The "Urban SuperState" and the Electoral College II.docx

David Barnhizer
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This is a very dangerous time for America. Since the 2016 Presidential Election we have heard strident calls for doing away with the Electoral College because Clinton won more votes than Trump—not even close to a majority but “more”. The Elections Project estimates there are approximately 250 million Americans in the voting age population and something like 231 million eligible to vote after those who have been disqualified are deducted. It also estimates that 200 million are actually registered to vote. In the recent election 134 million voted for Clinton, Trump, Johnson or Stein. This means that almost 100 million American citizens who were eligible to vote and 66 million who actually registered to vote did not exercise that right. It is everyone’s right not to vote just as it is an eligible individual’s right to vote. But the fact nearly 100 million citizens opted to “vote with their feet” by abstaining puts to shame the indignant clamoring that Clinton won a majority of the national vote.

Technically Clinton received more votes than Trump. Just as technically, and of much greater legal effect under the US Constitution, Trump received the clear majority of Electoral College votes. Before we get overly excited or morally offended by the fact that one candidate received a majority from America’s citizens it is useful to realize that at 64 and 62 million votes for either Clinton or Trump that each candidate received slightly more than 25 percent of those eligible to vote and less than 33 percent of those who bothered to register to vote. Whether this represents voter apathy or voter contempt for either candidate is irrelevant, but it does stand for the fact that no one came close to receiving a majority of voters eligible to vote or those registered to vote who either did not show up to vote at all or like some people I know decided not to vote for president because the choices were too unpalatable.

Thank God for the Electoral College

The Electoral College is a protective mechanism that prevents the populations of the most highly populated states from controlling the nation’s powers and ignoring the interests of others in the vast territory of the United States with a highly diverse population. Allowing the allocation of political power to be made as if America were a single state rather than a union of fifty states destroys the principles of federalism that provide the foundation of the Constitution and would empower a collection of ten very large US metropolitan areas acting in lockstep on a very limited set of issues to impose their will on everyone else in our diverse nation. This is precisely what the Electoral College helps to avoid.

As divided as the electoral map of America looks when broken down into a Red State/Blue State picture after the 2016 presidential election, that doesn’t begin to tell the full story about how fractured the nation has become. An “Urban SuperState” has emerged capable of controlling much of the nation’s agenda and disenfranchising citizens who live in 80 percent of the nation’s states and localities. The thought that ten to twelve metropolitan areas including Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco,
Miami, Detroit, Cleveland and Columbus, Seattle, and Baltimore (city and county) could dictate their agendas to the rest of the country if they were able to eliminate the Electoral College is offensive to the point I need a “safe space”. Fortunately I have one. It is called the Electoral College.

We are in an age of powerful factions made even more dominant and dangerous by the existence of the Internet. James Madison considered factions to be inevitable parts of a political community. In Federalist No. 10 he explained that since people hold differing opinions on issues and own different amounts of wealth and property they seek to advance their interests by creating alliances with people similar to them. All others are seen as outsiders and threats. Madison saw the Constitution as a combination of the republican and democratic forms of government, recognizing that a purely majoritarian system would be subject to abuse. He emphasized that with "the great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State legislatures" the power of government was less likely to be centralized in the hands of a dominant faction.

Madison's idea was that the resulting diffusion of power in a democratic republic would prevent any one faction or allied collection of factions from gaining full control of the nation's instruments of power. His warning resonates when applied to the fragmented American society of today where allied identity groups are not only insisting that their faction has the sole legitimate “truth” but that anyone who disagrees with that faction's “truth” is a moron, fascist, bigot, “populist”, “nationalist”, xenophobe or some other kind of “phobe” or "hater”.

At this point the only thing that prevents the disenfranchising of a significant part of the American population by the factions that comprise the Urban SuperState is the Electoral College. That brilliant balancing mechanism was created to protect the interests of states in our federalist democratic republic based on representative allocations of power and political voice. This was intended to protect the interests of each state and recognize that different states and their populations have differing interests, values, goals and preferences. The principles of federalism and the recognition that unique powers were reserved to the states erected barriers against a single self-interested faction or group of collaborating factions taking over all power and using the simplistic language of "majority controls all" to do whatever they want. Mill condemned the majority-takes-all argument in On Liberty, calling it “the tyranny of the majority”.

