

The Fairfield Prep Political Awareness Society presents

Zeitgeist



Spirit of the Times

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The Fairfield Prep Political Awareness Society

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About the Society

In a matter of years, our generation will be the status quo. We will be running the businesses and casting the votes and contributing to the culture that will serve to identify our country for decades to come. As such, it is our duty to cultivate a devotion to political curiosity and vigilance so that we can shape this future in the most well informed manner possible. The Political Awareness Society is a part of that cultivation, providing an environment for students to discuss and debate what is going on in the world and develop their own unique perspectives that they can carry with them into the adult world. We meet every Thursday afternoon in Mr. Szablewicz's room (B407). All are welcome to attend.

Note: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and are in no way intended to reflect those of Fairfield Prep as an institution.

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Faith in the Institution

An Interview with Rep. Jim Himes – By Michael Turk '17 with Damian Chessare '17



Zeitgeist: What do you see as the most pressing issues facing both this nation and the state of Connecticut?

Himes: One of the issues that I focus on with the most regularity for the state of Conn. is our transportation infrastructure. People are very interested in having good jobs and attracting good companies to Conn., and one of the top reasons why people don't want to move to Conn. is the traffic and antiquated transportation infrastructure. Another example of something that spans both Conn. and nationally is the issue of national security. I spend a lot of time on national security because I sit on the Intelligence Committee. That's important for everyone in the country—that we're going after terrorists, that we're monitoring their communications, that we're doing all we can to prevent a terrorist attack like we've seen in Belgium or San Bernardino. It's particularly important here because an awful lot of people remember 9/11 or lost people or knew people who died. And, I do spend a lot of time on the Intelligence Committee thinking about the very difficult issues associated with that—when do we use lethal force against terrorists, how much surveillance we have abroad, how much surveillance we have in this country—that sort of thing. I'll also make a point that both of those are important and pressing issues, but there are issues that are important

but don't feel pressing, the one I'll highlight being climate change. It, conceivably thirty years from now, could be a crisis situation, but you don't feel it as a crisis today. It's easy to list as an issue that you think about way down the road, but we are already seeing the effects here in coastal Conn. If you asked me to highlight three issues with different variety, those would be the three.

Zeitgeist: You've been involved in Dodd-Frank Reform and things of that nature on the Hill. What do you think should be done to help Connecticut residents in regard to financial regulation?

Himes: It's very interesting when you ask that question in the context of Conn. because Conn. is so dense with financial services companies, and companies always feel a little put upon by regulation, which I get. So, the challenge we have with financial regulation is to come up with regulation that keeps us safe, forbids banks from ever doing the kind of behavior that we saw back in '08, and also makes sure that that industry can thrive and provide people with money. It's always a balance. It's interesting, though, that if you live in rural Kansas, you probably care about agricultural financing but not so much about the rest of it, but here, of course, lots of people work on Wall Street, so I always have to be mindful of that seeking of a balance between safety and robust growth. It's very hard, though, to have a thoughtful policy discussion about financial services relatively soon after the meltdown of '08.

Zeitgeist: Governor Malloy has received some criticism recently about his budgeting issues, particularly that of businesses leaving Connecticut. How do you think Connecticut is doing economically, and how are you working to aid the state's economy?

Himes: Inasmuch as the Governor has received criticism, I think a lot of it is unfair. The Governor has actually done some pretty hard things—everything from a round of renegotiations with the unions to an increase in taxes to some tough cuts. Of course, it's the legislature who produces the budget, too. But, what's happened in the state of Conn. is that we got pretty used to the party; we're a financial services-oriented state, and we do a lot of defense contracting, so when the War in Iraq was on, and Wall Street was going gangbusters, the money was flowing in the state of Conn. Then the crash comes, and we're no longer in active combat in Iraq, so our two main industries get squeezed pretty hard. Now, all of a sudden, the numbers look bad, but there was a

lot of irresponsibility on the part of our budgeters over decades, and there's a lot of blame to go around, so I don't think it's fair to point the finger at this governor. I think he's actually the one left holding the bag, and we've got a lot of work to do together now to right size the budget and make sure that our system of taxation is, if nothing else, predictable. About the companies leaving, there are a lot of companies coming, too, which is the story that's never told. I talked to GE, and they weren't so concerned with the absolute level of taxes because Boston and Massachusetts have very similar tax regimes. A lot of businesses were just concerned about the unknown; business doesn't like change. Hartford just needs to provide for some certainty around what the tax code is going to look like.

