

The Delray Democrat

September 2023 (# 62)

Biden Has Gen Z's Back and They Have His

Michael K. Cantwell

Perhaps the best response to the pompous pronouncement by David Ignatius that [President Biden should not run again in 2024](#) was the one by a "Poster To Be Named Later":

"I think David Ignatius is TOO OLD TO BE WRITING THIS COLUMN!!!"

That really nails it, not only with respect to describing Ignatius but the other members of the So-Called Liberal Media who are unwittingly kneecapping Joe Biden's reelection with their obsessions about his age. They may be younger than Biden chronologically but they are far older in their imagining of what is possible.

To paraphrase Robert F. Kennedy, they are the men and women "who see things as they are," and say "why." Biden is the one who "dreams of things that never were, and says 'why not.'" Biden is younger at 81 than he was at 50.

They didn't believe Biden when he said he could work across the aisle, and for the record, neither did I. But Biden signed the following major bipartisan bills:

- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is the largest long-term investment in infrastructure and the economy in American history.
- The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is the first gun safety legislation in nearly three decades.
- The PACT Act is the biggest expansion of veterans' benefits in over three decades and provides medical care for veterans exposed to toxic chemicals.
- The CHIPS Act invests in microchip production to make America more competitive with China and reduce our reliance on foreign sources for a vital component used by the defense industry. The Act has already sparked \$200 billion in private investments in the United States.

Given the monolithic and malevolent opposition of a party that believes climate change is a "Chinese hoax," coupled with an evenly split Senate in which DINOs Krysten Sinema and Joe Manchin each held their own sword of Damocles, no one thought that even a stripped-down "Green New Deal" could pass, but Biden signed the largest investment in Green Energy in the history of the country.

In the year since its enactment, that bill has added [170,600](#) clean energy jobs and is [projected](#) to add 9 million jobs in the next decade. That is the art of the possible.

Continuing to Build Back Better

Just this past week Biden announced two initiatives that will better the lives and futures of Gen Z. The first is the American Climate Corps ("ACC"), something that had been stripped from Biden's legislative wish-list after Joe Manchin attacked it as "a waste of money and "pure socialist wish fulfillment."

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Modeled on Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s famed Civilian Conservation Corps and established by executive action, the ACC will employ and train 20,000 people “for good-paying careers in the clean energy and climate resilience economy.”

According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the median salary for green-energy jobs ranged between \$63,750 and \$84,030 in 2021, versus \$45,760 across all jobs.

But the ACC is not simply (or even principally) about “good jobs.” It represents President Biden’s commitment to the generations that will otherwise inherit a planet that is on life support.

Gun violence is another issue that has a wildly disproportionate impact on Gen Z. Since the mass shooting at Columbine High School in 1999, more than 356,000 students have experienced gun violence at schools in 386 school shootings. Cries of “we must do something” were followed by years of doing nothing.

On Friday, September 23, 2023, Biden did something. He announced the formation of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention. The Office will be headed by Vice President Kamala Harris, who pursued gun safety measures when she served as Attorney General of California. It flows from legislation introduced in the House this March by Representative Maxwell Alejandro Frost and co-sponsored by Senators Chris Murphy and Richard Blumenthal.

Representative Frost (FL-D) is the youngest member of Congress and the first from Gen Z. He explained the importance In his comments introducing President Biden, he explained:

As the youngest member of the United States Congress and the first member from Gen Z, I’m often asked what got me involved in this work, and the answer is quite simple. I didn’t want to get shot in school.”

Gen Z Has Biden’s Back

A recent [CBS News Poll](#) in which Biden trails Trump by 1 point is being trumpeted by the SCLM as evidence that voters think Biden is too old. It’s not the first time the SCLM has attempted to justify its obsession with Biden’s age by claiming that it is merely reporting what voters think.

This is disingenuous, for, as the SCLM well knows, it creates as much as it reports on voter attitudes . . . not only about Biden’s age but about inflation and even the economy, “[It’s the Media, Stupid.](#)”

In fact, it seems the SCLM cares more about attracting eyeballs and making a horse race of an election that should be a no-brainer than it cares than educating readers or saving our democracy.

Unmentioned by the SCLM with respect to this poll is the fact that the younger the voter, the greater the support for Biden.

	<30	30-44	45-64	65+
Biden	65%	56%	44%	42%
Trump	35%	44%	55%	58%

Perhaps Gen Z and Millennials are less concerned with Biden’s age and more impressed with his achievements and priorities than the loudest voices in the SCLM. This cohort came of age under the last three presidents and watched the country lurch from an inspiring intellectual to a malignant moron to a healer with a heart.

The Bottom Line

Joe Biden deserves a second term. He has earned it. He has been the greatest president since Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He has accomplished more with less than any president in this or the last century (including FDR). No Democrat alive today could have done a better job and no Democrat alive today would do a better job of governing over the next four years. In short, Biden deserves to Finish the Job.