Madison's idea of protecting the collective community of the United States against the "tyranny" of competing factions is still vital to maintaining the integrity of the nation as a federalist alliance of states and local communities. America is not a single "super-community" where all choices get to be made by a few allied factions able to seize and hold the reins of power through fear, propaganda, control of the media and now the ability to consolidate large blocs of identically interested people in a small number of major urban areas that collectively create a focused interest group that trumps the interests of everyone else in the nation. The Electoral College was created in Article II, Section I of the Constitution to block such an outcome.
The Rise of the “Urban SuperState”

There were 134,398,059 total votes cast for president in the 2016 election. Although the vote has shifted as absentee ballots were counted, as of this writing Clinton had received 64,424,986 and Trump 62,327,523. Almost seven million people voted for neither Trump nor Clinton because they couldn’t stand either candidate or preferred one of the minor party candidates. Even though the Red/Blue state map shows a divide in which the West and Upper East coasts were in Clinton’s camp and the “flyover” wasteland between the coasts supported Trump, the more accurate depiction centers on a very limited set of major urban areas, the Urban SuperState, versus everyone else. Even in the states where Clinton won the majority vote a very large percentage of individual counties were not in her camp. They didn’t have to be because she dominated the Urban SuperState. The most prominent members of the “Urban SuperState” gave Hillary Clinton 9,556,408 votes more than Donald Trump and she still only had two million more popular votes. This shows a deep abyss between the interests of the limited cluster of major US cities (the Urban SuperState) and the rest of the country.

Here is a picture of what I am talking about.

In California Hillary Clinton received an enormous vote margin over Donald Trump in five counties associated with major urban areas. Adding up the voting margin for the counties of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Diego, Clinton received 2,528,011 votes more than Trump. These five counties alone were enough to provide her entire national popular vote margin. I admit that I have no evidence to support Donald Trump’s allegation that there was massive fraudulent voting in the recent election, whether done by dead people, badly programmed computer systems, hacking or people who voted multiple times in different precincts, or people in this country illegally. There were a few reports of such things such as electronic voting machines switching votes from Trump to Clinton but I have no idea about the truth of those reports and make no claim about widespread fraud and vote manipulation across the nation. What I will say, however, is that the safeguards in the state of California appear entirely insufficient to prevent voting by people otherwise not entitled to vote.

If we are in fact concerned about the integrity of elections then I suggest that the system established in California is one tailored not only to allow but to create incentives for voting by non-citizens who should not be voting as a matter of law. The primary concern centers on the recent California law that allows non-citizens who are not legally in the US to obtain drivers licenses. This has to be considered in the light of a law that automatically registers all those who obtain California drivers’ licenses on the voter registry unless they affirmatively opt out. The situation is exacerbated because there is no coordination provided by the California Secretary of State’s office relating to the actual right to vote of those on the voter rolls due to obtaining a driver license.

In a situation where no record is kept that allows the identification and screening of voters whose names appear on the official voter registry there is no way that proof can be provided of illegal voting. Coupled with this issue is the fact that California is filled along
the coastline with “sanctuary cities” that affirmatively commit themselves to protecting people who are in the US unlawfully and consider those people to be a legitimate and contributing part of the state and nation. A sampling includes San Diego, Long Beach, Los Angeles, San Jose, Berkeley, San Francisco and Oakland. Expecting those in control of such metropolitan areas to be strict taskmasters on the issue of illegal voting is naïve at best. The far more probable scenario is that those running local voting centers or feeding paper ballots into machines for counting are enablers who have the incentive to do no screening of citizenship status even if they could because they can count on a very significant proportion of all voters to vote in ways that support their urban agendas.

Nor would screening for right-to-vote status be something easily done. In this recent election a majority of California residents used vote-by-mail forms. These forms do not indicate any limits other than being a registered voter. Given that California driver license recipients are automatically registered when they obtain the license anyone who receives that license is a registered voter. In 2015, in the first several months of the new California driver license for people not legally in the US 605,000 licenses were issued to people not lawfully in the country. 696,000 licenses were issued to migrants who had not entered the US legally under the driver license/automatic voter registration law through March 2016. The point to be made here is a simple one. It is that California has set up a system that enables and normalizes voting by people not legally entitled to vote. It has also made it virtually impossible to monitor illegal voting because it neither screens, asks the kinds of questions that would determine voting eligibility nor keeps the kinds of records that would be required to track the illegal voting behavior if it did occur.