Zeitgeist: Another very important issue in this country is campaign finance reform. Do you have any realistic goals regarding that issue that you would like to see Congress achieve after the election?

Himes: It's a hard question to answer, especially when talking about realistic goals. If I could wave a magic wand and do away with money in the system, I would do it in a heartbeat. People somehow think that I like a system where I have to spend insane numbers of hours calling people and begging them for money; it's humiliating. If you're spending all your time asking for money, you're not doing the people's business. It's a perverted system. In regard to realistic goals, I'm rather cynical on this issue; I don't think we're going to make a lot of progress on it. It's possible with a new Supreme Court that we might see a reversal of Citizens United, and that would be a step in the right direction, but it takes some time any time you have a system where money floods politics. It's a terrible system, but how effective is money in the system? You have these billionaires trying to buy elections; well, there's a lot of evidence that the expenditure of money doesn't have that much of an effect in many cases. Overall, it's just a very aggravating topic.

Zeitgeist: I researched that Citibank is one of your largest donors, and you have co-sponsored legislation that has been favorable to them. Does that sometimes tie into this reform that you're talking about?

Himes: Well, in my case, I represent a financial services district, and I spent twelve years working at a bank, so it shouldn't be too much of a surprise that I get a lot of contributions from my friends who I used to work with or who live in my district. Part of the reason the system is so warped is because somebody will assume that a politician gets a lot of money from the banks, so, therefore, he or she wants to do this. That sort of implies that all of my colleagues and I are prostitutes—that we're up for sale. It may be true that some small portion of my colleagues do that, but it isn't true with me. You made reference to the Citibank legislation, and if you look that up, it had to do with a very technical issue, 992, on whether derivatives should be traded within a bank. When the original Dodd-Frank Bill was passed in the Senate, it said that derivatives can't be inside banks. Some people thought that was a bad idea because if you take derivatives out of banks, then we can no longer see them. There was a really interesting conversation about whether it would make sense to keep simple derivatives in banks and to have the stuff that's really dangerous outside the banks. That's what that was, but the assumption was that because Citibank wanted it passed that it was bad and that I didn't think about it. That really highlights one of the flaws in the system, but I understand why people think that way.

Zeitgeist: Can you comment on the current presidential election?

Himes: It's sort of hard for me to comment without sounding a bit partisan, which I generally try not to do. On the Democratic side, it's an interesting, fairly quiet debate of issues between two people who disagree with each other in a civil way, and on the other side you see a circus where things are being said that we are going to be sorry were said—whether it's the prospect that someone who wants to be president of the U.S.A. would start talking about the size of their organs or propose that we discriminate against Muslims. I don't say this to take a cheap shot at the Republicans; I say it because it makes me really sad. I like to think that no matter who is president, Democrat or Republican, he or she is going to be somebody who is in the shadow of Abraham Lincoln or John F. Kennedy, but these guys are in the shadow of the Kardashians or something.

Zeitgeist: Where do you see the Democratic Party heading after this election?