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We’re also always looking for writers (remember, you don’t have to live in Delray Beach to read or write for *The Delray Democrat*. Send submissions to editor@thedelraydemocrat.com.

Republicans Worry They'll Be Blamed for Shutting Down the Government

Michael K. Cantwell

As we approach the 2024 presidential election, the So-Called Liberal Media has apparently forgotten all it learned from having unwittingly helped to elect Donald Trump in 2016.

Its coverage of his ruinous presidency was some penance, but if Trump ends up winning a second term they may find that there is some bite behind Trump's barking that they are enemies of the people.

Fortunately the SCLM is always on the lookout for the next big story, and nothing is bigger than another government shutdown caused by Republicans, followed by the absurd "impeachment inquiry."

The irony is that even Republicans know how ludicrous they appear as they work hard to remind the public why they are incapable of governing themselves let alone a dog pound.

With the government set to shut down by the end of the month unless a budget or a continuing resolution is passed, the Orwellian-named Freedom Caucus is busy exacting revenge on Kevin McCarthy for negotiating a debt ceiling deal with Biden that they now understand was a triumph for Biden.

Not only has there been no movement on the budget, but the nihilists in the Freedom Caucus have blocked consideration of even a Pentagon spending

bill while the unhinged Tommy Tuberville is single-handedly blocking routine military promotions.

It seems increasingly likely that they will cause a government shutdown because, well, they can, and they are nihilists who want to burn everything down. As to the consequences, they don't care how it will blow back on them because, well, they are nihilists and nihilist are unconcerned with consequences.

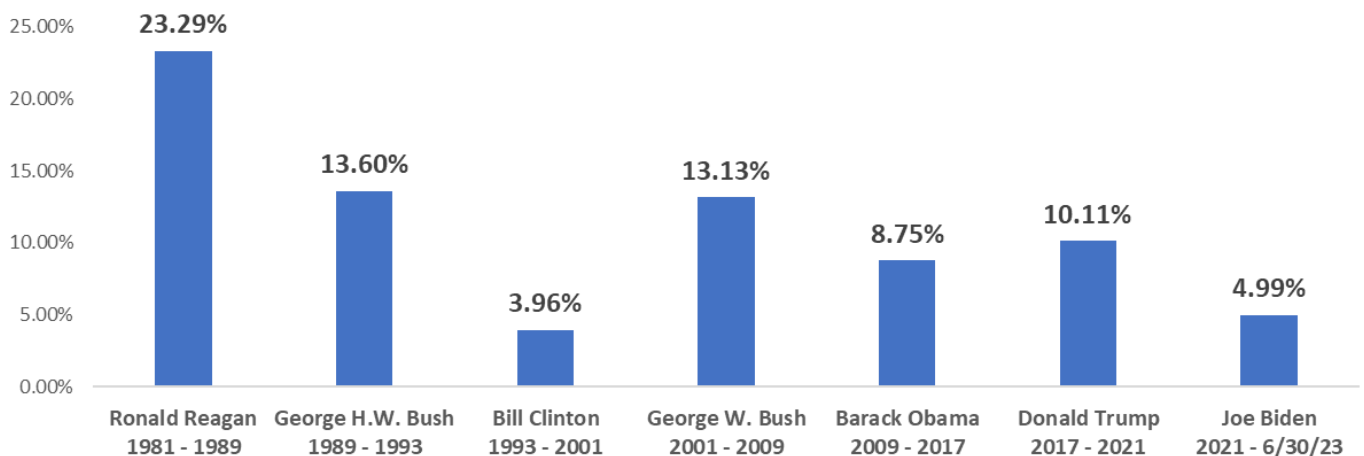
Other Republicans are (let us hope rightly worried). Mike Simpson whined, "We always get the blame. Name one time that we've shut the government down and we haven't got the blame." He's right of course, and the blame is well earned and deserved.

Even far-right Freedom Caucus member Chip Roy is warning his colleagues of the consequences. As he pithily put it:

I honestly don't know what to say to my fellow Republicans other than you're going to eat a shit sandwich and you probably deserve to eat it.

And then there's what is either the rank hypocrisy or appalling ignorance of Republicans who piously warn of the deficit, even as their party is responsible for the lion's share of the nation's outstanding debt (see below).

Annual Percentage Increase in Federal Debt By President



Source: [Treasury Department](#).

Letters By Our Members

Writing to local papers can influence NPAs and gives aid, comfort, and information to Democrats. Here is the latest crop from the board of *The Delray Democrat* and members of Democratic Club of Delray Beach.

Consistency Is a Virtue, but Not When You're Always Wrong

Gov. DeSantis rejected \$377 million in federal funds from the successful Inflation Reduction Act that would have benefited Florida residents by giving them energy-efficiency funding, even as we experience record-setting heat.

