

## Part 2: The 2020 Presidential Election

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I think every informed voter and reporter in this country is deeply disappointed with the fact that the best presidential choice we have today is either Trump or Biden. Voters are puzzled by the fact that there are many qualified candidates out there, yet it seems as if we are having to choose between the lesser of two evils in this election. The current choice between Trump and Biden is quite depressing to just about every person I talk to regardless of party affiliation. And we sure need some hope and optimism today.

I think people would be ecstatic and full of renewed energy if the two parties offered candidates who are qualified to deal with the economic damage this pandemic has caused. Consumer confidence is critical to any economic recovery when an economy depends on consumer spending as much as ours does. Our nation's GDP would likely increase by a whole percentage point in a couple of months if the two parties simply present a totally new slate for the office of presidency and vice presidency. Until Donald Trump took office, the United States of America had been recognized as the greatest republic in history. With a new slate of candidates for both parties, we can regain that reputation.

### **The 800-Pound Gorilla in the Room**

When Lyndon Johnson was president, his term of office was consumed with dealing with the Vietnam War, which was incredibly stressful. General Westmoreland, who was leading the war effort, in my opinion did not always give him the best strategic advice, and the war dragged on for years. Johnson decided not to run for a second term, and he gracefully announced his decision to the nation in a special television broadcast. But he left a great legacy. He will be remembered for championing long overdue civil rights legislation, as well as for his war on poverty and his expansion of Medicare and Medicaid.

Trump is also probably experiencing a lot of stress and fatigue during the war against this invisible enemy. And I imagine that his second term as president will not be much fun given the long-term economic damage this pandemic has already caused as well as the ever-increasing antagonism he experiences from the liberal press. Moreover, given the fact that the rescue fund that Congress passed to help large corporations like Marriot International excluded his family's hotels and resorts, he might want to consider taking a graceful exit like Johnson did and not run for a second term so he can attend to his family business. No one would fault him for wanting to help his family in these troubled times.

And like Lyndon Johnson, he, too, will leave a legacy. He will be remembered as the first president to take on China for its unfair and illegal trade practices. He will also be remembered for his business-friendly administration that helped instill confidence in board rooms and small businesses across the country, leading to one of the greatest economic expansions in recent memory. In fact, it is the strong economy leading into this pandemic that will allow us to

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bounce back fairly quickly once we get past the worst phase of the recession. With his falling poll numbers, Trump may want to simply sit out the next election and leave as a winner, not a loser. If he leaves now, he will always be known as the president who finally took on China, and as someone who created the coronavirus task force that got us through this crisis.

I am sure that the responsible Republican leaders in Congress know that it will take a president with a cooperative disposition who can work with Congress and the press for our nation to recover from this pandemic. The polarization that currently exists in this country needs to hit the pause button until we get through this crisis. Then we can resume addressing climate change, health care, immigration, gay rights, abortion, and all the other important but divisive issues we are facing.

Therefore, if Trump's family and closest advisors cannot persuade him to return to private life in the very near future, then his Republican friends in the Senate should step in and help persuade him. And they will need to make their case to the president quietly so as not to antagonize his devoted followers. Richard Nixon never had to face a trial in the Senate because his Republican friends in the Senate were highly persuasive when they needed to be.

House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi will need to sit this meeting out and stay as quiet as possible. Once the senators succeed in this mission impossible and the president announces his decision to step down, then Nancy Pelosi can stand before the television cameras and gracefully thank Trump for all of his help with the important bipartisan legislation that got passed during his presidency, such as the new programs that address the opioid crisis in this country.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and Nancy Pelosi will need to sit down with Trump's children who are running the family enterprise and come up with a fair and equitable grant to help Trump and his family through this crisis. It is unfair for his children to have to suffer because they have the same last name. Plus, this rescue package will help prevent Trump from becoming bitter and stirring up trouble among his white nationalist followers when he is asked to return to private life. Trump seems to have little self-control, so the grant would have to be conditional upon Trump living a quiet life until election day, so he does not spew out his bitterness on Twitter. The grants for his family business could be distributed in stages until Election Day to deter Trump from blasting out one of his tirades.

Nancy Pelosi should also consider passing the baton of leadership of the House to a younger person with similar leadership skills. And at her age, she is definitely at an elevated risk for COVID-19. It would be dangerous for her to return to Washington on a regular basis and continue working closely with 435 representatives and their young staffs, many of whom could be asymptomatic and highly infectious. She will be remembered for her decades of public service, especially her leading role in passing the Affordable Care Act.

That leaves Joe Biden who, given his age, is not the Joe Biden we used to know. And a national campaign is a grueling and exhausting experience. He too should consider a graceful exit as the

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Democratic nominee and be remembered for his decades of dedicated service to this country as a senator and vice president. Biden's wonderful disposition made it easy for him to work across party lines to pass important legislation throughout his thirty-six-year career in the Senate.

At some point, we ask our elderly parents to give us the keys to their car to not only protect them, but to also protect the rest of us. And it will not take a posse of Democratic senators to persuade Biden to give up his keys. I believe it would only take two people, Barack Obama and David Axelrod, to quietly reach out to persuade him to gracefully step down as the Democratic nominee. They know better than anybody that Biden is no longer up to the task. Hopefully, someone reading this paper has Obama's or Axelrod's contact information and can reach out to them with this suggestion or copy of this document.

The Democratic leadership will have to deal with the thorny issue of selecting another presidential candidate without antagonizing Bernie Sanders' devoted followers. Sanders is too ornery to lead us out of this crisis. And Elizabeth Warren is too anti-big business to be the nominee. Known as an attack dog, the country would be better served if Warren continued to work on important consumer protection in the Senate.

Michael Bloomberg certainly has the management skills needed to get this country back on its feet, but the American people tend to vote for people with a little more charisma and better debate skills. Amy Klobuchar has an impressive resume for getting things done in the Senate, but she was not able to galvanize enough support to be a contender in the Democratic presidential race. She would, however, make a good candidate for vice president. Some people believe Hillary Clinton is sitting on the sidelines waiting to be invited back in, but she remains unpopular with the people she described as a "basket of deplorables," and the Democrats needs to capture a significant number of these deplorable voters if they want to win.

I have always believed that being a governor of a state is the best training ground for the presidency because the executive roles are similar in many ways. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo has received numerous accolades for his informative and honest press conferences dealing with the virus outbreak in New York City. His warm Italian disposition was especially noteworthy. You have to love someone who talks about eating spaghetti and meatballs with his extended family on a regular basis during a coronavirus press briefing.

As an Italian American myself, that is how my extended family shared meals together after church. I watched the governor's brother Chris Cuomo on CNN describe what it is like coming down with the disease and living with it daily. But Governor Cuomo might be unfairly blamed for the carnage that occurred in New York City, and the Republicans would have a field day with television campaign ads showing videos of rows of refrigerator trailers full of dead bodies. Mitt Romney's campaign was destroyed by ads interviewing an angry worker with cancer who got laid off by one of Romney's multibillion-dollar hedge funds, Bain Capital. After the Great

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Recession, it was not a good time for a very wealthy man in the world of finance to be running for president.

Governor Gavin Newsom of California has received a great deal of name recognition from his impressive news conferences, and he has demonstrated a deep commitment to resolving the crisis in his state. If Governor Newsom is wise enough to change his approach to this pandemic to a tailored approach, and he allows the young low-risk people of California to enjoy their beautiful beaches once again, then he should be considered as a viable candidate. He is an excellent communicator. My recommendation to the Democratic leadership is that the 2020 Democratic ticket should be Gavin Newsom and Amy Klobuchar, which would be a good combination of executive experience running a state with legislative experience writing and passing legislation in Congress.