Himes: The Democratic Party is far from immune to the same forces that are roiling the Republican Party. We're a big tent; you got every kind of person, and sometimes there's tension, and the challenge for us Democrats is to be like a quarreling family. We're going to have fights at the Thanksgiving table, but when the time comes to compete, we're all a family working together. I think the Republicans would aspire to that today, but the inter-party conflict got out of control on their side. If Clinton is elected, she's perceived as the more "establishment" candidate; the challenge for us is to make sure that the millennials and others who are excited about Bernie Sanders get on board and vice versa. If Bernie is the nominee, we have to make sure that the "establishment" is comfortable with him. We have ten thousand ways of thinking about things in this big country and two parties that challenge those ten thousand ways of thinking, so there's always going to be wrestling and shuffling within both parties. The question is how to handle it; do you do it in an inclusive, civil way and, therefore, succeed, or do you go to war with each other and get a Donald Trump?

Zeitgeist: I know that you are a leading moderate in the House. Do you feel a responsibility as a moderate in a big tent party to compromise and come together in Congress?

Himes: Yes and no. First of all, I believe it's really important to have some humility for the majesty of the institution, and that means you don't scream at the president that he's a liar. You act like you have a responsibility to act like you're running the greatest country in history, so the way you hold yourself and the way you argue with people should be done in a way that does honor to the institution. I try to model that. You also have to recognize that in a legislature it's a lot of fun to stand on principle and give powerful, emotional, impassioned speeches. I'm proud to be a Democrat, but once the speech is done, you have to actually close the door on compromise with the other side. You want to be a little thoughtful about that because you don't want to be desperate to compromise, but you have to recognize the need for compromise, and there are far too many people on both sides of the aisle who have forgotten that. At the end of the day, it's more fun to use powerful, sweeping oratory to speak of good and evil because nobody ever build a statue to somebody and said, "he compromised a lot." It's obviously a Congress that needs more people willing to build bridges.

Zeitgeist: Lastly, do you have any advice for young people who are going to start getting involved in the political process soon?

Himes: Let me say three things. First, be involved. Young people don't vote, and, as a consequence, their interests are not adequately represented. A lot of young people think that it's a system that doesn't listen to them and that it's all corrupt, and, therefore, when Bernie Sanders says it's corrupt, they're going to follow Bernie Sanders. The system has its flaws, but it was Winston Churchill who said that democracy is a pretty terrible system except for all the others that have been tried. It's a pretty good system, and people need to participate in it. Second, don't be put off by the argument. I always tell young people that when you see Democrats and Republicans arguing, celebrate that. It's great that we have people with different ideas hashing it out; now, it should be civil, and we shouldn't call each other names, but the argument is a great thing. You don't want to live in a country where there isn't an argument. Third, aspire to it someday; go to work for the government someday. I didn't go to work for the government until I was 42 or something like that, but it's important. The country needs to be well-governed, and more people need to say they're going to put up with all the baloney that comes with politics in order to give it a whack.

Thomas Paul '17

The Penny: An American Tragedy

The penny is a useless piece of metal. It is worth next to nothing. It is, essentially, worth 1.0 cents as a piece of American currency and 1.7 cents as scrap metal. After this was discovered, enterprising capitalists attempted to make some money melting it down, which the federal government then made a felony.

One might think: sure, they had to end the smelting of pennies to keep them effectively in circulation; if these smelters went unprosecuted, there would be no more pennies in the United States. That would be bad, right?

Well, vending machines would disagree. They started refusing pennies long ago. In fact, think about the last time you used a penny to pay for anything. It is an endeavor in and of itself.

All of this would be fine, if the United States did not unreasonably subsidize the minting of pennies. As previously stated, there is a significant gap between the cost of pennies and their worth. Factor in

production cost, and it is obvious that the penny is wasting taxpayer money. In fact, President Obama has stated that he would be open to getting rid of the penny.

So, why do we still have pennies? There are many reasons. First, people like pennies. Pennies are undeniably and unchangeably affiliated with Lincoln, and some fear that removing the penny from circulation would remove Lincoln from American society. In addition, pennies are symbols of good luck. Lastly, pennies remind people of a time when they were younger, and pennies were worth more to them.

Likewise, the largest zinc lobby in Washington, Americans for Common Cents, has a huge incentive to keep the penny because the government buys their zinc in order to make pennies.