This is unusual even for an ultra right-wing Republican because they usually accept the money

and claim the credit while opposing the bill that provided it. It's really the same thing as the Republican opposition to expanding Medicaid, which would have saved lives and the health of low-income Floridians using federal funds. Consistency is a virtue but not when you're always wrong."

David Kulick, *Palm Beach Post*, August 23, 2023

'Safe Place' Designation Has Historical Precedent

Thanks to Scott Maxwell for his excellent, to-the-bone, report on the Republicans' hypocritical response to the kindness of strangers (Aug. 30). The Mount Dora businesses' use of rainbow stickers to alert the LGBTQ+ community to emergency shelter is to be applauded.

The use of symbols as beacons of shelter goes back to biblical times. When Pharaoh ordered the Israelites' first-born to be slaughtered, the Jews were told to mark their door posts with lamb's blood so the Angel of Death would pass over their homes and

spare their children.

The stickers are also reminiscent of the Underground Railroad, when people put out "signs," including quilts stitched with codes, to alert runaway slaves to places of shelter.

It's President Donald Trump, Gov. Ron DeSantis and their acolytes, forging division and hate, who created the need for such stickers in the first place."

June S. Neal, *Orlando Sentinel*, August 30, 2023

Biden Impeachment Inquiry? Bring It On

Donald Trump has given congressional Democrats many gifts. The clear and present danger he posed to our republic helped Democrats flip the House in 2018, seize the Senate in 2020 and prevent a red wave in 2022.

As Trump's minions force the hapless and craven House Speaker Kevin McCarthy to launch an impeachment investigation, Trump is now helping Democrats to flip the House and hold the Senate in 2024.

How? Even if Republicans have the votes to impeach, something Trump will demand, they will lack the votes to convict.

Moreover, Republicans in swing congressional districts will be put in an impossible position. They can vote to impeach despite what is certain to be the lack of any credible evidence, in which case they will lose all but the crazy vote next November. Or they can vote against impeachment and suffer the same fate as former Rep. Liz Cheney. Senate Republicans will face a similar Hobson's choice if Biden is impeached. As a result, Democrats will hold the Senate and pick up enough seats to flip the House. Thank you in advance, Mr. Trump.

Michael K. Cantwell, *Sun Sentinel*, September 20, 2023

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A Century of Republican Incompetence and Racism Versus Democratic Competence and Inclusion

Michael K. Cantwell

Republicans Cause the Great Depression Democrats Create the Safety Net

1929-1932: Republicans control both Congress and the White House in 1929 as the country careens into the Great Depression. The government does nothing to alleviate suffering as unemployment reaches 25% and millions become homeless: "Hoover feared that providing direct aid to people in need would cause them to lose their incentive to work hard."

The next two times Republicans will control both Congress and the White House will be in the runup to George W. Bush's Great Recession and after the election of Donald Trump.

1933-1944: FDR announces a "New Deal" that includes a massive public works program, a "safety net" for desperate Americans, and regulation of the economic titans that caused the Great Depression. In his final State of the Union, FDR explains "that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence" and proposes a [Second Bill of Rights](#).

"We cannot be content, no matter how high that general standard of living may be, if some fraction of our people—whether it be one-third or one-fifth or one-tenth—is ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed, and insecure." The dream dies with FDR's death 2 months later.

Democrats Expand the Safety Net Republicans Resort to Red-Baiting and Racism

1964: Democrats pass Medicare and Medicaid. Ronald Reagan, shilling for the AMA, warns that if Medicare passes, "you and I are going to spend our sunset years telling our children, and our children's children, what it once was like in America when men were free."

1964-1965: Democrats pass the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. LBJ warns "we have lost the South for a generation." It is a gross underestimate.

1968: Dick Nixon launches his "Southern Strategy," using racist dog whistles to capture the presidency.

1981-1992: Reagan opens his campaign with an appeal to "States Rights" in the same Mississippi county where the Klan murdered Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney. He promotes racist tropes: "welfare queens driving Cadillacs" and "strapping young bucks buying T-bone steaks with Food Stamps." Bush follows suit with Willie Horton. The Solid South flips, the Raw Deal replaces the New Deal, and the federal debt quadruples

1993-2001: Bill Clinton raises taxes and creates 23 million jobs during his tenure. The annual budget shows a surplus for his last three years in office.

Democrats Keep Fixing Republicans Messes

2001-2008: George W. Bush ignores CIA warnings regarding Osama bin Laden. He invades Afghanistan and comers but loses bin Laden in the mountains. He launches a \$3-trillion war against Iraq based on lies and in violation of international law. He spies on Americans unlawfully. He doubles the federal debt.

He signs two tax cuts benefitting the wealthiest Americans. He tries but fails to privatize Social Security. He bungles the response to Katrina. He lets banksters run wild and they cause the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, Four million Americans lose their jobs and 10 million (disproportionately POC) lose their homes.

