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QUOTE FOR THE DAY:

“If God ever calls me to a Holy war, I want Joe Frazier fighting beside me.” Mohammad Ali.

FIGHT OF THE CENTURY:

That quote brings to mind the fight of the century between Ali and Frazier, which Frazier won by unanimous decision in the 15th round. Words were not always so kind between them as they contested three mammoth battles over several years, but one thing was consistent, they played and fought by the rules.

That was the fight of the 20th century. Today we are involved in the fight of the 21st century. Covid -19 is the challenge of the 21st century,

and how sad to note the 200,000th death in the U.S. The fight of the 21st century, however, is for Justice Ginsberg's seat on the Supreme Court, and no one should expect any conciliatory words from either side. And, as for rules – what rules? This is existential warfare.

Be forewarned, HH readers are all my friends (I think/hope), and you cover every corner of the political spectrum. That is why HH is not a partisan publication. If you want your own views validated there exist a plethora of partisan sites. I collect information from many locations, some of which, of necessity, contain viewpoints with a political slant. I try to present information that is thought provoking, but does not represent an advocacy for the right or left.

That said, what a stew we find ourselves in. A reminder of who the combatants are: As noted several issues ago, Gallup did a poll in 2019 ranking 27 professions/jobs for honesty and ethics. Number 25 on the list was Senators; number 26, members of Congress and number 27, used car sales people.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that we find ourselves enmeshed in an era of flip flopping on both sides, all with the objective of enabling or preventing the Republicans from adding a sixth conservative to SCOTUS.

McConnell and Graham, in particular, on the right; the former denying Garland even an interview in a 2016 election year and Graham stating unequivocally, that a new justice should not be voted on in the last year of a Presidential term, as he said, “ You can quote me on that.”

Bret Stephens, a conservative columnist, writes an op ed which concludes by suggesting that Sen. Romney should not vote to confirm a new justice before the election, but enroute to that conclusion, has some observations about Democratic actions:

“There used to be a bipartisan tradition of confirming well qualified nominees for the court. Democrats trashed it with their thrashing of Robert Bork. The same with lower courts. Democrats trashed it by filibustering George W. Bush’s appellate court nominees.

There used to be a bipartisan position of respecting the filibuster. Democrats trashed it by blowing up the filibuster in 2013.” Stephens goes on with other examples, but you get the idea.

The take away I get from many articles, is that if the tables were reversed, the Democrats would be doing exactly what the Republicans are doing today.

Since the early 1900s there have been eight instances where a SCOTUS vacancy occurred in the last year of a Presidential term and where both the Presidency and the Senate belonged to the same party. In all but one instance (due to an ethics issue, imagine that) the nominees were confirmed.

So, fast forward to 2020. Why would the Republican controlled Senate in effect say, “Gosh, there may be an upcoming change in the Presidency and/ or the Senate. We should really let you fellows have a shot at it. Therefore we’re voting to hold off until the new term.”

You must be kidding !! Would the Democrats do that? No way. Why should the Republicans?

Flip floppers notwithstanding, the Republicans know where the railroad has to go and they're ramming it through. The Democrats are understandably extremely upset at the prospect of a 6-3 conservative dominated SCOTUS. Most notably, fear that such a court would eviscerate Roe V Wade and undo Obamacare – that's just for starters.

Now, for a delaying tactic and possible derailment of a SCOTUS confirmation, Ms. Pelosi is seriously suggesting that the President be impeached once again. Ending the filibuster is on the table, and to ensure future Democratic Senates, statehood for Puerto Rico and D.C. are also being discussed. Perhaps the most practical step to try to equalize the SCOTUS vote would be the proposal to pack the court. (add a justice or justices) This would, of course, require that the Democrats take over the Senate and the White House. FDR tried it and failed.

Interestingly, this is doable. The number of justices is set by statute, not the Constitution. Therefore, the number may be changed by the President with the concurrence of the Senate.

So, there you have it folks – a lot of ugliness – total, “take no prisoners” political warfare – the fight of the 21st century.

BUS MARSHALLS NEEDED:

Remember the Air Marshalls? Looks like we need them for the buses. Since Mid April when Gov. Cuomo mandated the wearing of facemasks on public transportation there have been 177 instances of harassment or assault on transit workers by riders who refuse to wear masks. 95% occurred on buses. A prime example being a 62 year old driver who, in response to passengers complaining about an unmasked rider, pulled over and called out to the passenger to put on his mask. That was the last thing he remembered as the passenger came up and assaulted him from behind. The driver regained consciousness in the back of an ambulance.

In San Francisco, three men beat a driver with a baseball bat after he ordered them off the bus for not wearing masks. And, in Lubbock, Texas, a woman hit a driver with a two by four after being asked to don a mask (Whoa! How many people travel about with two by fours?) At least those drivers survived. In France, a bus driver in Bayonne was beaten to death by four passengers after he asked them to put on masks.

This issue is no joking matter. To cause greater mask compliance transit officials in NYC have imposed a \$50 fine for defiant passengers. An instant cry from civil libertarians, “But you’re hurting the poor of the city who ride the buses and can’t afford the fines.” I’m not that sympathetic, but practically, who’s going to issue the ticket, who’s going to collect the fine? Maybe hire an additional fifty officers to go after scofflaws – I don’t think so. How about single ingress/egress bus doors? You don’t get on without a mask, and your friendly and courteous driver will give you one if you don’t have one – just one more snap shot of our lives with Covid- 19 (CV).

ANOTHER BRIDEZILLA BEAUTY:

Our bride today came up with the idea that the amount of money given for a wedding present should equate to the quality of food served. The RSVP reads: So that we may prepare your preferred dinner, please circle your gift level and indicate a meal of choice.”

“Loving Gift- up to \$250 chicken – swordfish

Silver Gift- \$251-\$500 Above or Sliced steak – poached salmon.

Golden Gift- \$501-\$1,000 Above or Filet Mignon – Lobster.

Platinum Gift- \$1001-\$2,500 Above or 2 pound Lobster + souvenir champagne goblet.”

Kinda gives you a warm feeling all over, right? Anyway to avoid awkwardness, I would suggest seating without regard to religion or ethnicity, but by gift levels – make certain the “got rocks” and the “loving gift” folks are well separated.

Your faithful scribe, PB