The largest problem, though, is that it is easier to do nothing than it is to make large changes, and even though the change would be miniscule, it would be incredibly noticeable, and legislators do not want to be on either side of this issue, so they do not raise it. Similarly, the media do not report on it because they do not want to be bogged

down by such a boring topic. So, another couple dozen million dollars fall through the cracks in the Washington machine because of sopiness, corruption, and negligence.



Michael Turk '17

Combatting Terrorism: Solidarity over Fear

For years, the issue of terrorism has brought forth a divisive and worldwide conflict—one side being the need to eradicate terrorism through force and the other being a desire to be humane and empathetic. These two opposing paths are no better expressed than through the United States' ongoing "War on Terror." This never-ending battle, which began in the 1970s but was given a boost by George W. Bush's renewed cause, is, in the eyes of the American people, a quest to spread Democracy and eradicate all evil. In

truth, it is difficult to find an American that does not despise terror and wish to end it, yet many disagree upon exactly how our nation should deal with the issue.

Since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, terrorism has been a central issue on the political forefront. Recently, though, it has become one of the most highly-debated issues amongst Democrats and Republicans alike. This is due to the fact that members of these two parties have disparate ideas regarding how the United States should aid in the fight against terror, in particular against radical Islamic terror organizations, such as ISIS.

Although terrorism has been on the table for several years, it has become especially prevalent in this election. This is both due to the looming global threat of ISIS, an extremist organization that prides itself in its modern recruiting tactics and large-scale attacks on the Western world, and the ongoing migrant crisis, which has forced millions of people, in particular, Muslims, to flee their home countries for safer lives in Europe and other Western nations. This crisis has created a large influx of displaced

Muslims in Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States. While a number of countries have been accepting of these refugees fleeing violence and terror, others have not greeted them with such open arms. The alienation and lack of assimilation felt by many Muslims in both this country and others is one of the key reasons why terrorist organizations like ISIS are able to recruit so many eager young men and women looking to fight for a just cause.

Three years ago, I travelled to Brussels, Belgium. In the eyes of an American tourist, it seemed as if such a serene city could never be the site of a horrible terrorist attack, as that which occurred in late March, killing over thirty people and wounding hundreds more. When visiting Brussels, the only aspects of the city I witnessed were the stunning architecture, lighthearted feel, and delicious food. What I did not see at the time was the sharp division present—one similar to countless other European cities. In cities like Brussels and Paris, Muslims are often marginalized and tend to live in close-knit communities outside of the main metropolis.

Since the Brussels Attacks, our nation's politicians, for the most part, have responded to terrorist threats in two distinct manners. The first manner reflects a Bushesque path—one which involves using force to destroy terror organizations wherever they may be located. During this election, Republican nominee for President Donald Trump has proved to be quite artful in his ideas for America's fight against terror, citing his strategic plan to "bomb the shit out of ISIS." This manner of combating terror provokes the emotions and fears of the American people without much true diplomacy or consciousness for the people of the Middle East. Furthermore, Trump claims that he is merely "playing on common sense" and that the Democrats, including Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, are far too weak on the issue of terror.



Conversely, Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic nominee, and her more progressive opponent, Bernie Sanders, have taken a different approach to the United States' attempts to combat terrorist threats. Both Clinton and Sanders, as well as most Democrats, understand that extremism cannot simply be defeated through brute force. Clinton, in particular, given that she dealt with terrorism during her time as Secretary of State, highlights the need for stability in the Middle East as a means of defeating ISIS' hateful ideology. The approach to terror promoted by Trump, as we have witnessed through our involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, often leaves a state of unrest in its wake. This plight that the United States left behind in the Middle East, some claim, is what contributed to the rise of organizations like ISIS who denounce Western action and influence in the Middle East. In reality, it is sometimes necessary to use military force when combating terrorist threats, yet that should not be our only measure to fight groups like ISIS.