2009-2016: Republicans monolithically oppose Barack Obama's efforts to repair the economy. Only three Republican vote for The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It averts a second Great Depression, but another 4 million jobs are lost before the economy begins to recover. The U.S. credit rating is downgraded and the government shut down in phony debt ceiling crises engineered by Republicans. Still, 11 million jobs added by Obama

Democrats pass the Affordable Care Act, insuring 20 million previously uninsured Americans and saving tens of thousands of lives. Bin Laden is killed.

2016-2020, Behold the Beast: Dismissed as a joke by the craven, clueless corporate media, Donald Trump presides over the most ruinous presidency in American history. His single legislative achievement is a tax cut for plutocrats and multinationals. Inheriting the greatest postwar expansion, he adds nearly as much debt in 4 years as Obama added in 8. His incompetent response to COVID exacerbates the death toll and plunges the country into a Second Great Depression. He loses 9.3 million jobs in his final year, becoming the first president to preside over a net job loss during his tenure.

2021-23: Democrats pass the American Recovery Plan and Inflation Reduction Act without any Republican votes. Biden signs the largest infrastructure bill in decades, the first gun safety legislation in nearly three decades; the biggest expansion of veterans' benefits in over three decades, and an investment in microchip production to make America more competitive with China.

Biden adds 13 million jobs in 30 months (a monthly average double that of Clinton and triple that of Reagan), unemployment flirts with its lowest rate in 54 years, and Black unemployment drops to its lowest level ever.

Are We Headed Toward Privatizing Education in Florida?*

June S. Neal

You have to give it to him. Gov. Ron DeSantis' scheme to weaken our public schools in favor of increased private, religious and home schooling has worked. As expected, when he eliminated income restrictions on school vouchers, there was a surge in applicants this summer. Heck, even wealthy folks can have the state pick up the tab for all or part of their children's private schooling.

Florida may be on the trajectory toward total privatization of our public schools.

What was originally a strategy to help poor children exit failing schools is now a dark design to destroy public education, supplant it with private schools, and bill the taxpayers.

June S. Neal of Delray Beach is a former columnist for the *As* of Aug. 18, 2023, school vouchers, officially the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program, siphoned off 407,000 students from our public schools while the rest of the 430,000 applications were being reviewed and more were coming in. DeSantis called this "... a monumental increase over last year's enrollment of nearly 250,000 students."

It's also a monumental decrease in funding for public education.

If it appears to be an incongruent strategy by a governor who frequently praises Florida's public education, it is. But it's also political insurance against fallout from both sides. DeSantis aims for positive media coverage of his public-school governance, while he simultaneously props up substandard institutions that use the same Christian nationalist playbook he thinks will advance him to the presidency.

Vouchers have a shameful past. In the 1950s and '60s, Southern states used them to skirt the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision that declared school segregation unlawful. The result was white flight to private schools, paid for with vouchers that drained taxes from the wretched public schools the Black children were left in. Vouchers were nothing more than Jim Crow in a new shirt.

DeSantis is using them for a different kind of segregation — severing his straight, white Christian philosophy from our modern democratic ethos.

Floridians are facing an existential threat to their schools and their democracy. The Education Law Center warns: "Already underfunded public school districts will be financially gutted. The potential for harm to local public-school districts, which serve most Florida students, is extreme."

And so is the harm to our kids.

A years-long investigation by the Orlando Sentinel and reviews by major independent organizations found too many voucher schools offer a substandard education.

Reporters uncovered mostly Christian-based curricula, much of which was anti-science, anti-LGBTQ, racially biased and almost completely unregulated.

DeSantis has already deformed Florida's public education with his racist, homophobic legislation. And private, religious schools (we don't have enough information on home schools) are fertile spots to indoctrinate even more students with his straight, white and Christian ethos. "For the 2023 school year, there are 1,448 religiously affiliated private schools serving 298,720 students in Florida," according to Private School Review.

The Sentinel reported, "Some private schools in Florida that rely on public funding teach students that dinosaurs and humans lived together, that God's intervention prevented Catholics from dominating North America and that slaves who 'knew Christ' were better off than free men who did not."

The reporters found, "The books are rife with religious and political opinions on ... abortion, gay rights. They disparage religions other than Protestant Christianity and cultures other than those descended from white Europeans." And yet, as of February 2023, only 27.2% of students using the voucher program are white. Further, 81.4% of the schools accepting vouchers are officially religious.

(Continued on page 7)

*As published in the [Orlando Sentinel](#), September 17, 2023.

(Continued from page 6)

And the vouchers are supporting actively anti-LGBT schools. In 2020, “14% of Florida’s nearly 147,000 scholarship students attended private schools where homosexuality was condemned or, at a minimum, unwelcome,” reporters discovered. Several private schools that received millions of dollars in vouchers promoted conversion therapy for LGBTQ students.

So, besides bigotry, what else are taxpayers getting for their money?

Lack of accountability in unregulated schools, for one. “Private elementary and secondary schools in Florida are not licensed, approved, accredited or regulated” by the state, according to the Florida Department of Education.”

