

Yikes!

California's primary is just over a year away. The two-year election cycle occupies nearly 20 of 24 months. What a daunting process to undertake, to manage and to track.

California has moved its primary date to March when we will be part of Super Tuesday. Here is an [interesting column from today's Washington Post](#) on the impacts of the shift.

Today I read that Congressional Republicans are attempting to change the rules so as to prevent anyone from challenging an incumbent president during the primary election process. This is an unsettling concept to say the least. However, it is probably, now, too late to affect the 2020 primary cycle.

I believe the voters' energy caused a terrific impact on the House and needs to be focused as well on the Senate Races that come up. The establishment Republicans have shocked me by buying into the rhetoric of an ignorant, self-serving and erratic narcissist. The impacts of New Gingrich and the absorption of fundamentalist Christians have made the Republican party an unhealthy version of what has been the bedrock of conservative values. Gingrich's push for making no compromises on extreme views has morphed into a series of monologues instead of true dialogue in Congress.

Incoming Democrats, including progressives, should not follow in this pattern. I believe that difficult decisions need to be made. It is not my idea that Democrats should "give in" just to make progress. But, I do hope that they present ideas that are sound, well-thought out, and with clear and include simple education for the public. The extremes of both parties are damaging. So is capitulating on values. I know that Jeanne and Karen feel very strongly about this.

Much more to my liking is Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R) Pennsylvania. In an [interview with Michelle Martin on NPR's All Things Considered](#) today, the congressman sounded like a person with perhaps different views, but someone that I could discuss ideas with. He is a member of the Problem Solver Caucus. I suggest listening to him and believe we need more people like this in the House and Senate, regardless of political party.

We should never assume that people understand why the President's desire for a wall or other poor and ill-conceived ideas are flawed on many fronts. Instead of following every non-sensical tweet from the White House, constant education on the flaws of bad ideas should be promulgated regularly by the press in formats that can be understood by most people. Facts, not opinions delivered by people reminiscent of Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntly and David Brinkley. We do have some very good news broadcasters today along with a number of political pundits posing as journalists.

The Republican Party and the President are operating under the premise that if you say something loudly and frequently, it will become the truth. This is what I believe Rudy Giuliani was referring to when he said "truth is not truth". Fortunately, there is a difference between truth and belief. Different beliefs can be debated . . . but there is only one truth. Substituting the terms 'fact' and 'truth' for a belief is a dangerous way to manipulate public understanding.

I am not hopeful that any of this will improve soon. There is too much resentment, anger, mistrust and misunderstanding in this country for things to get back to "normal" for a while. Progressive Democrats will want to have their say and to become a major influence in national politics. Many of them are as angry as the folks supporting the President. Until efforts to stop inflaming public discourse are more effective, I fear that rhetoric based on emotion will rule the day.

There are a number of very capable candidates for the next election cycle. They will each be painted as villains with ulterior motives to

change the face of America to meet their personal beliefs. Few, if any, will be touted as reasonable, sensible, likable and able to accept good counsel before making decisions for the betterment of the country as a whole. It is a very sad state of affairs governed by greed, influence, money, hatred and fear. Those who elected President Obama, based on hope felt overwhelmed by the power of darkness. That has made them rightfully angry. But anger is not the best way to govern.

I wish us well as we enter 2019 and a better 2021. Indivisible Ferndale is a welcome respite in a tumultuous world. We are doing and accomplishing good things where we can and do have an impact. Thank you all.

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