Evidently, a fear of terrorism is something that will always be present in this

country, and there will always be mourning after attacks like those in Brussels, Paris, and San Bernardino, CA. These emotions, however, should not impact how we, as a Democratic nation, decide to combat the hateful ideologies of extremism. For instance, something as unjust as Donald Trump's "suggestion" to ban all Muslims from entering the United States is only seen as somewhat rational because it plays on the country's fears of the possibility of a future terrorist attack. In truth, this political move would go against everything that this country stands for, and it would prove to supporters of ISIS just how unjust the Western world's treatment of Muslims has been.

To sum, the actions of radical terrorists should not define who we are as a country, and they should not make us fear because that is, in truth, the goal of terrorism. In our current situation, the United States must acknowledge the threat of ISIS and take appropriate action to destroy them without giving them unnecessary power through fear.

Finally, the only way that the world, as a whole, will defeat ISIS is if it can unite behind a common cause and work together to

extinguish their hateful ideology. While the United States' current strategy against ISIS has proved to be successful, there is still more we can do. One of the reasons why ISIS has been able to spread so much is because its message appeals to Muslims living in a world that fears and expresses disdain toward their religion. Islam, in fact, is often used as a scapegoat when dealing with terror, which is a significant problem in this country, in particular. When Muslims, the vast majority of whom are peaceful, witness political figures like Donald Trump say that their religion is one of violence and hatred, they may be inspired to join groups like ISIS. To be blunt, politicians calling for bans on all Muslims entering the United States and surveillance systems in Muslim neighborhoods do not give the United States a positive image in the face of the Islamic world.

Therefore, how we, as a nation, treat Muslims directly impacts the spread of radical terrorist organizations like ISIS. If we are able to unite behind a common cause and not incriminate the entire Muslim population for the actions of a small minority, then we

may be able to drive ISIS back and rid the world of their violence and hatred.

There will always be a certain level of fear and mourning in the face of terror, yet we cannot allow this to translate into fear, because that, in truth, only enforces the goals of ISIS. As President Obama stated the day of the Brussels attacks, "This is another reminder that the world must unite. We must be together, regardless of nationality or race or faith, in fighting against the scourge of terrorism."



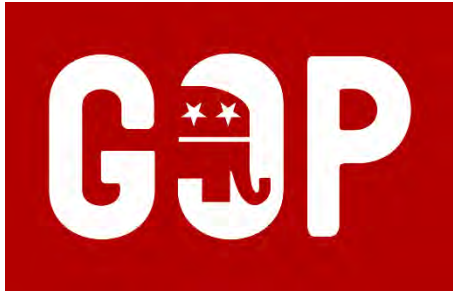
George Seyfried '18

Fractured Parties: The 2016 Presidential Election

This election has been nothing short of a memorable one. As we go to press, Donald Trump has secured the number of required delegates to win the Republican Presidential nomination, while Hillary Clinton is only a few delegates shy from clinching the Democratic nomination. However, during both Trump and Clinton's primary races, their favorability ratings have plummeted, and large rifts have arisen in both the Democratic and Republican Parties. The #NeverTrump and #BernieOrBust movements have taken off, and Democrats and Republicans alike are saying that they will either stay home on November 8th or vote third party. It is clear that in order for either Trump or Clinton to win the White House, they not only need to work on securing the undecided vote, but they also must work on uniting their own parties.

On May 3rd, the date of the Indiana primary, Donald Trump became the presumptive Republican nominee. Trump

has been known for calling the primary system rigged. Many Republican establishment members did not (and still have not) endorsed Trump; some include Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and 2012 Republican Presidential Nominee Mitt Romney, who has stated that he will not vote for Trump in November. Other rising stars in the Republican Party, such as Nebraska Senator Ben Sasse, have founded the #NeverTrump movement, a group of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents who have vowed never to vote for Trump. Likewise, Trump's former opponents have accused him of not embodying true conservative ideals, such as his former liberal stances on social issues and his plan to bar Muslims from entering the United States. However, Trump's anti-establishment campaign has gained support from many ordinary Republicans, and while he is generally not supported by the Republican establishment, Trump is, nevertheless, the presumptive nominee and, like it or not, the representative of the Republican Party in the 2016 Presidential Election.