The arbitrary appropriation of money is also crippling our schools. In 2021, the Southern Poverty Law Center found: “No state comes close to Florida in the allocation of public funds to private schools ... decreasing per pupil funding by 12% from \$9,799 to \$8,628 while the rest of the country’s schools increased their spending by 9.6%.” Florida ranks “seventh from the bottom of all states in per pupil funding at \$9,346.”

Public education is fundamental to democracy. It’s the nation’s singular institution structured to cohere a hugely heterogenous population into Americans. Whatever deficits our schools have should be fixed with the tax dollars we are now diverting to private schools that are operating on principles most Americans have worked for decades to eradicate.

What We’re Reading

Michael Rothbaum, *Ron DeSantis Is Destroying Florida’s New College Just Because He Can*, [The Nation](#): “Raised in Orlando and the beach town of Dunedin, and with degrees from Yale and Harvard Law, DeSantis embodies a certain kind of ham-fisted privilege assumed by a burgeoning cadre of people who literally have everything—money, status, titles, access—but somehow remain unsatisfied. Instead, they have to take the little that you have. Not because they need it or even want it, but just to show you that they can. The only logic relevant to them is the logic of force.”

Pamela Paul, [The Borking of Joe Biden](#), *New York Times*: “As Kevin McCarthy announced the impeachment inquiry, you could almost see his wispy soul sucked out Dementor-style, joining whatever ghostly remains of Paul Ryan’s abandoned integrity still wander the halls of Congress. But this isn’t the first time we’ve witnessed this kind of sorry perversion of Democratic precedent. What Democrats do first in good faith, Republicans repeat in bad faith. Time and again, partisan steps that Democrats take with caution are transmogrified into extraordinary retaliation by Republicans.”

Worth Quoting

“Instead of working on legislation to promote the common good or even just keep the government running, House Republicans are weaponizing their offices and exploiting congressional power and resources to promote debunked and outlandish conspiracy theories about President Biden.” Jamie Raskin

“Beijing and Moscow are working together to make the world safe for autocracy,” Anthony J. Blinken, [speech](#) to Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. .

"The American people are getting a front row seat at the circus that Speaker Kevin McCarthy and extremists in the Republican party are unleashing on our country," [Maxwell Frost](#).

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Editorial Board: Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Char Lane (Managing Editor), Sandra Elaisen-Cantwell, David Kulick, and June Neal.

Thank a Democrat

1964 Civil Rights Act	Food Stamp Act	National Science Foundation Act
1965 Voting Rights Act	Freedom of Information Act	National Voter Registration Act (a.k.a) Motor Voter Act
Affordable Care Act	GI Bill of Rights	Social Security Act
AmeriCorps	Medicare and Medicaid	Unemployment Compensation Act
CDC	Minimum Wage Act	Workers Compensation Act
Family and Medical Leave Act	National Labor Relations Act	

Thank Joe Biden

American Rescue Plan Act, Signed March 11, 2021

- Provided \$1,400 to every taxpayer and each of his or her dependents
- Expanded coverage and reduced premiums under the Affordable Care Act for 9 million Americans.
- Expanded and extended unemployment benefits.
- Increased SNAP benefits
- Increased and expanded Child Tax Credit, representing the largest investment in child care assistance since World War II
- Increased the Earned Income Tax Credit for frontline workers who helped their communities through the COVID crisis
- Invested \$160 billion to provide supplies and vaccines to combat COVID's heavy toll
- Distributed \$360 billion in emergency funding for local governments to help keep front line public workers on the job and paid
- Provided emergency grants and loans to hard-hit small businesses
- Established a special sign-up period for the Affordable Care Act, adding 800,000 previously uninsured to the ranks of the insured.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Signed November 15, 2021

- The largest federal investment in public transit
- The largest federal investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak
- The single largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system
- The largest investment in clean drinking water and waste water infrastructure in American history, delivering clean water to millions of families
- Ensures every American has access to reliable high-speed internet
- Helps us tackle the climate crisis by making the largest investment in clean energy transmission and EV infrastructure in history; electrifying thousands of school and transit buses across the country; and creating a new Grid Deployment Authority to build a resilient, clean, 21st century electric grid

Inflation Reduction Act, Signed August 16, 2022

- Invests \$369 billion in energy security and fighting climate change
- Invests \$64 billion to extend Affordable Care Act subsidies
- Authorizes Medicare to negotiate with drug companies
- Provides an additional \$80 billion to the IRS for tax modernization and enforcement, which is estimated to reduce the deficit by recovering as much as \$203.7 billion from tax cheats
- Closes tax loopholes by imposing a 15% minimum tax payment on companies with over \$1 billion of income and a 1% excise tax on stock buybacks
- Expands Medicare benefits: provides free vaccines (2023), caps insulin costs at \$35/month (2023) and caps out-of-pocket drug costs to an estimated \$4,000 or less in 2024, settling at \$2,000 in 2025
- Provides \$4 billion for drought resiliency in western states

More Letters From Our Members

Keep Trump (the Gift that keeps Giving) on the Ballot

Citing Section 3 of the 14th Amendment to bar Trump from running was first floated after the Jan. 6 committee hearings exposed the depths of his attempts to overthrow the election. It was generally regarded as unlikely to succeed.

