

MID-MICHIGAN VIEWS

Are you better off right now?

Are you better off than you were four years ago? During a presidential debate in 1980, Ronald Reagan asked that question. It helped him win his election. Perhaps four or five out of a hundred of you can honestly claim that, yes, things are much better in 2020 than they were in 2016. The rest of us cannot.



Ed Fisher
Columnist

Millions of us have caught the COVID-19 virus, almost 200,000 have died so far, over 15 million have lost their jobs, millions more face mortgage shortages or eviction, the USPS has been sabotaged to make voting much more difficult. Trump has lied or misled us more than 20,000 times so far. Biden has empathy and a good record of bipartisan cooperation. He will also address the need to reverse climate change which has brought us an early, harsh hurricane season, enormous wildfires, and coastal flooding. His choice is cooperation rather than division.

Trump's older sister, Maryanne Trump Barry, was taped talking about her brother: "All he wants to do is appeal to his base. He has no principles. None. None. And his base, I mean my God, if you were a religious person, you want to help people. Not do this."

She reaffirmed that Trump paid someone to take his SATs to go to Fordham University, adding that she frequently did his homework for him. He "has no principles" and people "can't trust him." She went on to say, "I'm talking too freely, but you know. The change of stories. The lack of preparation. The lying. Holy (s—t)."

Barry is a retired judge who ruled on immigration cases and admitted shame that DonnyT put children in cages at the border. Trump routinely skips daily classified briefs. "He doesn't read," she said. He prefers spoken reports and often claims to know more than the experts.

Companies led by Trump filed for bankruptcy six times. These involved casinos and hotels. He invested very little of his own money while collecting millions of dollars in salaries, bonuses and special payments. Investors and relatives were left with the tab. Barry com-

plained that, "He once tried to take credit for me."

Barry adds weight to Mary Trump's expose in her recent book, "Too Much, and Never Enough." In it she describes Trump's failures in business, how his father kept bailing him out, and cheating his partners, workers and clients. "I couldn't have anticipated how many people would willingly

enable his worst instincts, which have resulted in government-sanctioned kidnapping of children, detaining refugees at the border, and the betrayal of our allies and other atrocities."

Maryanne Trump Barry and Mary Trump are close relatives who have witnessed Trump's true persona and regard him as dangerous to our democracy. Add to that similar discussions by associates, staff members and Republican politicians who now distance themselves from DonnyT.

A recent example — former chief of staff at Trump's Department of Homeland Security, Miles Taylor, stated that Trump had offered officials pardons in exchange for possibly illegal actions at the border. This would, in fact, be illegal.

The Republican Convention was a hollow sham without a political platform, a rudderless Titanic. "DonnyT kin do just 'bout anythin' wot he wants!" Dozens of family, cohorts, and hacks brushed away Trump's failures and made absurd claims about his opposition.

Joe Biden does not want to defund police, take away all guns, eliminate the suburbs or want Medicare for everyone. Unlike Trumppublicans he wants fairness for all citizens, fair elections, uniform decent policing, improved living conditions for minorities, a national plan for dealing with the pandemic and reopening the economy, reestablishing relations with our allies and standing up to our adversaries.

Four more years of Donald Trump will undo what the Founding Fathers had set in motion. Apply for your ballot, fill it out and mail it or put in a drop-box by Oct. 26!

Ed Fisher writes a weekly column for the Morning Sun.

OTHER VIEWS

Completing Census is vital to community — and time is running out

Across the globe, and in our own community, the year 2020 has tested us in many ways. Yet, during these challenging times we have witnessed how people come together to assist each other. An easy way to help your neighbor, and our community for the next 10 years is to complete the 2020 U.S. Census before September 30, 2020.

By simply answering 10 short questions you have the power to ensure the Mt. Pleasant area receives:

- Fair representation in federal and state government.
- Proper funding of programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, Pell Grants and Food Assistance Programs.
- Quality highway and infrastructure systems.

Currently, our community's self-response rate is not

only lagging behind the State of Michigan and neighboring communities, but we are behind where we were for the 2010 U.S. Census. It is imperative each and every household is counted. It is critical your household is counted.

Please take a few minutes today to complete your 2020 U.S. Census. Responding is easy, whether online at my2020census.gov, over the phone at 844-330-2020, or by answering the door for your U.S. Census representative. Answering ten short questions today will make a positive difference in your neighborhood, and the entire Mt. Pleasant community for the next decade.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Mt. Pleasant Complete Count Committee

Cartoonist's take

MPMORNINGSUN

Trump Tower



COLUMN

A tale of two conventions

The two political conventions are finally over. To paraphrase Charles Dickens, one convention promoted the best of times, the other the worst of times.

If you are a Democrat, or a virulent anti-Trumper (not necessarily the same), you saw their virtual convention paint a picture of America that was depressing to the core. Nothing is working. We are a people carrying the permanent stain of systemic racism, full of hate, police brutality and hopelessness, at least while Donald Trump remains president.