I do, however, have another suggestion for the leadership of both parties. During the presidential primaries, there are often far too many unqualified and immature candidates running for the party's ticket. And there are far too many rancorous debates. For example, this year the Democratic Party started with twenty-three candidates, and there were twelve debates during the primaries. When Bloomberg finally joined the debates, the five other remaining candidates were speaking over each other and shouting at each other. These debates were an embarrassment to the Democratic Party. And how do you expect the busy voters in this country like myself to seriously evaluate the qualifications of twenty-three candidates? A few important issues percolated to the top in these debates, but it really came down to showbusiness and grandstanding, which is why Bloomberg did not become a leading candidate. And if Trump resigns, the Democrats can no longer run on a platform on who is the best candidate to beat Donald Trump.

When the head coach of a football team wants to find the best quarterback to lead the team, he does not have twenty-three freshmen try out for the first-string position of quarterback. Rather, he picks three players and then evaluates their strengths and weaknesses before determining which one will be first-, second-, and third-string for the position. Notice that the head coach does the scouting and selection of the three candidates himself to determine who tries out for head quarterback and the backup quarterbacks.

My suggestion is that the leaders of both parties amend their party rules and come up with a new approach to developing a slate of candidates to represent their party in the presidential primaries. After a great deal of scouting and due diligence, they would narrow the field to five primary candidates. First, both parties would form a Council of Elders made up of twelve members who would determine who would represent their party in the primaries. The twelve members would be people such as existing or former statespersons from all levels of government, as well as people from small and large businesses. For example, the Democratic Party Council would consist of former President Barack Obama, Governor Cuomo, former mayor of Chicago Rahm Emanuel, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power, a local sheriff, community leaders, and leaders of major

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corporations and small businesses, and tradesmen such as a local plumber. Researchers have found that the best corporate boards are those with a mix of people from all walks of life. This formation of Council of Elders for both parties would provide them a broad range of collective wisdom as they perform their all-important task of evaluating various people to represent their party in the general presidential election.

For starters, the Republican Party Council of Elders could consist of former President George W. Bush, former Ohio Governor John Kasich, and former Charlotte mayor and North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory.

The Council of Elders would have a full-time staff to perform the background research to make sure none of the candidates being considered has had a prior mental illness (such as Michael Dukakis) or has been credibly accused of some type of sexual abuse (such as Donald Trump), etc. Of course, they will need to check their birth certificates to make sure they were born in this country.

Medical records, however, are kept private in this country and rightly so. But if someone wants to be considered by their Council of Elders, they should be required to relinquish this right. Does the Democratic Party know if any of the twenty-three original candidates who wanted to sit in the Oval Office had an underlying mental illness, like bipolar disease or schizophrenia? And does the Republican Party know if any of their candidates who wanted to sit in the Oval Office has seen a psychiatrist for some obsessive compulsive disorder, has been treated for paranoia, has a sleep disorder, has a personality disorder, or cannot tell the difference between a conspiracy theory and reality? Something tells me that the answer to these questions for both parties is no. Obviously, we would not want to put someone with a serious mental disorder in charge of a ferryboat, much less the presidency of the most powerful country in the world with more nuclear bombs than the military can count.

Once each party's Council of Elders has narrowed down their list to five candidates, they would release these names to the general public, who would be given thirty days to privately contact the council with any credible information about prior sexual abuse or spousal abuse by that candidate. A special task force from the FBI would be available to assist the Council of Elders in these investigations. If an investigation by the council determines that the accusation has merit, then that person's name would be quietly removed from consideration.

After the thirty-day period is up (or some extended period if necessary, to give the FBI more time), any new accusation after that time should simply be ignored by the press. The current seemingly constant dribble of accusations of sexual abuse against presidential nominees has got to stop, for it is a major distraction for both parties. We need to focus on the major issues facing our nation, not on someone's moral failures that may or may not have occurred in high school, college, or in the workplace. The press will need to respect this process just as they do when they refuse to reveal the names of rape victims, unless the victim wants to be recognized. The tabloids, however, can be expected to print just about anything, particularly the

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candidate's origin from the planet Mars. Fortunately, most of the people that buy these tabloids do not bother to vote.

Next, the parties would present their slate of five candidates for consideration during the primaries to let the voters of each party decide which one that like best. Each party's finalist would then start campaigning for the general election. This method is like the way the television show *The Voice* works. The judges go through lots of auditions, and then they choose which candidates are the finalists. Once they narrow the field to a reasonable number, they open up the selection process to the viewers, who vote to determine who wins the grand prize of a recording contract. It is a great process, and it has produced some great recording artists. A singing pastor was crowned the winner this year, but I thought the other two finalists would have had a better chance at becoming a successful recording artist. I think a huge block of evangelical voters turned out for the pastor.

If the two parties agree with this modified approach to determine who is going to represent their party in the primaries, I can pretty much guarantee you that the people of this country will erupt with joy and excitement when they hear the news. And when both parties present a highly qualified slate of candidates to the voters on Tuesday, November 3, this country will probably have the largest voter turnout in recent memory. And the boost in consumer confidence will increase dramatically, leading to a rapid economic recovery.

If Trump decides to take a permanent involuntary sabbatical, the Republican Party's logical choice for president would be Mike Pence. But because his position as vice president requires him in to be a cheerleader to the president, he would be tarnished by Trump's many missteps. How does Pence spin the statements by Trump that ingesting Lysol by mouth or by an enema has some promise in killing the coronavirus? Like Governor Cuomo, these moments would make good fodder for Democratic television ads. Right now, I could use video editing software to slice a cut of Trump's magic formula of Lysol to treat COVID-19, then immediately cut to a video of Pence praising Trump for his exceptional and flawless efforts to beat this pandemic.

The tradition in this country is for the vice president to support the president's policies. As such, the press needs to stop trying to trap Pence into contradicting the president. Imagine if Trump had a one-hour news conference to outline his policies on approaching this pandemic, and it is immediately followed by a one-hour news conference by Pence describing a completely different policy. The press has simply not been fair to Pence. As the proverbial saying goes, Pence is trapped between a rock and a hard place. Nonetheless, Pence has been tarnished by his close association with Trump, and the Republicans will need to find another candidate to represent their party in this year's election.

My suggestion would be Nikki Haley for president. She has executive experience as the former governor of South Carolina, and she also has experience communicating with ambassadors from nations around the world when she served as US ambassador to the UN, which will be important in forming a global strategy to combat this pandemic. She was also one of the few

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people in the Trump administration with the fortitude to speak the truth boldly to Trump, even when it was something he did not want to hear. And, amazingly, he continues to respect her.

As governor of South Carolina, she fearlessly ordered state troopers to take down the Confederate flag on South Carolina State House grounds in 2015 in response to the murder of nine parishioners at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, by a white nationalist terrorist. Imagine doing this in a state that fired the first shots on Fort Sumter that ignited the Civil War. I would hope that Trump would endorse her as the Republican nominee.

For vice president, I suggest former Speaker of the House Paul Ryan of Wisconsin. He brings legislative experience as speaker of the House, and he worked diligently attempting to bring the federal budget in line with federal tax revenues. Deficit spending should only occur in a time of war, during a pandemic, or as an investment in infrastructure for future economic development. And with the trillions of extra deficit spending to support the economy during this pandemic, we are going to need expert help in restoring and balancing our federal budget. Paul Ryan would also help the Republican Party win the state of Wisconsin as well as some of the other midwestern states that will be critical in the next presidential election.