Hillary Clinton, on the other hand, is seen as the embodiment of the Democratic establishment. Many of the party's ideals were set forth and honed by her husband, former President Bill Clinton, and this strong connection to the party has helped her to gain the support of 543 Democratic superdelegates, nearly 500 more than her opponent, Bernie Sanders. Bernie Sanders' campaign has been criticized as being too one-sided, the primary issue that he has tackled being the unjust economy. He has been highly critical of Clinton's large campaign donations from Wall Street special interests, as well as her moderate viewpoints; some of his supporters even accuse Clinton of 'buying the election.' Bernie Sanders' campaign resembles Barack Obama's as both delivered a 'yes we can' mentality. This

positive sentiment contrasts with Hillary Clinton's often unlikable, scripted campaign, one which resembles that of Al Gore in 2000. Sanders' supporters generally dislike Hillary Clinton, as she is seen as a representation of special-interest issues that Sanders speaks out against. A recent ABC News Poll found that 20% of Bernie Sanders supporters would vote for Trump over Clinton in November, and many more would opt to stay home on Election Day.

It will be decisive for Trump and Clinton to unite their own parties by November. Trump must appeal to the portion of the Republican Party that still highly dislikes him, and Clinton must focus on uniting both her and Sanders' supporters. Clinton must also convince Democrats that she is a better candidate than Trump and that a vote for her will stop Trump, and vice versa. In order to achieve party unity, Republican and Democratic leaders and candidates, in particular Bernie Sanders and Paul Ryan, must endorse their party's nominee and convince their supporters to vote for their party instead of another candidate. The unification of both the Democratic and

Republican Parties will be the single most important campaign strategy in the coming months. It is likely that Trump and Clinton, while attempting to unify their own parties, will take measures to prevent their opposing parties from uniting behind their nominees. After Trump and Clinton have unified their own parties, they will likely try to win the independent vote, which is seeming to have a monumental impact on this election.



Michael Brennan '17

A Reaction to the Refugee Crisis

Given that the current race for the White House is so entertaining, it is easy to forget that there are some very real, very disturbing, ongoing issues in the world. Five years of civil war in Syria have created the

greatest humanitarian crisis of our time. The United Nations estimates that 6.6 million people have been displaced within Syria, whether fighting for survival within the country or forced to become refugees. There are 4.7 million Syrian refugees in neighboring countries, such as Jordan and Lebanon, and although they have found shelter in refugee camps, there is no legal way for them to work or support themselves. With no way to return home, hundreds of thousands of refugees have made the dangerous journey to Greece in flimsy rafts, in the hopes of seeking political asylum in Europe.

With millions of refugees migrating to Europe, cracks in the welcome wagon have started to appear. Many Europeans are questioning the wisdom of open borders, and the tolerance level for accepting refugees is decreasing. Europeans are feeling the political and financial strain of the influx, and the cultural clashes have been overwhelming. All of this has given rise to a growing right-wing opposition to the acceptance of the refugees, and fears that a path has been cleared for terrorists and ISIS sympathizers only strengthens this stance. Many now wish

that their leaders had made decisions with their heads, not their hearts.

It is true that the leaders of the EU have a responsibility to serve and protect the citizens of their own countries. There is a valid argument in wanting Europe to remain European, with the culture and way of life staying intact. Many EU leaders are being harshly criticized for their responses to this refugee crisis, and much of it is well deserved. But for those of us who are not politicians or world leaders, what is our role in this?