For one, it's unclear whether Trump would be considered among "former officers of the United States." Second, he could argue that drafters of the amendment intended "insurrection or rebellion" to apply only to sustained battlefield war. That's a stretch, given the plain meaning of Section 3, but the ultimate interpreter of the language would be the Supreme Court, three of whose members were appointed by Trump and six of whom are conservative Republicans.

Things have changed this year, however. After four indictments, each one increasingly damning, Trump is not only unelectable, but his nomination is likely to cause a level of down-ballot destruction not seen since 1964. It's hardly surprising that two Federalist Society professors authored a report claiming that the 14th Amendment applies to Trump, nor would it be surprising to see the Supreme Court agree. They've all gotten what they needed from Trump.

With Trump, loyalty is a one-way street. It would be satisfying to see him hoisted on his own petard. Still, I hope he is not barred from the ballot. It might be the only way we can save both our democracy and our planet.

Michael K. Cantwell, *Sun-Sentinel*, September 1, 2023

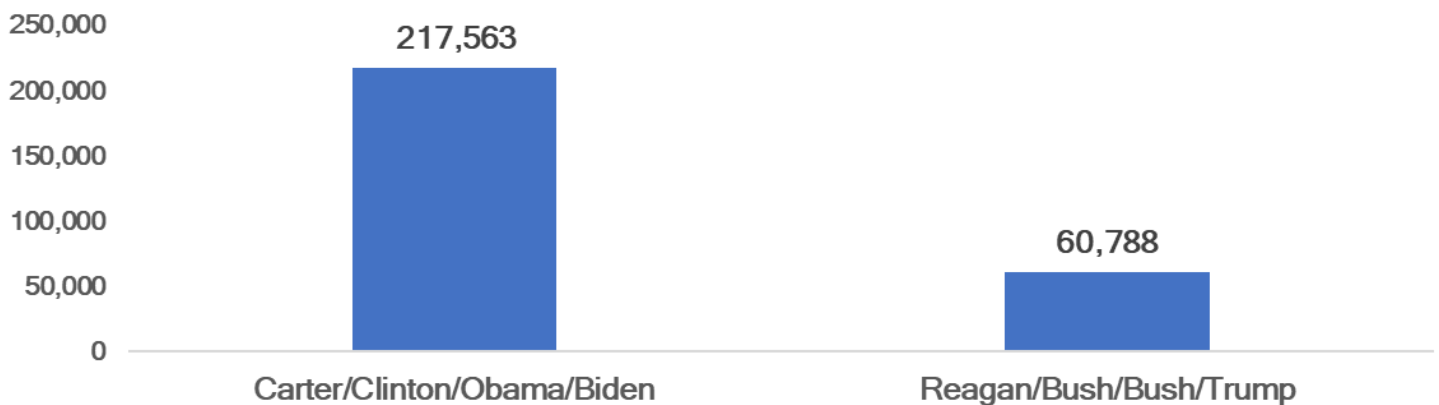
Weaponizing Government

It was not 'weaponizing government' to impeach a president for threatening to delay the delivery of congressionally approved military armaments unless a foreign leader opened an investigation into Joe Biden. It was not 'weaponizing government' to impeach a president for leading a violent revolt to prevent the democratically approved transfer of power to Joe Biden. It was not 'weaponizing government' to indict Mr. Trump for refusing to return classified documents illegally taken when he was finally forced to vacate his office. It was not 'weaponizing government' to indict Mr. Trump for demanding that Georgia's secretary of state 'find' him enough votes to overturn the election results in that state.

Republicans have been looking for years for what the hapless and craven Kevin McCarthy calls a 'culture of corruption' surrounding the Biden family. They have found none, nor will they. Accordingly, there is no better example of 'weaponizing government' than the decision to open a doomed 'impeachment inquiry' simply to placate the quivering mass of grievances and failures that is Donald Trump.