I also think it is wise for both parties to announce some of their choices for the top cabinet positions ahead of time during the campaign. These selections help voters gain further insight about how the candidate plans to govern the nation. For example, if Haley picks the isolationist Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky as secretary of state, then one would logically conclude that Haley's foreign policy would be for the United States to retreat from foreign conflicts. Let the Kurds resolve their conflict with Turkey on their own.

As a regular follower of politics, I do, however, have some suggestions for Nikki Haley if she becomes the Republican nominee for president. Senator Mitt Romney would make a great secretary of state, for he was correct about Putin and the threat he represents to us and the other countries of the former Soviet Union. He is also a real gentleman with tremendous courage, and I believe that a man with his morals and stature would be able to help heal the wounds in Europe and around the world that have been severely damaged by Trump. NATO is the most successful alliance of peaceful nations in the history of the world, and in my opinion, the president of the United States should never threaten to abandon NATO over a dispute about financial contributions.

And for treasury secretary, I would suggest selecting John Kasich, former representative of the House and governor of Ohio. He was an investment banker, and he served as chairman of the House Budget Committee for six years. With his budget expertise combined with Paul Ryan's budget expertise, the two could spearhead a special task force to address the budget crisis we will certainly face after this pandemic is over.

If Governor Newsom wins the election, and he wants to heal the wounds of the partisan bickering in this country, he should consider appointing Romney as secretary of state and Kasich as secretary of the Treasury. Newsom might consider appointing Mike Pence as

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ambassador to the United Nations. Pence has traveled and met with leaders from around the world, and his position as a former vice president would give him great status and influence. His mild-mannered behavior and soft-spoken manner would serve him well in this position. I would also recommend that the Democratic Party keep William Barr as attorney general, for I believe he is an honest and fair-minded attorney general despite the barrage of criticism he receives. This form of cross-pollination in the president's cabinet would go a long way in healing the wounds of the hyper-partisanship that has occurred over the last three and one-half years of the Trump administration.

During the presidential election between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, there were three presidential debates. That could be changed to allow two presidential debates, combined with a single debate between the cabinet selections from each party for secretary of state and secretary of the Treasury. In other words, the Republican nominee for secretary of state would debate the Democratic nominee for secretary of state—unless of course, both parties announced the same candidate as their choice. If that were the case, then the two nominees for secretary of urban and housing development (HUD) could debate each other on how they plan on solving the housing crisis in this country whereby the millions of workers on a minimum wage cannot not afford renting or owning a home in their own communities.

This approach would allow the public to become much more informed about the visions of the two parties. It would also give the media more to talk about other than the three presidential debates, which pretty much always cover the same material.

In short, if I had my way, the upcoming presidential election would be Haley and Ryan versus Newsom and Klobuchar. What is interesting about these two slates of candidates is that the white nationalists that Trump appealed to with his dog whistles in the last election would not know who in the world to vote for! They would surely not vote for Haley, who took down their beloved Confederate flag. And Newsom from California would be far too liberal for them. They might just sit out this election, which would be fine by me.

In full disclosure, I have been a registered Democrat for forty-eight years, ever since I registered to vote when I was eighteen years old, and I have been an observer of politics all my adult life. My deceased father, Theo Cangelosi, was a prominent attorney in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where I grew up, and he helped elect two Louisiana governors. He was also chief legal advisor to these two Democratic governors while they were in office.

Therefore, as a lifelong Democrat with a keen interest in politics, allow me to offer some advice to the Democratic Party that would help them in the next election. Polls have shown that Trump's appeal to the evangelical Christian community in this country made the difference in his defeat of Hillary Clinton. Evangelicals showed up in droves to vote for Trump despite his obvious moral failings because they were horrified at the thought of Hillary Clinton appointing the next liberal Supreme Court justice.



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The Democratic Party might not realize it, but in many ways, the Christian community in this country is naturally drawn to their party as defined in their platform, which seeks a more just and equitable society, and one that seeks to provide a health care system that is available to the rich and poor.

Nonetheless, there are three major issues that prevent evangelical Christians from voting for members of the Democratic Party. Allow me to offer a few suggestions on how to resolve these issues from their perspective. You might be pleasantly surprised by how many of them will turn out to vote for the Democratic ticket this November.

During one of the early Democratic primary debates that involved numerous candidates, the candidates had a heated debate over who would best champion the civil rights of the LGBTQ community over the civil rights of Christians or any other religious community. That was a serious mistake, for religious liberty is much more important than the civil liberties of any one community, including the LGBTQ community. A person's potential spiritual relationship with a superior being combined with the person's potential eternal relationship with that supreme being is far more important than one's temporal need for sexual gratification and companionship with another human being regardless of their sex. In other words, the LGBTQ relationship is temporal and may have value for this life; whereas, one's spiritual relationship with a supreme and eternal being not only may have value for this life, but it also has the potential to have eternal value. In short, as mortal human beings, our relationship with a supreme spiritual being or Creator is superior to that of a mortal human being's relationship with another mortal human being. Thus, religious liberty for any community of believers is far superior to the civil rights of the LGBTQ community.

This hierarchy of rights can be compared to the difference between the rights of the states and the rights of the federal government. The states have the right to create a state highway patrol and arrest people for speeding and drunk driving, and they have the right to call out the National Guard to control rioting in their state. But the federal government's use of force is far superior to that of the state because only the federal government has the right to send the army, the navy, the marines, and the air force to fight a war against an enemy from another country. And with today's modern military, that is an awesome amount of fire power compared to that of a state trooper. Christians believe in making peace with their awesome God and being loved by him, and they will put up with a few pesky speeding tickets.

The LGBTQ community certainly deserve civil rights in this country and around the world. And I am sure that if a gay person simply walked into a Christian photographer's studio, most would be glad to take their photograph. But if the gay person and their partner asked the same Christian photographer to shoot their wedding using his artistic skills to help them celebrate their ceremony, most would likely politely refuse. They would most likely recommend another photographer who also does good work and would be glad to have their business. Even the military allows for a conscientious objection for recruits who are pacifists and do not want to have to shoot and kill another human being. And the military does not court-martial them for

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their sincerely held beliefs. They simply go find another recruit to replace them who has no problem with shooting an enemy soldier to defend their country.

The evangelical community is convinced that if gay rights override religious liberty, it would not be long before the Supreme Court rules in favor of state laws that make it a crime for their pastors to refuse to marry a gay couple in their church, or a crime if they refuse to hire a gay receptionist. My advice to the leaders of the Democratic Party would be to simply add a short sentence to their platform stating that religious liberty is the preeminent right of all human beings. Then the low courts and the Supreme Court can get back to the business of dealing with all the other thorny issues this country faces when it comes to our laws and regulations.

There is another related issue that is especially important to evangelical Christians that should be added to the Democratic platform if Democrats want to attract their votes in large numbers. It relates to the need for religious liberty throughout the world, not just in this country.

For example, Afghanistan currently has a theocratic constitution that includes a clause that makes it a crime to leave the Muslim faith and join another religion. Even if another predominantly Muslim country like Afghanistan does not have a written rule against religious freedom, many countries persecute Christians and those of other faiths on a regular basis. This includes India, where the Hindu majority regularly persecutes Muslims and some Christians in their country. It comes down to which religious group has the majority of power and who holds the reins of power in that country.

That is why the British decided to divide their former colony into two separate nations, the Hindu-dominated India and the Muslim-dominated Pakistan, neither of which has learned the lesson of giving their citizens religious liberty. They keep fighting each other to this day over their deep-seated religious animosities. The lack of religious liberty creates wars within nations and wars between nations. But no nation should be a theocratic nation in this modern world. Yet, we find many nations around the world still living in the Middle Ages when theocratic nations were the norm.