At this point we can use the old adage that “if it quacks like a duck” it most likely is a duck. The bottom line in relation to the intentions driving California’s actions is quite simple and focuses on the automatic voter registration. It arguably makes sense to offer people a means to legally drive a motor vehicle and to insist they pass proficiency tests for that license. This is an intelligent safety measure. It also makes sense to have those people obtain auto insurance for the protection of others although California did not impose that requirement. It makes absolutely no sense to automatically register people to vote who are not legally entitled to do so, unless the real intent is to create a system in which they can and do vote in a poorly supervised and easily manipulated vote-by-mail process such as now used by a majority of California voters. The lawyer in me says that I can’t conceive of a more obvious illegal voting conspiracy on the part of a state of California to expand voter ranks with people who are voting illegally and who are very likely to vote for the party in control of the coastal cities of California, i.e. the Democrats. The likelihood of voter fraud in such a situation is beyond probability to near certainty.

California is in a special class by itself, but there is also an issue of extremely distorted voting in the urban areas of New York and neighboring counties. In the state of New York, in the four urban counties of the Bronx, Kings, New York and Queens, Clinton received 1,537,797 more votes than Trump. In Wisconsin Clinton outpointed Trump by 309,131 votes in the urban counties of Milwaukee and Dane. In Illinois she had a vote margin of 1,158,594 in Chicago’s Cook County alone. Philadelphia County gave Hillary Clinton 457,399 votes more than Trump even though he won the state. In sparsely populated
Colorado Clinton had a margin of 213,910 votes from the counties of Denver and Boulder. In Ohio the combination of the urban counties of Cuyahoga and Franklin (Cleveland and Columbus) provided 348,713 more votes to Clinton than Trump even though he won the overall Ohio vote. The Seattle area alone gave Clinton 501,309 votes more than Trump while Oregon’s Multnomah County (Portland) provided Clinton with a 224,407 margin. Detroit’s Wayne County gave Clinton a margin of 390,441 votes and Virginia’s Arlington, Fairfax and Richmond counties provided a 334,131 edge to Clinton. Orleans Parrish (New Orleans) provided a Clinton margin of 109,704 votes of a total number cast with Clinton 133,996 and Trump 24,292. In Massachusetts the counties of Middlesex, Norfolk and Suffolk provided a pro-Clinton margin of 583,974 votes. Baltimore (city and county) along with Montgomery and Prince Georges counties in Maryland went for Clinton 1,095,070 versus Trump's 295,192 votes.

The more disturbing problem is not simply one of absolute vote counts but the percentages and ratios. These demonstrate a radical disjunction between the Urban SuperState voters and those outside its boundaries. The pro-Clinton ratio in Maryland’s Prince Georges County was almost 11:1, 8:1 in Baltimore (City) and 3:1 in Montgomery County. The District of Columbia offers one of the most distorted ratios imaginable, with Clinton receiving 270,107 votes more than Trump from slightly more than 282,000 total votes cast, a 23:1 pro-Clinton imbalance. There is a message in voting proportions such as Massachusetts’ Middlesex County where Clinton received 508,919 votes to Trump’s 216,163, or Suffolk County where the vote was 241,212 to 50,042. In Detroit’s Wayne County (Detroit) Clinton had 519,444 to Trump’s 228,993. San Francisco County gave Clinton 345,072 to Trump’s 37,688, a 9 to 1 multiple, while for Los Angeles the totals were 2,160,538 to 681,971, a more than three to one margin. In San Mateo County the ratio of Clinton to Trump votes was 4:1, Santa Clara 3.5:1 and Santa Cruz more than 4:1. In The Bronx Clinton received 318,403 votes and Trump only 34,424, a 9:1 “stomping” while in New York County the ratio was more than 8:1 and 4.5:1 in Kings County at 595,086 Clinton and 133,653 Trump.