Michael K. Cantwell, *Palm Beach Post*, September 16, 2023

Monthly Job Gains Under Democrats More Than Triple Those Under Republicans



“Oh, You Can’t Scare Me, I’m Sticking with the Union”

Michael K. Cantwell

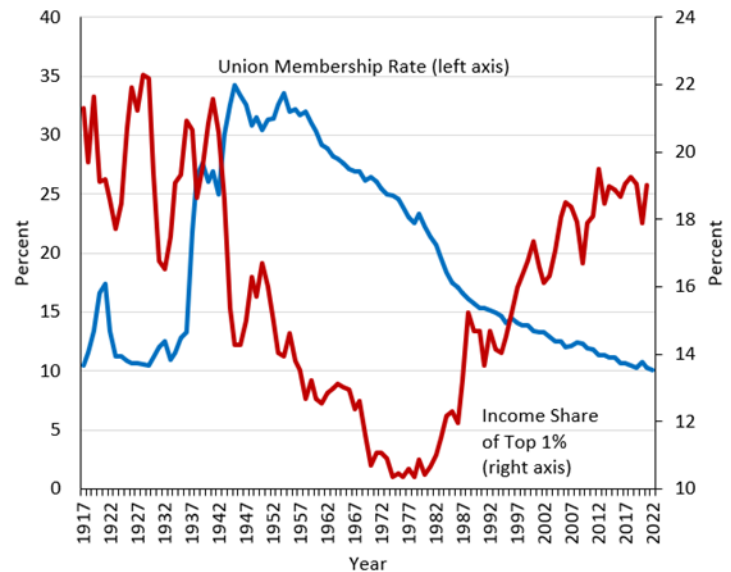
When Woody Guthrie wrote *Union Maid* in June 1940, more than 30% of American workers belonged to unions. The right to unionize was won only after a century of bloody battles in which workers were beaten by Pinkertons and thugs hired by factory owners.

In 1935, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act (“NLRA”). Part of FDR’s New Deal, it gave employees the right to form and join unions and required employers to bargain collectively with unions selected by a majority of the employees.

Unions helped create an American middle class that was the envy of the world. They reduced inequality because “they raised wages more for low- and middle-wage workers than for higher-wage workers, more for blue-collar than for white-collar workers, and more for workers who do not have a college degree. more for low- and middle-wage.” They also benefitted non-union workers in the same and related industries by setting a benchmark for employers anxious to avoid unionization efforts.

The converse is true as well. Union membership peaked in 1954 at 35 percent. By 1983 it had dropped to 20.1 percent and in 2022 it was 10.1 percent, according to data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The inverse relationship between union membership and concentration of wealth at the [top](#) is evident in a chart included in a report recently issued by the Treasury Department. The tripling in union membership (blue line) that followed the creation of the NLRB was accompanied by a similar decline in the income share of the top 1 percent (red [line](#)).



How Did This Happen?

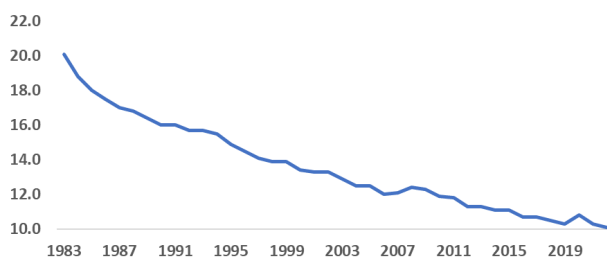
That’s what George W. Bush asked his Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson after the Banksters crashed the economy in 2008. As Paulson later recalled in his [memoir](#), “It was a humbling question for someone from the financial sector to be asked – after all, we were the ones responsible.”

What happened? Many factors were cited in symposium published by the [Institute for International Economics](#): increased competition, both domestic and international; additional members of workforce (white-collar, Southern, and women) less favorable to unions; deregulation of transportation industries; decline in pro-union attitudes among workers and increased resistance by employers to unions.

Resistance by employers seems to be the principal cause, aided and abetted by government hostility to unions, with the principal villain being the genial snake-oil salesman who became our fortieth president and quickly set about replacing FDR’s New Deal with his own Raw Deal.

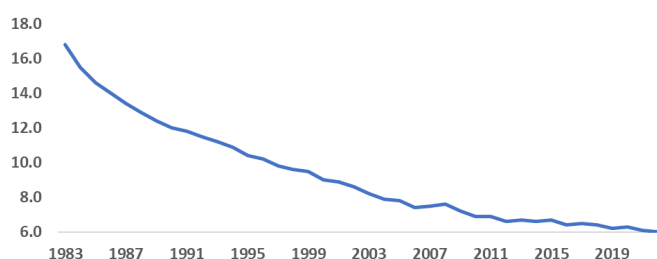
(Continued on page 11)

Union Membership: Private Plus Government



Membership in private sector unions fell even more dramatically over that period, from 16.8 to 6.0 percent during the years between 1983 and 2022:

Union Membership in Private Industry



(Continued from page 10)

Overpaid CEOs were lionized as they cheated, squeezed, and discarded workers, many of whom continued to vote Republican because Reagan's racist tropes effectively misdirected their anger. Reagan stood on its head the philosophy that had taken America from the Great Depression to the Great Society: We are all in this together. Government became a dirty word while [greed](#) was celebrated.

The Good News: Unions Are on the Rebound

The [National Labor Relations Board](#) reports that the number of union representation elections increased nearly 60 percent in 2022. Moreover, a rule change recently promulgated by the NLRB will eliminate some of the dirty tricks companies employ to defeat unions.

