the reader's own views on this topic, here are the Gallup poll statistics from May, 2021 on the voters' views of "pro choice" vs "pro life":

SUPPORT FOR

	Pro choice	Pro life
Republicans	22%	74%
Independents	53%	38%
Democrats	70%	17%

With the Republicans being solidly pro life, could that have a marked impact on the midterm elections? Certainly, the debate is not helped by those who are already trying to discredit the Supreme Court by calling the upcoming decision a "political act", added to which we have the inflammatory statement of SCOTUS justice, Sotomayor, saying, " Will this institution survive the stench that this creates in the public perception that the Constitution and its readings are just political acts? I don't see how it is possible." Is that statement not, itself, a total political statement? How about a

little Shakespeare here, “Nothing is good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

Columnist, David Brooks, doesn’t necessarily see this issue as being won or lost by majority opinion. “We’re now trying to deal with a miserably complex issue in a brutalized political culture. Majorities don’t rule in this country; polarized minorities do. The evidence this week is that the post- Roe politics would make even our current politics seem tame. I’m not sure our democracy is strong enough for that.”

Bottom line – Are easy victories ahead for the Republicans next November? I don’t think so. Keep your Pepcid tablets handy.

SMASH AND GRAB

“The pandemic is the root cause of organized looting incidents.” White House press secretary, Jan Psaki. How totally embarrassing that this otherwise lovely lady is forced to go out and give this pathetic explanation to Americans- the old mushroom theory- keep them in the dark and cover them with s- - t.

Sorry readers- the climate fostered in the major blue run cities in America has led to this. Store security personnel and police are terrified to intervene. If a perpetrator is injured or killed in an apprehension attempt- off to trial and/or jail for the offending peace officer. On the other hand, if arrested, without injury, except for the most heinous crimes- out on the streets again without bail.

Along comes a breath of fresh air, NYC mayor elect, Eric Adams, who warns criminals and gangs he is going to crack down big time. Except for the smash and grab incidents, what is the biggest source of crime in NYC? It's black on black crime. So what does Hawk Newsome, head of the Black Lives Matter chapter in NYC, have to say about Mr. Adams tougher stance on crime. If initiated, "There will be riots. There will be bloodshed." I leave it to our readers to finish the thought.

COVID VARIANT- OMICRON

It's hard to say anything new on this topic since most everyone is following it very closely. One report that I have seen only one

reference to relates to information passed on by Danish health authorities – the lung to lung transmissibility of the Omicron is really, really, really strong. From one party attended by 100 people, 70 contracted Omicron covid.

Then, there is the promise of the pill to be taken if people start to have symptoms. Where is the final FDA approval, and why is Merck even trying to bring a product to market when their pill is only 30% effective compared to the 88% efficacy rate of the Pfizer pill?

Lastly, good news for those who have received the Moderna vaccinations and booster. The booster is reported to be extremely effective against the Omicron variant. With infections close to those at covid 19's peak, it's looking like we have a long winter ahead of us, albeit with illnesses not quite as life-threatening as the first time around.

**THE DEMOCRATIC DECLINE OF AMERICA
AND ITS ALLIES.**

Columnist Max Fisher reports at length on this issue, citing as a primary source Dr. Seva

Gunitsky, a University of Toronto political scientist who studies how great powers influence democracies.

From Gunitsky's research, Fisher reports, "Once positive impressions of American democracy have been rapidly declining." Gunitsky is quoted as saying, "Very few in any public survey think American democracy is a good example for other countries to follow." A recent Pew research poll found that, on average, only 17% of people in surveyed countries called U.S. democracy worth emulating, while 23% said it had never offered a good example.

Fisher's commentary concludes, "American prosperity may no longer look so appealing either, because of growing problems like inequality, as well as the rise of China as an alternate economic model. And, awareness of the U.S.'s domestic problems- mass shootings, polarization, racial injustice- has greatly affected perceptions."

"It may be more precise to think of what's happening now as the rise of illiberal

democracy as an alternate model. That system seems to be increasingly popular....”

“But even people who want illiberal democracy for their country tend to find it unappealing in others, thanks to its nationalist tendencies. As impressions of U.S. democracy as a global model degrade, so does democracy itself.” Not a pleasant report card!!

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Marilyn and I were seated next to each other on a banquet at a restaurant recently. There were two attractive young women seated two tables away, one on the banquet and the other on a chair facing her dining companion. We could see the woman on the chair and she, us. At one point I observed her writing on a paper napkin for several minutes. They finished their dinner, paid the bill and departed, giving a friendly nod as they left.

Shortly thereafter our waitress came over and gave us the napkin on which the young lady had written a message, along with a twenty dollar bill. The message:

“My father died last Saturday. I’m not sure why, but I felt compelled to put some money towards your bill. I don’t know if you are married, on a first date or just friends. But I loved that you are sitting next to each other. Thank you for making me smile. Love Erika.”

Not a dry eye in the house, our waitress included.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

And a happier and healthy New Year

Your faithful scribe,

PB