Many nations around the world, like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran, and Nigeria, are tyrannical to religious minorities within their countries. The freedom to speak and share their faith is restricted, as well as their freedom to print and distribute books on their religious views. The freedom to gather peacefully as a community is also restricted.

The American understanding of religious liberty has simply not been spread around the world over that last two hundred years as well as it could have been. I believe the main reason is because government officials like former Secretary of State and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, who served under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, placed the importance of trade and wealth over the importance of religious liberty and other basic human rights. In Kissinger's view, why would the US want to alienate Saudi Arabia by insisting that their government provide religious liberty for their people, when we want to buy their oil and they want to buy

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our advanced military gear. As the saying goes, cash is king. Yet, because one's religion can have temporal as well as eternal implications, religious liberty should be king.

There is, however, a way to use cash to persuade countries like Pakistan to change their ways. The solution is rather simple now that nations like Pakistan are dependent on global trade with our country. Pakistan exports many textiles, clothing, leather goods, and rugs to the United States. First, we should provide their governments a clear definition of religious liberty within their countries and then provide a list of items we will start embargoing if they fail to begin implementing religious liberty. If they fail, the next step would be to ban the import of all textiles from their countries. In the meantime, we find another source. Next, if they implement halfhearted measures and are obviously not intent on establishing true religious liberty, we would ratchet up the embargo with limits on the import of clothing, leather goods, and so on, until they finally get the message and have a true change of heart.

It will be necessary to give them plenty of time to implement religious liberty, however, for the modern state of Pakistan has a long history of religious intolerance as a Muslim country. Religious intolerance has been ingrained into the minds of their general population. It will be difficult to explain to many of the poorly educated Muslim people that religious freedom is necessary for the general well-being of their country when they have been brainwashed into believing it is blasphemous to the God of Mohammad if a Muslim converts to another religion. The general population in Pakistan often demands that both the evangelist and the convert either be imprisoned or killed.

Religious liberty is an expression of humility in that it proposes that no flawed human being has an absolute monopoly on what is true. A person's belief may be correct, but each person has a right to stop and make an assessment of this fallen world and seek out answers from any number of proposals in this vast sea of opinions on God and the universe. We are all searching for answers, and we should all be free to discover the truth on our own without the help of a government official. Every citizen should be free to read or listen to any person they believe has it all figured out.

If Kissinger had tried this carrot-and-stick approach, he would have discovered that Pakistan would have become a much more prosperous country with a much greater appetite for advanced goods and services from the US. That is a win-win situation for everyone. Religious liberty sure worked well in this country, for we are one of the most prosperous nations in the world, so let us encourage other nations to follow our example.

In short, the evangelical Christian community believes that different religions should compete in a free marketplace of ideas about God and creation just like goods and services should compete in a free marketplace. Christian missionaries are not afraid of competition because they believe they have found a superior way to restore mankind to their Creator. Christian missionary organizations want our federal government to ensure that their missionaries have this freedom when they travel to theocratic countries. If the United States allows a Jewish

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synagogue and an Islamic mosque to be built down the street from a Christian church without their respective followers rioting and the burning down the competing religious facilities, then so should the rest of the nations on this planet we all share together.

Religious liberty is the seminal liberty that leads to civil liberties for social institutions, news organizations, and political parties. They, too, can freely assemble, speak, and publish their beliefs in a free marketplace of ideas.

One reason I support Mike Pence as our ambassador to the UN is because he is an evangelical Christian, and he understands the value of religious liberty for all people regardless of what country they live in. He understands that the state is responsible for the material well-being of the people, not their spiritual well-being.

The third issue that the Democratic Party needs to address if they want to attract the important evangelical Christian vote is the abortion issue. Evangelical Christians may never wholly agree with the party's position on abortion, but it would make a difference if there was more concern about the potential long-term emotional trauma a woman can experience when she has an abortion. A small number of women experience a form of post-abortion traumatic syndrome (or PATS) like some soldiers experience post-traumatic syndrome. Women should be informed of the pros and cons of having an abortion and told about alternative ways they can be supported if they cannot afford to have the baby.

I have read about far too many women who have suffered miserably from post-abortion syndrome. Some of them are wracked by guilt thirty years later. And some women suffer lifelong periods of depression and remorse. To fight this remorse, they often numb their emotions, which affects their relationships with other people. They may even experience this numbness and not know where it came from. Some women report that when they watch other kids cheerfully playing with siblings or friends, they hear an echo of the child that could have been. Not every soldier suffers from post-traumatic syndrome, and not every woman who has an abortion will suffer from post-abortion traumatic syndrome, but for those who do, it can make their lives and those who live with them less joyful. Christians are as concerned about the well-being of the mother as much as they are concerned about the lost child. As a caring society, we have a moral obligation to let women know that some mothers who abort their babies will experience this condition. Planned Parenthood suppresses this information.

For example, I had a retired friend who had some polyps surgically removed, and in the process, the ENT surgeon cut a major nerve on the left side of his face, which caused him to constantly drool on the left side of his mouth. His face was so numb, however, that he could not feel the drooling saliva, and his devoted wife had to regularly wipe his face. His doctor failed to inform him about the risk. My friend told me that he would have just lived with the polyps if he had known about this risk. Likewise, not every woman will experience post-abortion traumatic syndrome, but every woman has the right to know the potential risk for this disorder when considering an abortion, even if the risk is small.

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Another facet to the trauma of having an abortion sometimes occurs when a teenager gets pregnant. Sometimes she genuinely wants to have an abortion, for she has her whole life ahead of her, including college and graduate school. But I imagine far too often that she is coerced into having an abortion by her boyfriend or by a parent who does not want to suffer embarrassment. I believe that all applications for an abortion by underage girls should be investigated by a trained social worker before she goes through with her abortion to make sure her decision is not another form of child abuse.

If the Democratic Party is truly committed to the rights and well-being of women who are often sexually harassed and abused by men at their workplace, then they should be equally committed to young women who are considering an abortion of an unwanted child. Just as sexual harassment by men such as Harvey Weinstein has been covered up for so long, so, too, the potential psychological damage for a woman having an abortion has been covered up by Planned Parenthood.

Many supporters of abortion, however, make a good case that if abortions are completely banned by the Supreme Court in all fifty states, then many women who are determined to find an abortion will seek one on the black market. These lovely young women may also be entering a dark world that has no problem enslaving poor young woman into forced prostitution or selling them to some other underground slave market once they recover from the abortion.

Until the massive underground drug market and sex-slave market is expunged from this country, I think many Christians are realistic enough to be able to live with above-ground abortion clinics. But only on the condition that informed social workers are made available to women seeking an abortion in a legal clinic. That would be a fair compromise until the world is a better place for the mother and her unborn child.

If the Democratic Party wants to capture the hearts and minds of the evangelical community, it will go a long way if they were deeply committed to informing women of the potential risk of experiencing PATS after having an abortion. The party would also need to commit serious funding to begin researching this form of post-traumatic syndrome. And this research cannot be biased; it must be an honest attempt to obtain the truth about PATS. Then, as a society, we can make this information available for women faced with making the agonizing decision as to whether they should have an abortion. If you believe in woman's rights, then you must also be in favor of the woman having the right to be informed about PATS. Otherwise, you are not truly committed to the woman's right to a happy and joyful life.

In summary, the three major issues that divide the Democratic Party and evangelical Christians are as follows:

1. Religious liberty as the preeminent right of all human beings
2. Global religious liberty
3. A woman's right to an informed abortion

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If the party adds these three planks to their platform, I believe the party may be pleasantly surprised by the votes they receive.