Previously employers undermined unionization drives by firing organizers, delaying the election, bombarding employees with disinformation, and engaging in other illegal tactics. After they won the election, they were given slaps on the wrist. Under the new rule, such tactics are punished by the immediate recognition of the union.

As part of its Work and Education Survey, Gallup has been polling attitudes toward unions since 1936, and support for unions in 2022 was the highest since the mid-1960s.

In addition, the Center for American Progress reports that support for unions has reached a level not seen

since the 1960s. Although support for unions is over 50% for all generation cohorts, the support increases with each subsequent generational cohort:

Gen Zers are the most supportive of unions, with a mean approval rating of 64.3, compared with 60.5 for Millennials, 57.8 for Gen Xers, and 57.2 for Baby Boomers.

Moreover, and perhaps contributing to this trend, each generation is increasingly diverse: "While 75.5 percent of Baby Boomers and 65.2 percent of Gen Xers are white, according to 2020 ANES data, only 59 percent of Millennials and 52.4 percent Gen Zers are white." The racists who chant "You will not replace us," are fighting a losing battle. Like them, I have spent my life in the majority, but unlike them, I do look forward to being replaced.

[A recent report](#) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics highlights the benefits of union membership, citing the following data from September 2022:

- Union workers earn (salary + benefits) \$53.20 [per](#) hour (versus \$38.37 for non-union workers).
- Nearly all (96%) union members have access to health care coverage, versus only 64% for non-union workers.
- Union members have nearly six times (64% versus 11%) the access to guarantee to defined benefit plans, which guarantee a predictable income during retirement.

How the SCLM Resembles Frank Drebin of Police Squad

Michael K. Cantwell

Naked Gun 33½ ends with a hilarious sequence during which Lt. Frank Drebin solidifies his status as the archetypical schlemiel. Chasing a criminal at the Academy Awards, he ends up on stage with a group of male dancers accompanying a performance by Pia Zadora.

In one routine, the dancers line up and spread their legs and, one by one, the last in line slides through all the legs and pops out in front of the line. When it's his turn, Drebin follows suit but fails to realize he should lower his head as he slides through. When he emerges in front, he sees that all the dancers are grabbing their crotches in pain. Thinking that it's part of the act, he does the same.

That's what I think of when I see the SCLM attempting to rationalize its obsession with Biden's age by insisting it is simply reporting on what Americans are thinking. The difference between Drebin and the SCLM is that he had no idea of his responsibility for the destruction he had wrought whereas the SCLM remains in denial and seems prepared to reprise its role.

2023 Membership

Char Lane

Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as *The Delray Democrat*, our meetings, other working supplies and signage for our sign waving events. **Meetings are at 7 PM on the third Thursday of each month at the Palm Beach County Democratic Party office, located in the Congress Office Park, 220 Congress Park Drive, Suite 140, in Delray Beach.** Our meetings are hybrid so you can also join via zoom. Meeting notices include zoom links to register for or join the meeting and links to our various websites.

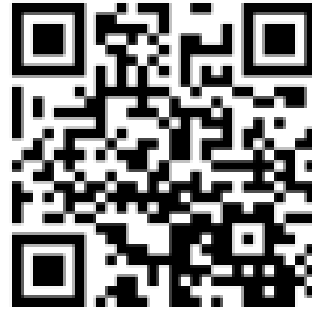
Our goal is to educate people as to the importance of voting, why they should vote Democratic and why they should use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. We'll have to work hard to help keep our democracy intact and protect it from the manifesting lunacy.

Getting out the vote is our most important mission. You can help by writing postcards, making phone calls, texting, canvassing or becoming a precinct leader. You can register people to vote and help people sign up to vote by mail. You can volunteer for projects to benefit the community. There's so much to do between now and November 2024.

If you're a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach and haven't yet renewed, please do so. If you're not a member of the Club, please consider joining.

Please visit us at www.demclubofdelray.org.
Read our monthly publication *The Delray Democrat* at www.thedelraydemocrat.com.
Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/992741928168620>.

Become a member of the DCDB by completing and mailing the below application or going to <https://www.demclubofdelray.org/membership> or scanning the QR code below. You can also give me your membership application/renewal at our meetings.



Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2023 Membership Application and Renewal

Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Name/names of household members _____

Address _____

Community/Condo Name _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone number _____

(E-mail addresses are shared with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party so our members will be kept abreast of the latest County Democratic Activity. If you do not wish to receive this information, please initial here _____ and we will not share your E-mail address.)

Preferred method of contact: E-mail _____ Mail _____ Phone _____ Text _____

Send newsletter by: E-mail _____ Hand delivery _____ U.S. Mail _____

I/we are in South Florida from _____ to _____ each year or are a permanent resident _____.

Payment: Individual \$25 _____ Household \$35 _____ Donation _____

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to P.O. Box 8224, Delray Beach, FL 33484. Thank you and welcome to our Club.