If you are a Republican, you saw a convention portraying America coming back from the pandemic — economically and spiritually (the names of God and Jesus Christ were mentioned favorably more than once). Our best days are ahead of us said speaker after speaker unless Joe Biden, whom Trump has portrayed as the "Trojan Horse" for Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the rest of the far-left extremists prevail in the November election.

For the Republicans it was a diagnosis. For Democrats it sounded like an autopsy.

Ann Dorn, the widow of a retired Black police officer killed

amid protests and looting in St. Louis, spoke movingly at the RNC about her husband, David Dorn. To anarchists some Black lives appear to be more equal than others and their hatred for police officers dulls any compassion for cops who daily put their lives in jeopardy to defend especially minorities and their neighborhoods.

Writing in National Review, Kathryn Jean Lopez said: "This is where Democrats failed — as they attacked Trump, they didn't leave room for something other than anger, or even owning up to their own mistakes."

Among those mistakes is peddling the notion that government can fix problems such as racism, income disparity and crime. If government could solve these problems, would it not have done so by now? We have seen trillions of dollars spent on dubious anti-poverty and racial justice government programs. Laws have been passed. Studies have been done. White papers have been written. Not much seems to have changed in the eyes of Democrats, though in fact much has changed for the better.

How does legislation or money create a stable family that includes a loving father in

the home with proper discipline for his children? Who teaches ways to overcome bad circumstances, not just the words of an anthem?

The personal example of Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC), the chamber's only Black Republican, should be taught everywhere. It was Scott who co-authored a police reform bill that Democrats walked away from because, he said, they wanted the issue, not a solution. In one of the best lines at the RNC convention, Scott said he went "from cotton to Congress" in one lifetime.

Then there was the sparkling personality of 34-year-old Daniel Cameron, attorney general of Kentucky. Cameron eviscerated Joe Biden, who has said people like him "ain't Black" if they can't decide whether to vote for him, or President Trump: "Mr. Vice President look at me, I am Black. We are not all the same, sir. I am not in chains. My mind is my own. And you can't tell me how to vote because of the color of my skin."

Can I get an Amen?

Which tale of the two conventions — sad or optimistic — will prevail? We'll know in two months, maybe. As for me and my house, we are embracing the optimistic tale.

Readers may email Cal Thomas at tcaeditors@tribpub.com.

COLUMN

Michigan aims to remove barriers to work

By Conor Norris and Edward Timmons
Special to MediaNews Group

By throwing nearly a million workers in Michigan out of work, the economic damage caused by COVID-19 highlights the need to remove regulatory barriers to employment.

Many of those who will be looking to return to work will be blocked by occupational licensing laws. The newly proposed SB 40 would help prevent new barriers from being added and will remove some of them in the future.

Occupational licensing laws can be thought of as a permission slip by government needed to work in a field. They require education, exams, and fees to try to protect consumers. However, these barriers to entry are often onerous. And these hurdles make it difficult to enter a field, restricting the number of professionals. Normally, this results in higher prices for consumers.

But we're not in normal times. COVID-19 and the lockdowns have thrown many out of work, who are and will continue to be looking to return to work and restart small businesses. Occupational licensing requirements pose a serious burden for those currently out of work looking to find work in licensed professions. For someone who has been out of work since February, going through

the process of taking more time off for education, studying for exams, and paying fees may be too much, forcing them to look elsewhere or remain unemployed.

As we recover from COVID-19, the effects on aspiring professionals and consumers are harmful for all Michigan residents. But a new bill proposed by the Michigan legislature aims to mitigate this, making it easier to return to work.

When proposing a new licensing related law, the bill would force the legislature to consider alternatives, instead of assuming that licensing would be the best option. The goal is to use the least restrictive means of regulation. Supporters must articulate the problem and use data to show it's widespread. This way, the law will be better designed to solve the actual problems facing Michigan residents. The hope is that it will result in fewer, better regulations.

SB 40 also requires that the commission compare proposed licensing laws to other states. Too often, state legislatures ignore how other states license professions. This causes a wide discrepancy in who gets licensed and the requirements that professions face. This variation between states makes it more difficult to move to a new state for work.

It also requires that the commission reviews one fifth of li-

censed professions each year. The review will focus on the issue licensing would solve, trying to find the least restrictive means to ensure that consumers receive the best service possible.

For instance, if the main concern is health and safety from potential dangers in the premises, instead of requiring licensing we could use health and safety inspections. This would remove unnecessary barriers to entry for aspiring professionals, while still ensuring consumer safety.

What does this proposed law really mean? It makes sure any new barrier to entry into a profession is truly necessary. It also helps lawmakers design laws better suited to actual problems facing Michigan residents. Finally, it reviews the old laws already on the books to make sure they are serving a purpose and do so in the best way.

Now more than ever, we need to remove roadblocks that keep people from returning to work. SB 40 will ensure that we do not add any more to prevent those out of work from COVID-19 to find a new profession.

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