Most Christians today are not believers in a laissez-faire form of government that lets some of our unscrupulous businesses and developers run amok to pollute our streams and allow our cities to grow in a chaotic manner. They believe that governments play an important and strategic role in creating a well-ordered society through important real estate development regulations and forward-thinking city planning. Of course, governments also use the sword to protect us from people whose conscience is not working right. But they should never use the sword to take away a person's God-given right to search for and find answers for this fallen world.

Because of these issues, for years I have considered switching party affiliation and joining the Republican Party, and I often vote for Republican governors, mayors, and senators in my state. But I am just as concerned about people who die from poor or nonexistent health care in this country as I am for the high rate of unwanted children in this country. If Republicans want to win the next election, they will need to add language to their platform that emphasizes the need for decent health care for the millions of workers in this country who have employers that do not provide insurance benefits, or for employers that only pay their workers a minimum wage that is just enough for subsistence living—not decent health care.

To compound the problem, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, tens of millions of Americans have been laid off from their jobs and are no longer covered under their companies' insurance plans. If they get seriously ill from COVID-19 and require thirty days in the ICU, how are they going to pay for hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical bills if they have already burned through what little savings they had? And how is the hospital going to absorb these costs if these patients are broke and cannot pay them? And how are the hospitals in this country going to survive when the main source of their income is from ordinary and elective surgeries that have been shut down for weeks or months to make room for a flood of COVID-19 patients?

This crisis is obviously not the Republican Party's fault, but if you are going to repeal the Affordable Care Act, then you cannot simply walk away from the problem. If you do, then one day soon another Bernie Sanders will come along with many more credentials, and we will find ourselves living in a socialist state. And the CEOs of major corporations in this country will be making \$1 million a year instead of \$15 million a year. And these corporations will all want to move their companies to other countries where taxes are almost nonexistent.

Granted, the private health care industry in this country is an exceedingly complex industry and reforms should be approached in a bi-partisan manner. And it will take a great deal of time to sort out the problems and come up with a better system. In the meantime, why not come up with a system that is different from the European model, and one that is uniquely an American model? As a real estate developer for over forty years, I have come up with a model that not only addresses the need for health care for those who are financially disadvantaged but also

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affords these same people the opportunity to prosper financially and socially. It involves building a mixed-use development that contains a free community health care facility to serve disadvantaged people.

It could be designed and built using HUD as the administrator of the program. This program would be similar to the opportunity zone legislation that Congress passed a couple of years ago, but quite different in many ways. HUD would create a new division within their agency to assist cities with building a mixed-use village that contains a free community health care facility. These villages are known as “lifestyle centers” in the real estate development business, and they are popping up all around the country. Unlike large shopping malls that have chain retail stores that can be found anywhere in the country, lifestyle centers are smaller and have unique shops arranged in a main street configuration. Obviously, states vary in size and prosperity, but a funding formula for the states could be designed around the number of their representatives in Congress in combination with the number of citizens in their districts who are in low-wage jobs and cannot afford health care.

Let us assume that the average cost for each of the fifty states is \$5 billion a year to build and operate these villages throughout their urban and rural communities. If Congress makes this program an annual budget item, it would cost \$250 billion a year, which is a lot of money. But the villages would ultimately pay for themselves, and, like the \$750 billion bailout loans during the Great Recession, the federal government would get paid back this amount with interest. Of course, cities and states can supplement these federal funds with local municipal bonds and state bonds for supplemental infrastructure improvements.

The local cities or towns would use these funds to purchase land to build lifestyle centers containing a wide variety of uses. The land could be in an opportunity zone or located on one of the many defunct mall sites around the country. The city would pay the owners of these obsolete malls a fair market value for their property and then tear down the structures to start with a relatively blank slate. The city would then hire a real estate developer to plan, develop, and manage these mixed-use villages. But the city would maintain ownership, and the developer would only receive the customary 5 percent development fee and 5 percent management fee. I imagine that wealthy real estate developers might even offer their services at no cost, except for the long-term property management fees.

The village would be built around a central boulevard serving as a pedestrian-friendly main street lined with buildings with a mix of retail on the first floor, office space on the second floor, and apartments on the third floor.

The first floor of each building would consist of small mom-and-pop businesses—no major chains. Some of the disadvantaged workers in our communities who are ambitious would be encouraged and educated on how to start and operate small retail businesses. Local chambers of commerce often offer these counseling services at no cost. These startups would also be given some grant money and financial assistance to start a wide variety of retail shops such as

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florists, hair salons, gift shops, arts and crafts galleries, boutiques, and fitness centers. Army recruitment offices could also be tenants and would be available to introduce young men and women to career opportunities in the armed forces. Local colleges and technical schools could have offices with career counselors on-site as well.

The second floor of each building along the boulevard would be small office suites for small existing or startup businesses such as accountants, attorneys, real estate companies, website designers, and so on. Grant money and financial assistance would be available for these startup businesses, too.

The main boulevard would be surrounded by small grocery stores, chapels, small concert halls, banks, a town hall, a police substation, and many other organizations that one would typically find in a healthy small town or city.

Most important, a free community health care center would be a part of the village center where people on subsistence wages could get free physicals and a few other simple procedures and medications. They may not be able to get a \$1.4 million heart transplant at the center, but they could have a small precancerous spot removed before it becomes a full-blown melanoma, which will require far more expensive medical care.

In addition, if the physician determined that a person was overweight and had diabetes, the community health care center would include exercise facilities with personal trainers and dieticians who could coach them on how to exercise and improve their diet and overall health. Type 2 diabetes is a treatable illness. Health cooking classes could also be offered. Preventive care and improved exercise and diets will save the federal government a whole lot more money than the cost of these community health care clinics, in the long run.

For advanced surgeries or treatments that are extremely expensive, a referral program could be set up with specialists and hospitals in the local community that are willing to dedicate 10 percent of the income from their practices as a form of charity for these patients. The community health care physician would give the patient a voucher to be used by the specialist. For example, if a patient needed expensive triple bypass surgery, the surgery would be performed free of charge by these physicians and hospitals willing to make the 10 percent donation to underprivileged patients. If enough physicians and hospitals participate in this program, this country will be on the road to providing universal health care for all its citizens, regardless of social economic background. These physicians would probably gain a great deal of publicity and good will from the community at large, which in turn, would increase their business to make up for the lost 10 percent of their income.

It is important that the city maintain ownership of these lifestyle centers because for-profit developers and owners of these centers always want to maximize their profits, and the ever-increasing rental rates will drive away the mom-and-pop stores and businesses. The turnover in stores on King Street in Charleston, South Carolina, over the last ten years is a case in point. Building owners have steadily raised rents so much that most of the unique one-of-a-kind shops



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have been forced to move and have been replaced by large chain retailers. Furthermore, all housing must be owned by the city to prevent gentrification to the point that the original owners or tenants can no longer afford to live and work in these lifestyle villages. It is essential for the city to own all these facilities, so the rents remain affordable.

Policemen are severely underpaid today, and they often cannot afford to pay for housing in the community in which they patrol. They are forced to find cheaper housing elsewhere and must commute to work. In these HUD communities, however, these essential workers could be given free housing as a part of their compensation package.

Having policemen living in the village with their families has many advantages in that they can walk to work and get to know people in their community. For example, if they befriended a woman working at small breakfast café where they eat breakfast every morning, then they will be able to know when the woman has a new black eye and then investigate to see if she is suffering from abuse. If he knows the abuser, then he could confront him and help him find mandatory counseling. The patrolman could also be trained to spot depression or erratic behavior in a young high school student who is being bullied in school, and they could guide them to an appointment with a professional mental health care provider in the health care facility. It is an asset to have trained officers living in these villages.

