In Our Opinion

Happy 4th of July!

The 4th of July has long been one of my favorite holidays. I love seeing the kids' bike parades with flags flying from handlebars, family and friends gathering together to eat well and play games and as the day comes to a close, prepare for the excitement of fireworks.

Of course, this day symbolizes much more than all of that. It's first and foremost a day to celebrate freedom, democracy and the principles of liberty which our nation was founded. As we celebrate this 4th of July let us all remember the sacrifices made for our freedom, the values that unite us as a nation, and the responsibility we each have to uphold and defend these principles. Let us cherish the gift of liberty that we have been given, and strive to ensure that it is preserved for generations to come. We are truly blessed as a nation; I hope that each of you share in these blessings and have a wonderful Independence Day.

Linda Kor
Editor

Rampell's View

Trump's green card plan sounds great (if you ignore his entire record)

By Catherine Rampell

Free advice to voters and the media: Pay more attention to what politicians do than to what they say.

There's been tons of credulous coverage of Donald Trump's policy statements that defy his record. Take, for example, his recent "proposal" to provide green cards to foreign-born graduates of U.S. colleges.

"Let me just tell you that it's so sad when we lose people from Harvard, MIT, from the greatest schools and lesser schools that are phenomenal schools also," the former president said on "All-In," a podcast hosted by Silicon Valley investors. "But what I want to do, and what I will do, is you graduate from a college, I think you should get automatically as part of your diploma a green card to be able to stay in this country."

This is a terrific idea that politicians and wonks of all political stripes have proposed many times before.

After all, one of America's greatest advantages is its ability to attract global talent - people who study here and invest their skills in the land of opportunity. We don't have sufficient native-born talent to develop many of our "strategic" high-tech industries. For instance, international students compose about two-thirds of enrollment in electrical engineering and computer science graduate programs at U.S. universities, the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics reports.

Unfortunately, after we train the best and brightest from around the world, we make it exceptionally hard for them to remain here by capping the number of high-skilled visas available and setting country-specific quotas for green cards. This can unwittingly help our adversaries. As Trump put it in the podcast: "I know of stories where people graduated from a top college or from a college, and they desperately wanted to stay here. They had a plan for a company, a concept, and they can't. They go back to India. They go back to China. They do the same basic company in those places, and they become multibillionaires employing thousands and thousands of people, and it could have been done here."

This is all true. But, when he was president, Trump made the problem significantly worse. He (or aides such as Stephen Miller) implemented policies that further restricted skilled legal immigration and made the lives of these international workers and students a living hell.

Denial rates for new skilled-worker visas roughly quadrupled under Trump, from an average of about 7% in the five years before he took office to 29% in the first half of fiscal 2020. (Then, in mid-2020, a legal settlement forced the administration to stop many spurious denials.) Trump's appointees also made it much more difficult for skilled workers already here to renew their visas, adding red tape even when nothing about the workers' circumstances had changed.

Trump's immigration officials threw so much sand in the gears that visas were sometimes mailed out after they had already expired.

On other occasions, Trump officials determined that high-skilled immigrants' young children were "economic security" risks who must be barred from entry. His appointees were especially hostile to international students from China, despite Trump's recent lamentations that U.S. policies are driving bright would-be entrepreneurs back to China. Or if not China (or India), the Trump administration's various hostilities often drove talented immigrants to seek residency in Canada instead.

Trump's plans for a second term would likely be worse. In late 2020, Trump tried to implement even more restrictions on high-skilled immigration, including one that would have once again jacked up denial rates for skilled-worker visas. Perhaps most relevant: He sought to reduce how long STEM international students could work here after they graduated. (Fortunately, neither policy was successfully implemented before he left office.)

Republican lawmakers probably wouldn't stand in his way if he resumed this unfinished business. An early version of what would evolve into the Chips Act granted more green cards to immigrants with STEM doctorates from U.S. universities; Republicans killed the measure.

Why, then, did Trump make this new green-card promise (at least, until his campaign walked it back)?