Disproportionate ratios such as these, in an election where each candidate clearly possessed very serious flaws, suggest that voters were operating according to deeply held biases, stereotypes and agendas that could not be altered. Such Urban SuperState ratios evoke the “pretend” democracies run by dictatorial regimes where there was typically an almost 100 percent vote in favor of the ruling party’s candidate. The Urban SuperState vote ratios in the Clinton/Trump contest have that “taste” of authoritarian mindlessness and it is a bit foul.

Why talk about vote margins, ratios and the urban locations from which they come? The point is that while “certain people” seem to trumpet the virtues of diversity, the massive advantage in Urban SuperState voting received by Hillary Clinton as well as the stunning voting ratios rejects diversity. It also demonstrates an unusually consistent on-diverse urban voter mindset and exposes national divisions that are unlikely to be repaired or harmonized. The dramatically unbalanced voting patterns represented by the urban vote reveals an electorate in lockstep whose adherents are marching in unison to the “music” of a limited set of concerns. This may also represent a lack of engagement with, or awareness
of, a host of critical issues such as threats to jobs, the condition of the American economy, the importance of religious beliefs to a large portion of the citizenry, concerns about the appropriate roles and intrusiveness of government, a massive out of control national debt, tax burdens, the dangers of ISIS and policies related to the Middle East, educational quality of American schools as their graduates’ performance plummets in comparison with that of Asian countries, illegal immigration and border security, nuclear tensions with Iran and the Iranians continuing sponsorship of terrorist organizations, the implications of the re-emergence and intentions of a newly collaborating China and Russia, the impacts of globalist trade policies on American workers and numerous other issues.

Nor should concern about such issues be taken as a lack of concern with problems of race, gender and other forms of discrimination. The deeper point is that in the Urban SuperState areas there is a more limited set of concerns driving the distorted voting patterns beyond any rational norm. The answer is not only that of race, gender, or preservation of federal programs although these are critical perspectives. I would guess, for example, that a significant contributor to the incredible 23:1 vote margin Clinton enjoyed in the District of Columbia, and the quite large vote advantage she had in the near DC counties of Northern Virginia and Maryland had much to do with the fear on the part of those voters that a Trump administration would slash federal jobs. We can trumpet altruism but the reality is that nothing compels us quite as much as fear for our job and the financial security government employment provides. Several million federal government employees live in the metropolitan area of the District, many military do as well, and state and local government workers and teachers add to that total. Clinton offered business-as-usual and Trump offered uncertainty. A high number of college students and faculty in the area’s universities likely contributed as well.

**The Tyranny of Factions, Single Cause Interest Groups, and Propaganda**

My fear is that the residents of the Urban SuperState are caught up in a culture of propaganda and hostility or contempt toward all others they see as not being like them. This is, ironically, a reversed version of the smug and “phobic” attitudes our urban elites and propagandists attribute to the “unwashed hordes” of Middle America. A brilliant management guru, Peter Drucker, once described the phenomenon in a book titled *The New Realities*. Drucker wrote about the “new pluralism”, saying: “The new pluralism ... focuses on power. It is a pluralism of single-cause, single-interest groups—the “mass movements” of small but highly disciplined minorities. Each of them tries to obtain through power what it could not obtain through numbers or through persuasion. Each is exclusively political.” This self-absorbed narrowness of “single-cause, single-interest” concerns is what we now face in the SuperState’s quest for power. The danger and powers of such groups have been multiplied exponentially by the Internet as it has become a key tool for organizing and coordinating, recruiting, shaming, attacking, sabotage, spreading lies and propagandizing.

In his wonderfully insightful book *Propaganda*, Jacques Ellul described how propaganda depends on the inculcation of stereotypes as a way to control the minds of a group’s adherents. He explained: “A stereotype is a seeming value judgment, acquired by
belonging to a group, without any intellectual labor…. The stereotype arises from feelings one has for one’s own group, or against the “out-group.” Man attaches himself passionately to the values represented by his group and rejects the cliches of the out-groups…. The stereotype, … helps man to avoid thinking, to take a personal position, to form his own opinion.” I challenge anyone to disprove the claim that we no longer have intelligent political discourse, only the barbed and malicious missiles of propaganda and stereotypes.