NORTH AMERICA 19.10.2018 | Charles M. Blow

Liberals, this is war

What's at stake is much more than a single seat on the US Supreme Court

Read this article in German.

Yes, Brett Kavanaugh is on the Supreme Court. Rue the day. Rend your garments.

Then, step back, view the entirety of the battle in which you are engaged, and understand that Kavanaugh is just one part of a much larger plan by conservatives to fundamentally change the American political structure so that it enshrines and protects white male power even after America's changing demographics and mores move away from that power.

This, for them, is not simply a game about political passion and political principles. This is a game of power, pure and simple, and it's about whether the people who have long held that power will be able to retain it.

For them, Trump is just a useful idiot, a temporary anomaly.

They are thinking generationally, not in terms of the next election cycle but in terms of the next epoch.

Liberals can get so high-minded that they lose sight of the ground war. Yes, next month it is important to prove to the rest of Americans, and indeed the world, that Trump and the Republicans who promote and protect him are at odds with American values and with the American majority.

On one level this would provide relief and release for a pent-up demand by most Americans to be heard and to calm some of the chaos. But, catharsis is an emotional response and an emotional remedy.

The problem with the US Constitution

Liberals have to look beyond emotions, beyond reactionary electoral enthusiasm, beyond needing to fall in love with candidates in order to vote for them, beyond the coming election and toward the coming showdown.

For instance, the constant pining about justices who will interpret the 'original intent' of the Constitution feels far bigger than single issues like gun control.

The effort to demonise the lottery program is an effort to preserve America's white majority, against the statistical eventuality, for as long as possible.

In July, Leonard Leo, executive vice president of the 'constitutional originalist Federalist Society,' as RealClearPolitics phrased it, told Fox News:

'Any Supreme Court confirmation is transformative. This is a court that is often equally divided. At the end of the day, I think what's really important to remember is that there's been a movement on the court toward being more originalist and textualist. In other words, the idea that law means something, it has determinate meaning. And that's the trend that I think this president wants to continue.'

But, when I think of originalism, I think this: Many of the founders owned slaves; in the Constitution they viewed black people as less than fully human; they didn't want women or poor white men to vote. The founders, a bunch of rich, powerful white men, didn't want true democracy in this country, and in fact were dreadfully afraid of it.

Now, a bunch of rich, powerful white men want to return us to this sensibility, wrapped in a populist "follow the Constitution" rallying cry and disguised as the ultimate form of patriotism.

We have to learn to see everything around us, all that is happening on the political front, through that lens. This is what the extreme measures on illegal immigration and even the efforts to dramatically slash legal immigration are all about.

This is also what the demonising of the visa lottery program is all about. As the Pew Research Center pointed out in August: 'In fiscal 2017, which ended Sept. 30, the largest number of visas went to citizens of African countries' while applicants from European countries and from

Asia received fewer visas than before.

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A constitutional convention?

That is also what voter disenfranchisement and Citizens United are about. That is why conservatives cheer the moves by young liberals to densely populated cities. The move weakens conservative votes in the places they move to and strengthens it in places they move from.

Folks, Kavanaugh is only one soldier, albeit an important one, in a larger battle. Stop thinking you're in a skirmish, when you're at war.

As The Washington Post pointed out in 2016, 'In the Electoral College, each individual Wyoming vote weighs 3.6 times more than an individual Californian's vote.' The Post continued, 'That's the most extreme example, but if you average the 10 most populous states and compare the power of their residents' votes to those of the 10 least populous states, you get a ratio of 1 to 2.5.'

But probably the biggest, gutsiest move is the call for a constitutional convention.

There are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed: One is by a two-thirds majority in both the House and Senate, and the other is by a constitutional convention called for by two-thirds of the states. The second method has never been used, but is now gathering steam among Republicans.

As Charles Pierce wrote in January in Esquire, the people pushing for a convention 'have commitments from 28 state legislatures. They need 34 to trigger the Constitution's provision for a "convention of the states."'

Pierce continued: 'If the convention is called, the disunion that has become a faith in some conservative quarters will run amok. Economic oligarchy will be established in law, and any political check on the powers of business likely will be eviscerated.'

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