With good architecture and landscaping with beautiful squares and pocket parks, these mixed-use developments could lead to healthier and more prosperous people who can come out of their poverty. And with the wide variety of cultures and ethnicities in this country, local people and tourists would flock to these one-of-a-kind villages.

Historic downtown Asheville, North Carolina, has become a tourist mecca for many of these same reasons. It is filled with one-of-a-kind, interesting, and prosperous small businesses because the city's zoning laws will not allow national chains in the downtown area. Asheville is a unique mix of one-of-a-kind shops, restaurants, chocolate pastry shops, galleries, and microbreweries. In fact, the city currently has twenty-six breweries, and it has become a mecca for tourists who love beer and want to browse the unique arts and crafts stores and galleries, as well as the Biltmore House and Gardens. The city has so many interesting restaurants that one can take a walking culinary tour.

To offset the cost of this federal program, an extra 5 percent federal income tax would be paid by all the for-profit businesses in the development. But here is the beauty of this program. From a health care perspective, the poor person's health would dramatically improve with preventive care which, in turn, will save the federal and state governments a lot of money when they go on Medicare and Medicaid. The key to the health care crisis in this country is preventive medicine and healthy people living in healthy homes and communities with low crime.

And the prosperous new businesses in these communities will dramatically increase income tax revenues to the federal government, which should offset the interest cost of the \$250 billion Congress spends each year on the program. Whenever the city of Charlotte spends money on

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improved infrastructure like a light rail system, real estate development booms along the path of these projects, dramatically increasing sales tax, property tax, and income tax revenues.

It will take plenty of planning by all levels of government for these mixed-use projects to work, but I am confident that each state has high-quality commercial architects and landscape architects as well as qualified developers who have some experience with these kinds of lifestyle developments. And I am sure they would be willing to assist with this endeavor even though they will not own the project. To see how nice these lifestyle centers can be, Birkdale Village, located in the suburbs of Charlotte, North Carolina, is a very successful example. (See <https://bit.ly/3gPVoce>.)

Finally, since this new legislation would be a bipartisan effort by Congress, maybe it could be called the Affordable Care Act-2 (or ACA-2) or simply the Community Care Act. With his background as a community organizer in Chicago before he was a US senator and president, Barack Obama might consider doing the ribbon cutting for each new community center. He would certainly make an excellent spokesman for this program as it is rolled out all over the country.

The Affordable Care Act may have its flaws, but the Republican animosity toward this act should come to an end. With their better understanding of free enterprise, the Republican Party needs to reach across the aisle and work with the Democratic Party to come up with a better solution to providing health care to the disadvantaged low-wage workers in this country.

I have one other piece of advice for the Republican Party. Isolationism has a long history in the Republican Party, and Senator Rand Paul is the current voice for this wing of the party. I like Senator Rand Paul for he is honest, and he does not pander to anyone. But his isolationist beliefs that we should completely stay out of other nations' problems unless they directly affect us needs modification. We certainly cannot solve every country's complex problems such as those in the Middle East, but for the problems we can easily solve, we have a moral obligation to do so.

Consider Venezuela. People are being imprisoned by a corrupt regime that is making massive sums of money from the illegal drug trade with our country for the benefit of an exceedingly small elite class associated with the President Nicholas Maduro's regime. This drug trade not only hurts our citizens, but it also hurts the Venezuelan people who are currently trapped in extreme poverty. This crisis can easily be solved without invading the country. I would hope that once Trump steps down and Pence becomes president, his first order of business would be liberating Venezuela from this illegitimate regime. Pence should consider modeling his military strategy on Joshua's capture of the city of Jericho as found in the Old Testament (Joshua 6:1–27).

It could work without having to invade the country as President George W. Bush did in Iraq. This strategy is based on the current headline news that a paramilitary special ops force invaded the country in a failed attempt to capture or kill President Maduro. Many of the

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mercenary forces were retired US Special Forces who probably have families at home. It has now been reported that they are locked up in a shopping mall converted to one of Maduro's prisons. They are most certainly being tortured as John McCain was when he was captured by the North Vietnamese Army during the Vietnam War. Ultimately, I think they will all be killed if they are not liberated soon.

Here is how a simple plan that could not only liberate these Americans, but at the same time liberate the whole country. First, the US Air Force would begin circling the outer perimeter of the country's territorial boundaries with our most advanced fighter jets in single file. The circling would continue twenty-four hours a day for days. Maduro's Russian friends in Venezuela propping up his regime will certainly use their advanced radar to alert Maduro of what is happening in the sky. Then Secretary of State Mike Pompeo can notify his Russian counterpart to get all their military advisors out of the country in forty-eight hours. In the meantime, fighter jets are still circling the nation.

Maduro and his gang of thieves would then be given the opportunity to join the Russians so they can fly back to Russia together. It will be Putin's responsibility to decide what to do with Maduro and his followers. If he wants to grant them asylum, fine. And if he wants to send them to the International Court of Justice in The Hague for trial, then that would be fine too.

Of course, there is a risk that Venezuelan forces will kill the American paramilitary soldiers on their way out. To prevent that from happening, Pompeo can inform his Russian counterpart that if these American citizens are killed, it will destroy any hope for a quick return to a more normal relationship with the United States for many years.

If these efforts fail, and Maduro and his followers still refuse to leave with the departing Russians, the next step will be to send in enough units of Special Forces to physically surround the perimeter of the mall parking lot. Then, another Special Forces team would enter the mall to extract the mercenary soldiers who are imprisoned there. If they have already been killed by Maduro's men, then our Special Forces would simply extract the dead bodies of their former comrades and bring them home for a dignified burial.

Once all the rescued mercenary soldiers have been extracted and our Special Forces leave the scene, we would then use a massive number of cruise missiles launched from navy ships and highflying drones to pulverize the mall buildings. Maduro and his men would have a few days to drive out to the site and see the burning remains. At the same time, our fighter jets would keep circling the perimeter of the country while we wait for Maduro and his men to come to their senses, which should not take too long. A little help from the people in Venezuela would help as well. But we should let Maduro know that if he tries to take his stolen gold with him, we will take his plane out of the sky.

In 1823, President James Monroe established the Monroe Doctrine, which defined the American continent as our sphere of influence. Since then, the United States of America has

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been the big brother to our smaller brothers in Central and South America. And what big brother would not rescue his little brother or little sister when they are in serious trouble?

I imagine Rand Paul would support this approach. One could even argue that if President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney had used the same measured approach to Afghanistan and Iraq, we never would have invaded those countries. As President Theodore Roosevelt famously taught us, we really do carry a big stick. We just need to use it wisely, shrewdly, and sparingly.

Finally, if this mission is successful, and Pence becomes the next ambassador to the UN, it would give him great clout among the nations. He will be known as someone who means business when he wants to solve a crisis, and he will use his enhanced reputation to be a peacemaker around the world where unnecessary strife and wars continue unabated. Maybe he can come up a solution to help the loyal Kurds who fought the terrorists in Syria on our behalf. Hopefully, he can persuade Turkey to allow a new state of Kurdistan to be formed to bring an end to this long conflict between Turkey and the many Kurds scattered in nearby countries. Sometimes new lines in the sand can create a lasting peace for all neighbors in the region.

Due to the current pandemic ravaging our nation physically and economically, this is probably the most consequential presidential election in our lifetimes. And I think the leaders of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party have a tremendous obligation to present a slate of candidates for the executive office of the president that are up to the task and will have the confidence and backing of the vast majority of the American people no matter who wins.

