

Community Comment
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Presidential Spectacle

Since I was first able to cast a vote for President, I have always been very comfortable with the selection process that brought us our nominees. In my adult life, these people have had the experience, the personal qualities, their respective history in their political party, and the ability to command the donors to finance their campaigns. As a Democrat, I've been mostly loyal to the party because it best represents my goals and vision for how our government should govern. I should say that I'm not an idealogue, instead I tend to be a guy that will support good ideas that seek to solve the issues that we face. I think good governing requires consultation and compromise between both parties and other stakeholder groups to successfully create and implement a law that works. In other words, working across the aisle in congress is a value.

Since the 60's, I've seen good government ebb and flow. I've never fully agreed with our Democratic Presidents nor have I fully disagreed with our Republican Presidents. Sometimes party politics, from either party, drives me nuts. Since the turn of this century, two political events have occurred that have served to erode my confidence in the Republican party and it's ability, even it's desire, to govern. The first was the Supreme Court's decision to involve itself in the selection of a president. Our democratic form of government relies on keeping the confidence of the voter to know that his or her vote will matter. In my opinion, the votes should have been counted in Florida and let the chips fall where they may. Bush didn't help my distrust when he bragged about the political capital he had from his victory. If ever there was a time for an honest attempt at governing from the center, this was it. He chose not to take this approach.

The other event had to do with the election of our first Black President. To have a group of Senate Republicans and others vow to make him a one term President and obstruct him on anything he proposes just to make him fail is nothing short of treason and is repugnant. Or perhaps it was just racist. Regardless, this is not how to govern a democratic republic. This latest refusal to even accept a nominee for the supreme court is the latest insult to our constitution and form of government. I always took pride in my serious look at both candidates for President. These activities have made it nearly impossible for me to take the Republican nominee seriously. And that makes me sad.

And then there is the side show that is the Republican primary. Donald Trump is the likely nominee according to the first few primary results. Next Tuesday will probably confirm that, but we'll see. What I hear when he speaks is how he will make the country great again. I think we live in a great country. He would build a wall at our border with Mexico and Get them to pay for it. How? He would disallow Muslims from coming in to the United States. So the Muslim religion is a terrorist organization? He says he can

negotiate better. The U.S. is one player of many in all our dealings with other nations. Does he really think it's that simple?

I ask my Republican friends to please ask the hard questions and demand from their candidates real ideas. I would like to have a real choice this November and know that while I may disagree with the policies of one party or the other, I can be assured of their competency. At this point, I can't say that.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.