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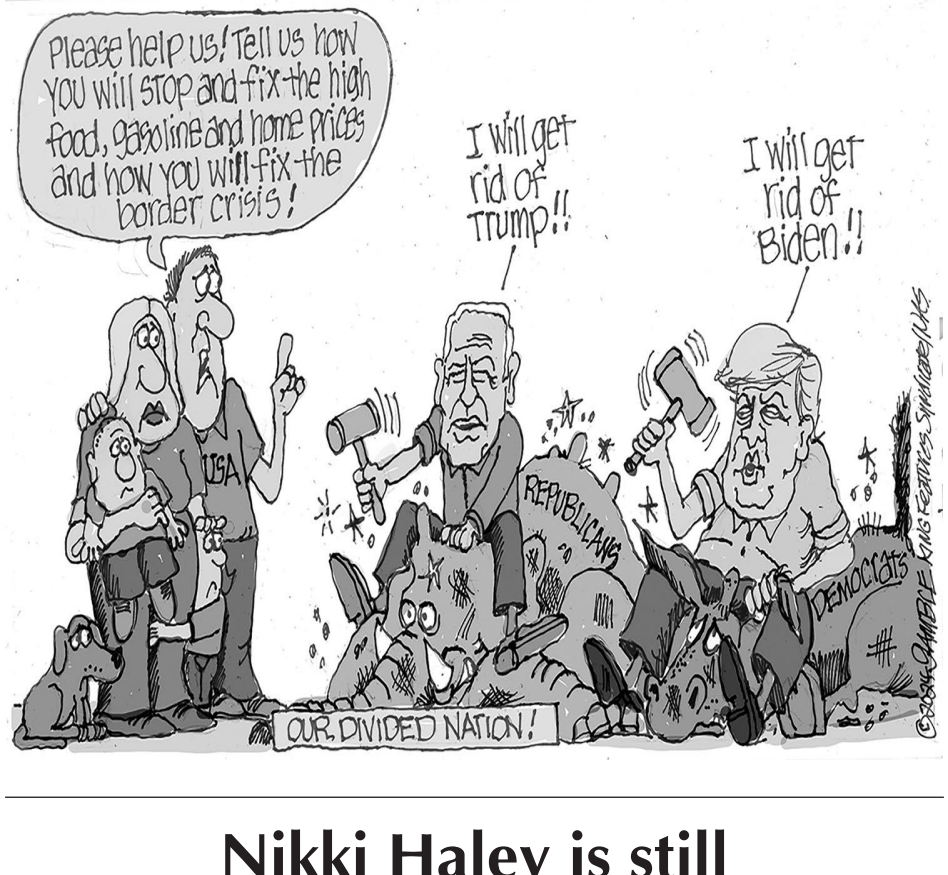
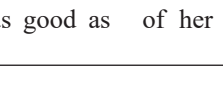


Nikki Haley is still the strongest VP pick

By Rich Lowry

As far as we know, Nikki Haley isn't on the shortlist, nor on the long list.

There's no indication that she's being considered as Donald Trump's VP pick, and Trump forcefully smacked down a report in Axios that the campaign was looking at her.



She'd still probably be the choice who, more than any other possible pick, would help Trump win in November.

By conventional rules, the former South Carolina governor getting the nod would be so obvious as to be completely unremarkable -- she's the runner-up in the nomination fight; she represents a different faction of the party; she provides demographic balance; she has executive and foreign-policy experience; and she's ready, to the extent this can be judged by resume and experience, to be president.

Paint-by-numbers politics would make her a top contender, if not a shoo-in. If, that is, she hadn't criticized Trump in harsh and personal terms during her primary campaign. It's one thing to criticize another candidate's tax plan; and another to say he's "diminished," "unhinged," "saying things that don't make sense," and "not qualified" to be president.

Any nominee would have a hard time swallowing those types of gibes, and Donald Trump is, shall we say, more sensitive to slights than most.

Trump gave as good as he got, turning what should have been a celebratory event the night he won the New Hampshire primary into an anti-Haley revival meeting.

All of this, though, is why her selection would be a shock and a potentially galvanizing moment in the campaign -- it would show Trump to be willing to forgive and forget and put aside his personal feelings in the cause of saving the country from a second Biden term.

It would be an extraordinary grace note from someone who the public doesn't expect it from (although Trump does fairly often bury the hatchet with former critics).

Both Haley and Trump would have explaining to do; Haley more than Trump. He could just say that campaigning is a tough business, and, sure, she said lots of tough things about him, but beating Biden is more important than dwelling on the past. Haley would be forced by the media to do word-by-word exegeses of all her Trump attacks. Her out would be explaining that, whatever she said about Trump, Biden is worse.

Picking Haley would be an olive branch to a small group of Republican-inclined voters who aren't ready to support Trump. It's possible to exaggerate the import of the "zombie" Haley vote in the GOP primaries, given that the zombie dynamic is a common one in primaries and a significant element of her support is coming from 2020 Biden voters. But she definitely has appeal to college-educated and suburban voters, with whom Trump is weak, and anything that helps at the margins could be decisive in a narrow race.

Going with Haley would open up some wallets. She has her own base within the donor class that would be enthused about her pick and newly determined to do whatever it takes to see the ticket prevail.

A downside is that she's a hate figure for the MAGA base. Trump, though, is the most important influence on what his supporters think.

Relatedly, there's the question of whether Trump could trust an emphatically pre-MAGA Republican who hasn't bent the knee in such a sensitive position. That'd be an issue. But Haley would have every incentive to be loyal, unless the wheels come off during the campaign or a second term -- and if the wheels come off, Haley's posture would be the least of Trump's troubles.