And maybe, like the Republican senators who quietly convinced Nixon to retire, our current Republican leadership can convince President Trump to do so now without having to wait until the end of his term on inauguration day on January 20 of next year.

I am sure Donald Trump is a nice guy if you are his friend and are playing golf with him at his Mar-a-Lago resort in sunny Palm Beach, Florida. And I understand he has been a great father to his children who are devoted to him. So, let him to return to his family business and enjoy his family and friends so he can go quietly into the night, and we can all sleep at night. And Vice President Pence, who is mild mannered, honest, and sincere, can lead with a softer approach to governing while we wait for the next president to take office.

### **The 8,000 Pound Gorilla in the Next Room**

Now that the COVID-19 pandemic has created a deep crisis in our country, allow me to paint an imaginary picture of what life would be like in this country and around the world if the Republican leadership does not quickly act to insist that Trump take a long overdue and permanent sabbatical and return to his family business.

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As a reminder, my background in intellectual history at Tulane University has provided me with the skills to historically analyze and intelligently predict the future based on historical patterns of thought and behavior. To better understand the field of intellectual history, see <https://www.britannica.com/topic/historiography/Intellectual-history>.

As an infectious disease expert, Dr. Fauci has predicted that more than 2 million Americans could die if the government does nothing until herd immunity is achieved. Likewise, as an amateur intellectual historian and futurologist, I would like to present a picture of what could happen if we follow the current pandemic strategy with Trump remaining in office.

This imaginary view of the future of this country is based on the assumption that our economy becomes extremely dysfunctional in the next year or so. It is relatively easy to predict that disastrous riots will soon erupt around the country, requiring Trump to declare a national form of martial law known as the Insurrection Act of 1807. This is a federal law that empowers the President of the United States to deploy U.S. military and federalized National Guard troops to suppress civil disorder, insurrection, and rebellion.

In September 2006, New York University professor Nouriel Roubini warned the International Monetary Fund that the US housing market would soon collapse, leading to a severe economic recession. He was right. He is now predicting a similar housing and debt crisis and a ten-year depression because of the current economic carnage. He further stated:

You're going to start having food riots soon enough. Look at the luxury stores in New York. They've either boarded them up or emptied their shelves, because they're worried people are going to steal the Chanel bags. The few stores that are open, like my Whole Foods, have security guards both inside and outside. We are one step away from food riots. There are lines three miles long at food banks. That's what's happening in America. You're telling me everything's going to become normal in three months? That's lunacy. (See <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/05/why-the-economy-is-headed-for-a-post-coronavirus-depression-nouriel-roubini.html>.)

In the last presidential election, I had a good friend who was adamant about voting for Trump so he could appoint a conservative Supreme Court justice. I gave up warning him, for I thought our nation's checks and balances could control Trump. I also predicted that Trump would not make it to the end of his first year in office before being impeached. I was off by a couple of years.

But before Election Day, I sent my friend a long list of Trump's dangerous character flaws and personality disorders that were quite evident from his campaign speeches and the Republican Party primary debates in which he verbally berated his opponents, including people of high character such as Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio, and Ted Cruz.

Here is the list of Trump's character traits I came up with: irritable, cantankerous, mean-spirited, spiteful, vengeful, vindictive, venomous, holds a grudge, unforgiving, boastful, proud,

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pompous, arrogant, self-righteous, self-centered, immature, unreliable, unpredictable, untrustworthy, unfaithful, ungrateful, untruthful, unapologetic, unforgiving, lacks self-control, deceitful, disloyal, dishonest, disrespectful, opportunistic, manipulative, aggressive, ignorant, unrepentant, ill-tempered, impulsive, unsympathetic, temperamental, childish, undisciplined, ungovernable, unmanageable, boorish, impatient, irrational, disrespectful, callous, dangerous, and scary.

Out of the 45 presidents in our country's history, Trump's character traits and personality make him the most ideal candidate to become a dictator. But I thought the country could sustain itself for four years if nothing traumatic happened in the meantime.

Now, however, I am truly afraid of a dictatorship emerging in this country for the first time in our history. The current strategy for containing the coronavirus will certainly lead to severe economic turmoil, which is fertile ground for a dictatorship, especially when the leader of the country has the perfect disposition for becoming one. I imagine that Trump himself does not realize how easily he could be transformed into a brutal dictator under the right conditions. But his admiration of Putin reveals this hidden darkness. And he has a strange affinity for his chubby little friend in North Korea, Kim Jong-un, as well as some of the rulers of Southeast Asian countries who have followed Trump's mantra of fake news. In short, he appears to admire dictators around the world, large and small.

*Note: If the reader is a bit squeamish, you may want to stop reading the rest of this paper because I paint a rather dark picture of what could happen if the current approach to this pandemic continues for the next one to two years if Trump remains in office.*

We currently have a president who can cleverly support a large rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, filled with white nationalists and neo-Nazis marching down the street chanting racist and anti-Semitic slogans and carrying weapons, Nazi and neo-Nazi symbols, and Confederate battle flags, And whose campaign shrewdly appeals to these groups with the use of dog whistles. If you examine dictatorships around the world, members of the press and opposition politicians are the first to be imprisoned, tortured, and killed.

Once the riots require Trump to impose the Insurrection Act, he will be roundly criticized. As the chaos explodes, his potential as a dictator will bloom. Dissenting generals will be purged, and he will then find a core group of loyal generals to help him keep order in our ravaged country. The Secret Service would likely become Trump's intelligence force, and the Army's Special Forces would become his version of the elite German SS (German: "Protective Echelon"). They would be redirected from international operations to the United States to search out any who speak out against Trump for his use of martial law to squelch the increased rioting. And his People's Army around the country made up of white nationalists and neo-Nazis would jump at the chance to patrol the streets toting their assault weapons looking for malcontents, undesirables, and leftwing anarchists.

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Trump's disdain for Hispanics is well known, and he has used enough dog whistles to indicate that he is a closet anti-Semitic. Once he imposes martial law and his love of power and authority grows, we'll see him come out this closet. Woe to any Jewish investors and bank owners who turned him down for loans to bailout his failing real estate ventures and casinos over the years. No doubt Democrats such as Nancy Pelosi, Senator Chuck Schumer, and others of the opposition party will be targeted as well.

Others he will target will include Mitt Romney, James Comey, Mike Sessions, Robert Mueller, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, General John Kelly, and General James Mattis. No doubt he will go after governors who have insulted him, such as Governor Jay Inslee, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and others. Attorney General William Barr has already sharply criticized Trump, so he, too, will likely be included in Trump's purge. Sean Hannity is a staunch supporter of Trump, but he, too, will eventually see the evolving danger of Trump as a dictator, which would put him in the crosshairs of Trump. Any Supreme Court justice and lower court judges who have challenged many of his executive orders will be purged.

I imagine that one reason Trump wakes up in the middle of the night blasting out meanspirited tweets to his millions of followers is because he is compiling a long list of people who have criticized him, including his enemies in the FBI, the Justice Department, Hollywood actors and producers, business leaders like Jeff Bezos, Columbia University professors, and other groups who do not praise him. And, of course, his many enemies in the press, particularly the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, CNN, and others, including *PBS NewsHour* political commentators Mark Shields and David Brooks, will be arrested. Nixon had his list of enemies too, but the Republican leadership in his day was responsible enough to see to it that he could not implement his crooked plans. Trump is profoundly insecure, and his inflated ego demands uninterrupted praise and adoration.