Our role should be that which our Jesuit education teaches us: to be men for others. Politicians may need to think of refugees as numbers, but it is our responsibility to view them as people. I had the opportunity to trade emails with Daria Dixon, a coordinator for Echo100Plus, a non-profit charity organization based in Austria that offers relief in the refugee crisis who works in a refugee camp on the Greek island of Leros. Daria said, "If you actually go and spend time at a refugee camp, this whole distinction people pretend exists between 'us' and 'them' falls away completely. They are exactly like us and are in a situation that we

could just as well be in ourselves. We just have the 'right' passport."

I asked Daria whether or not she thinks the goals of the refugees are realistic. She says that they are, but as the political situation changes dramatically and rapidly, so do the lives of the refugees. Sudden border closings have left approximately 20,000 refugees stuck in certain parts of Greece, without any hope of moving on. At Daria's camp, they organize activities that are designed to ease the minds of the refugees and create trust. These refugees have been through the trauma of war and often arrive emotionally broken, but in order to succeed in a new life, they need to learn to trust. In order to accomplish this, camp organizers use translators in meetings where refugees and volunteers can openly express their questions and concerns. New skills such as women having the ability to speak freely about their concerns—something they are not always able to do in their homelands—are important in order to help the refugees adapt to their new lives.

No matter how one feels about the presence of these refugees, looking the other

way can have disastrous consequences not just for Europe, but for the United States, as well. There are approximately 3.7 million child refugees in this crisis, and 300,000 have been born as refugees. Here, a lost generation has been created, their lives shaped by fear, desperation and hopelessness. These children will grow up and will eventually play significant parts in the countries to which they have fled. It would be considerably better for us all if the refugees were treated with compassion from the start, yet it may be too late for that at this point.



Christopher Iannaccone '16

Why Trump Isn't the Republicans' Solution

Since the last issue, we have seen many primaries and caucuses take place. For the Republican Party, the process, for some time, was a very frustrating one due to the many candidates in the race, most of whom have dropped out by now. Unfortunately, this frustration continues for some Republicans as Donald Trump is now the party's presidential nominee. I believe, though, that Trump's success in the primary process will not continue into the race for the general election. I will attempt to explain why I believe Trump is so popular yet not the candidate the Republican Party should be looking for in November.

If you had asked me in June 2015, when Donald Trump announced he was running for president, or even six months ago, when I wrote my first article about the Republican candidates and whether or not Trump would be a serious contender, I would have said that his popularity will have died by now, and he would be out of the race long before the convention. Clearly, I was wrong,

and, somehow, Donald Trump has won the Republican nomination. Trump's popularity has left many political strategists bewildered and uncertain about the future. Personally, I think that the reason for Trump's popularity lies in the fact that he plays on the emotions, especially the anger, of those who feel that they have been ripped off or wronged by the current political system and desire drastic change of any sort. The type of people that Trump is winning over are those who have not voted in years yet are now coming out for a candidate who they believe will "make America great again."

However, Trump and his supporters need to understand that this group, a substantial part of which is made up of independents that can be swayed by either party, is not the group of voters that typically wins elections. Trump, unfortunately, is not a candidate who will be able to win great numbers of independent voters. I am not only saying this because Trump has taken very controversial stances on issues, such as immigration, or because he has demonstrated a very aggressive public persona, but because he possesses no political experience

whatsoever, and it clearly shows. For example, when Trump was asked during a debate about what he would do about our presence in Middle East, both diplomatically and militarily, he responded by simply saying, "Look, we just need to beat ISIS." While I do agree that we need to beat ISIS, I expect much more out of a potential president than simply a response that essentially says, "I don't really know how to answer that question, so I'll just say something really simple and obvious and hope that the crowd goes crazy." This is just one of many example of how Trump's inexperience will likely cost the Republican Party the election if he continues on his current path.