Maybe it'd be a shortsighted pick for Trump's governing purposes, but if it helps him prevail in November, how much does that matter? The Trump approach to life is to get through one obstacle before worrying about the next, and dealing with a vice president he's not enamored of when he's back in the White House would be a good problem to have.

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Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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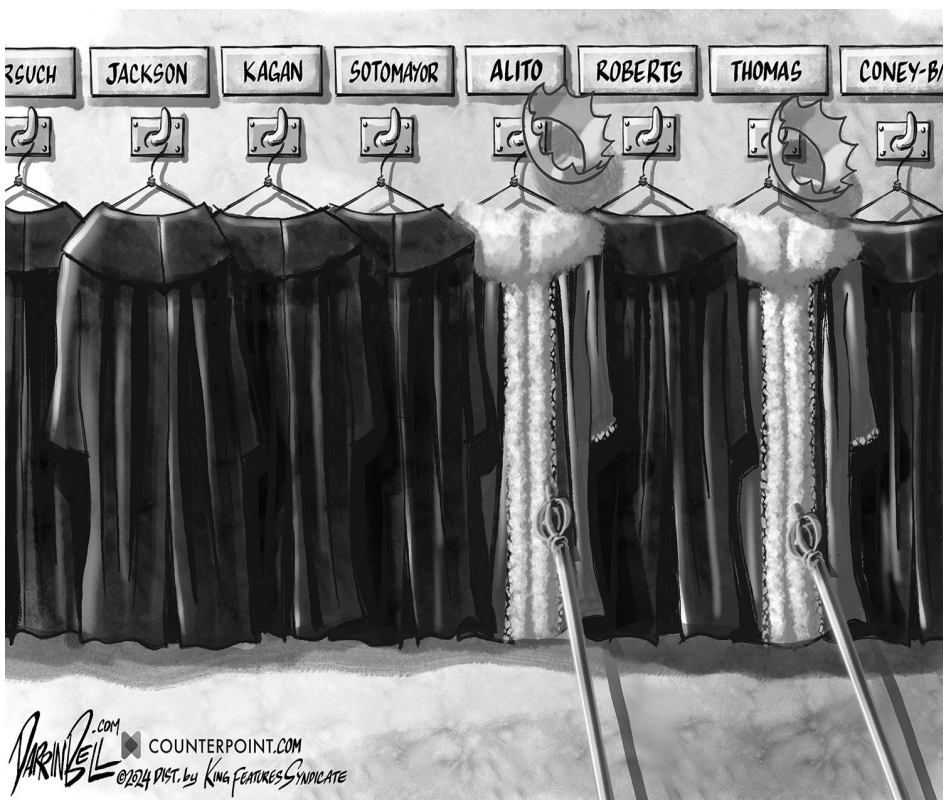

Contemplating Life

Allen W. Smith
Columnist

"A ship ought not to be held by one anchor, nor life by a single hope."

--Epictetus

Although most of us have many positive experiences as we travel life's journey, life is certainly not a bed of roses for any of us. In addition to the positive experiences, life also brings many disappointments. One way to minimize the pain that comes from disappointment is to avoid pinning all our hope on a single goal. Some things work out in life, and some things don't. Therefore, the more goals we have, and the more things we try, the greater the likelihood that we will have at least some successes.

None of us is born with just a single talent, and we can all be successful in more than one field of endeavor. It is okay to try to succeed in whatever field we choose, but we should not pin all our hopes on that endeavor, and we should be willing to change course if that becomes necessary.

The same is true of relationships with people. Those who have a best friend whom they can always count on are very fortunate indeed, but none of us should rely on a single person to meet all our emotional needs. First of all, no single person is capable of providing all the emotional support needed by another individual. Secondly, it is not fair to expect so much from one person.

We all need mutual support relationships with others. Family members, neighbors, friends and colleagues from work are all important in the lives of most individuals. We are all sailing the same ship of life, and we are all on our last voyage. We have a responsibility to our fellow human beings. We should always be willing to extend a helping hand to others just as we should be able to expect others to give us a hand when we are down.

We should be especially careful not to totally drain the batteries of others while recharging our own. Sometimes, some of us demand so much emotional support from a spouse, parent or adult child that we rob them of a life of their own. This is a special problem for some adult children whose parents expect them to devote so much time and emotional support to them that the children are prevented from having independent lives of their own. In loving families, there is mutual support between parents and their adult children, and neither demands more than the other is capable of giving. In the words of Abraham Lincoln, "Love is the chain by which to bind children to their parents." Unfortunately, in some cases, parents make demands on their adult children and use guilt as the mechanism of control. Likewise, some children make excessive demands on their parents.

We are given one life from God when we are born, and I believe God wants us to enjoy that life and to use it as best we can to make this a better world.

Think about it.

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-- Psalm 33:12

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