The Christian community will be deeply divided between those who favor law and order versus those who favor freedom of speech and worship. Like the Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who spoke out against Hitler, evangelical Christians are not afraid of dying because they have a firm belief in a future resurrection in which they will inherit a heavenly paradise. *Christianity Today* recently published a scathing editorial in favor of impeachment during Trump's trial in the Senate, so they will most certainly be on his radar. Pastors, seminary professors, and other mission or charity groups will be targeted based on old or new criticism.

And if a flood of South Americans start streaming across the Mexican border because they are having a hard time finding food in their dysfunctional nation, this 8,000-pound gorilla will pounce on Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and every South American nation all the way down to Chile. I expect Canada will probably stay neutral in this war of aggression, but I can envision Trump turning the Americas into one large Great America from Chili to Canada. Then Trump can build a string of Trump resorts and casinos all the way to Chili, with ballrooms devoted to beauty contests for the parading of beautiful women from these nations for Trump to check out. He can then call his idol and favorite dictator Vladimir Putin to give him the

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go-ahead to take over Ukraine and the rest of the former nations of the Soviet Union. The two friends will then have their own empires to rule over for the rest of their lives. And if South Korea or Japan insult Trump and challenge his takeover of these poor countries in the UN, he can call his friend Kim Jong-un in North Korea and with the threat of nuclear weapons, and considering South Korea's and Japan's weak national military, allow Kim Jong-un to take over these countries and much of Asia.

As a student of history and current affairs, I have always been amazed at the staying power of tyrannical dictators. North Korea is on its third generation of family dictators who have ruled the country for seventy-four years. And if the young grandson Kim Jong-un stays in power for another fifty years, North Korea's reign of terror and extreme poverty will have lasted for one hundred years. Fidel Castro was in power in Cuba for fifty years, and if his brother Raúl does not have a change of heart, the severe political repression and human rights violations in Cuba could go on for yet another generation.

Imagine what would happen if Trump is a dictator with no restraints. Think Harvey Weinstein, with a habit for sexually harassing and assaulting women, lustfully roaming around his new Great America. And what if his next vice president is like billionaire Jeffrey Epstein, who had an addiction to pornography and deviant sex with young teenage girls? The MeToo movement will be crushed as mothers and their young daughters will be abused as never before.

History informs us that every nation has its demons, and when disruptive events occur in a nation, its demons tend to come out of hiding and influence certain kinds of individuals to gain control over the nation. In most cases, life for the people often becomes a living nightmare, especially when heartless and deviant leaders gain control of their country. As one of my favorite world history professors used to say when surveying these types of regimes, "Their armies love to burn, rape, torture, pillage, and kill their enemies; or just let them starve to death after destroying their cities and crops."

Many people are rather flippant when it comes to predicting a certain event that will lead to World War III. But if the current economic destruction continues unabated, Trump could go after China with a vengeance, whom he loves to blame for having caused this pandemic and global recession. And with China's modern military prowess and nuclear arsenal, I will let the reader imagine what World War III will look like when Trump, Putin, and Kim Jong-un form an alliance to take on China.

This prospect of what could happen if Trump remains in office during this predicted economic chaos may seem far-fetched. But all one must do is study a little world history to realize that the above scenario is a real possibility. Or just watch the next news conference and observe how Trump trashes governors and members of the press who dare to criticize or question him. Even *Fox News* occasionally receives his wrath when one of their reporters dares to find fault with him.



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With this pandemic, we really do face an existential crisis if the 800-pound gorilla in the room becomes a huge 8,000-pound Godzilla who goes on one of his rampages. All the little monkeys in the House of Representatives, and all the large chimpanzees in the Senate, and all the lions in the Supreme Court, and all the barking dogs in the press will not be able to jump on his back and bring him down.

*Note: I finished writing this paper on May 25, and George Floyd was killed by a police officer on that day, which was followed by days of protests. To get a glimpse of how Trump would react when riots erupt over the economic carnage caused by mandatory indiscriminate social distancing, read the following statements and tweets by Trump during the protests over George Floyd's murder:*

- “When the looting starts, the shooting starts.”
- “If you don’t dominate, you’re wasting your time. They’re going to run over you, you’re going to look like a bunch of jerks. You have to dominate.”
- “I am dispatching thousands and thousands of heavily armed soldiers, military personnel and law enforcement officers to stop the rioting . . .”
- Trump told the governors that “you have to use the military” and “we have a wonderful military.”
- “The only good Democrat is a dead Democrat.”

And on Wednesday, June 4, General John Allen, a retired four-star Marine general, lambasted Trump’s threats to use the military on protesters and his controversial church photo op on June 2, writing that his actions “may well signal the beginning of the end of the American experiment.” (See <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/04/politics/john-allen-trump-protests-george-floyd/index.html>.)

Dr. Birx and Dr. Fauci need to realize that if they continue to follow their current strategy of rolling economic shutdowns to mitigate the coronavirus, they are playing with fire in an extremely dry forest with very high winds that can rapidly turn into a major forest fire that will torch the America we love.

Who knows, maybe one day a retired Donald J. Trump will wake up in the middle of the night with his conscience bothering him, and he will call Franklin Graham to join him in a game of golf. Even Christ forgave one of the two thieves next to him on the cross who repented so he could join him in paradise. Of course, Trump will have a very long list of people he sinned against and will have to tell them how deeply sorry he is and beg for forgiveness. No one is beyond redemption until they die.

## Part 2: The 2020 Presidential Election

Dr. Luis C. Almeida posted the following message on his website which states,

I've seen this my whole life, "*God Opposes the Proud but Gives Grace to the Humble.*" It pays off to be humble and push pride to the corner. You won't gain much by taking a prideful stance and behaving as if people are below you. Instead, live humbly always loving each other. (See <https://luisalmeida.com/2019/12/13/god-opposes-the-proud-but-gives-grace-to-the-humble/>.)

At this crucial point in our country's history, we desperately need a president who is humble and who does not need constant praise and glory as if they were some kind of god.

If the reader of this short horror story agrees with this assessment of Trump, and they do not want to give him the opportunity to become a dictator, then they need to light up their senators' and representatives' phones and inboxes and let them know.

The Republican and Democratic leaderships should do whatever is necessary to create a new slate of candidates for their respective parties. If they decide to choose Haley and Ryan versus Newsom and Klobuchar, then to everyone's complete surprise, the debates between these candidates would actually be interesting, informative, and respectful!

And if the voters follow their example, the deep polarization that has plagued the nation for the last three and one-half years will soon come to an end. And people can start enjoying Thanksgiving once again with family and friends.

I would also love to hear how each of these candidates from the two parties explain how they plan to save American lives during this pandemic, and how they plan to redeem our shattered economy so we can live peaceful, healthy, and prosperous lives once again in this great country of ours.

Thank you for your willingness to read this long paper!

PS. I may be a real estate developer, but I am also an amateur biblical theologian after auditing numerous courses on theology at two local seminaries in Charlotte when business was slow. If you are interested in learning about how God plans to save lives and redeem this fallen world so that mankind can return to a peaceful Edenic paradise, please visit my website and watch the videos I produced on the subject. They are free!

Watch the seven-minute trailer first, and if you want to learn more, I suggest watching Session 2 next, "The Missing Messianic Kingdom." If Jesus Christ really is the Messiah, then where is his messianic kingdom of peace, justice, righteousness, and abundant prosperity the Jewish prophets promised for Israel and the world?

Go to [www.godsendgame.net](http://www.godsendgame.net).

## Part 2: The 2020 Presidential Election

Note: An electronic file of this paper can be downloaded from this website as a PDF file. And if you agree with my tailored approach to this pandemic, feel free to share this paper with anyone you know.

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