All of these reasons are why I believe Trump is so popular, as well as why I think his popularity in the primaries will not necessarily help him in the presidential election this November. Therefore, if the Republicans wanted a decent shot at beating the democratic candidate, likely Hillary Clinton, in November, they should have worked to bring down Trump before he gained so much momentum. In truth, I believe that John Kasich should have been the

Republican nominee. Unlike Trump, Kasich was neither aggressive nor obnoxious, and he hold years of successful political service. Kasich, in addition, appeals to more moderate voters, who, as opposed to independent voters, tend to win elections.



Damian Chessare '17

Everything in Moderation

Under a president who has played more rounds of golf than visits to Capitol Hill and a Congress burdened by the divisions of both the far-right and hard-lined left, moderation, compromise, and statesmanship are hard to come by. These hallmark practices that drive our government to function are woefully absent from Washington, and the

current abysmal state of economic, foreign, and domestic affairs are the result. The current state of the United States is the case in point for why this extreme, hard-lined, uncompromising, and petty way of governing perpetrated by both sides of the aisle is unsustainable, destructive, and perilous to the future of this nation.

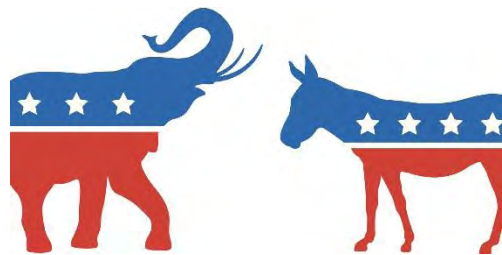
It's hard to believe, but the beloved Republican Party was once a "big tent" party for liberals, moderates, and conservatives united by common ideals of individual liberty, smaller government, and free markets. Ronald Reagan—the deity of the modern conservative movement—advocated for a big tent party to include Republicans of all ideologies and from all geographic regions of the country. As a result, the party as a whole was able to come together and compromise, just like Ronald Reagan compromised with Democratic Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill to make real, effective progress. However, in recent years these moderate Republicans have been targets of extermination from the party by the obstructionist Tea Party and the unaccompanied far-right pivot of the

national party. For the futures of both the country and the party, statesman and Republicans like these must be brought back.

Here in the Fourth Congressional District (a district for the U.S. House of Representatives that includes Fairfield, Greenwich, Stamford, Norwalk, Bridgeport, and the rest of Fairfield County), we were represented by one of these independent, moderate Republicans for over twenty years. Christopher Shays supported gay rights, the environment, practical financial regulation, and many other moderate positions that would now be considered anathema to the post-Tea Party Republican Party of today. Defeated in 2008 by the "Obama wave" to an inexperienced and relatively unknown Democrat who carried Bridgeport, Shays was the last Republican from New England at the time of his defeat. With him died the socially moderate, fiscally conservative, and practical governance of the moderate, as well as the New England Republican.

The true shame is not only Shays' defeat but the exile of most moderate Republicans, and with their exodus the popularity, fondness, and capability of

compromise and true statesmanship. Now, districts whose constituents identify as moderate - socially moderate to liberal, fiscally moderate to conservative, and ultimately pragmatic - are now poorly represented by partisans such as our own 4th District. As a result, the voice of the people is muted and Congress does not accurately represent or act for their constituents. Thus, Congress cannot compromise, effective legislation cannot be made, and the legislative branch cannot function.



Both parties must stake their accommodating "big tents" again. As voters, it is our duty to support candidates committed to bipartisanship, compromise, and country over party. It is primarily a leadership problem; political leaders are no longer held accountable for their partisanship

and destructive "my way or the highway" attitudes. The Barack Obamas, Harry Reids, Ted Cruzes, Mitch McConnells, Nancy Pelosis, and even our native sons, Jim Himes and Dick Blumenthal, have to go. We need Democrats and Republicans who respect each other's views and the imperative necessity for compromise and bipartisanship—

aspects that are largely absent today. In spite of the horrifying prospects of the upcoming presidential election, it is our duty as both Americans and Jesuit-educated Prep men to truly think and be active in our government for independence, compromise, and bipartisanship from the local level in our communities up to the congressional level.