

Yes, the System Is Rigged

“I’m afraid the election is going to be rigged,” Donald Trump told voters in Ohio and Sean Hannity on Fox News. And that hit a nerve.

“Dangerous,” “toxic,” came the recoil from the media.

Trump is threatening to “delegitimize” the election results of 2016.

Well, if that is what Trump is trying to do, he has no small point. For consider what 2016 promised and what it appears about to deliver.

This longest of election cycles has rightly been called the Year of the Outsider. It was a year that saw a mighty surge of economic populism and patriotism, a year when a 74-year-old Socialist senator set primaries ablaze with mammoth crowds that dwarfed those of Hillary Clinton.

It was the year that a non-politician, Donald Trump, swept Republican primaries in an historic turnout, with his nearest rival an ostracized maverick in his own Republican caucus, Senator Ted Cruz.

More than a dozen Republican rivals, described as the strongest GOP field since 1980, were sent packing. This was the year Americans rose up to pull down the establishment in a peaceful storming of the American Bastille.

But if it ends with a Clintonite restoration and a ratification of the same old Beltway policies, would that not suggest there is something fraudulent about American democracy, something rotten in the state?

If 2016 taught us anything, it is that if the establishment’s hegemony is imperiled, it will come together in ferocious solidarity – for the preservation of their perks, privileges

and power.

All the elements of that establishment – corporate, cultural, political, media – are today issuing an ultimatum to Middle America:

Trump is unacceptable.

Instructions are going out to Republican leaders that either they dump Trump, or they will cease to be seen as morally fit partners in power.

It testifies to the character of Republican elites that some are seeking ways to carry out these instructions, though this would mean invalidating and aborting the democratic process that produced Trump.

But what is a repudiated establishment doing issuing orders to anyone?

Why is it not Middle America issuing the demands, rather than the other way around?

Specifically, the Republican electorate should tell its discredited and rejected ruling class: If we cannot get rid of you at the ballot box, then tell us how, peacefully and democratically, we can be rid of you?

You want Trump out? How do we get you out?

The Czechs had their Prague Spring. The Tunisians and Egyptians their Arab Spring. When do we have our American Spring?

The Brits had their “Brexit,” and declared independence of an arrogant superstate in Brussels. How do we liberate ourselves from a Beltway superstate that is more powerful and resistant to democratic change?

Our CIA, NGOs and National Endowment for Democracy all beaver

away for “regime change” in faraway lands whose rulers displease us.

How do we effect “regime change” here at home?

Donald Trump’s success, despite the near-universal hostility of the media, even much of the conservative media, was due in large part to the public’s response to the issues he raised.

He called for sending illegal immigrants back home, for securing America’s borders, for no amnesty. He called for an America First foreign policy to keep us out of wars that have done little but bleed and bankrupt us.

He called for an economic policy where the Americanism of the people replaces the globalism of the transnational elites and their K Street lobbyists and congressional water carriers.

He denounced NAFTA, and the trade deals and trade deficits with China, and called for rejection of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

By campaign’s end, he had won the argument on trade, as Hillary Clinton was agreeing on TPP and confessing to second thoughts on NAFTA.

But if TPP is revived at the insistence of the oligarchs of Wall Street, the Business Roundtable, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce – backed by conscript editorial writers for newspapers that rely on ad dollars – what do elections really mean anymore?

And if, as the polls show we might, we get Clinton – and TPP, and amnesty, and endless migrations of Third World peoples who consume more tax dollars than they generate, and who will soon swamp the Republicans’ coalition – what was 2016 all about?

Would this really be what a majority of Americans voted for in this most exciting of presidential races?

“Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable,” said John F. Kennedy.

The 1960s and early 1970s were a time of social revolution in America, and President Nixon, by ending the draft and ending the Vietnam war, presided over what one columnist called the “cooling of America.”

But if Hillary Clinton takes power, and continues America on her present course, which a majority of Americans rejected in the primaries, there is going to a bad moon rising.

And the new protesters in the streets will not be overprivileged children from Ivy League campuses.

Patrick J. Buchanan is the author of the new book “The Greatest Comeback: How Richard Nixon Rose From Defeat to Create the New Majority.” To find out more about Patrick Buchanan and read features by other Creators writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators website at www.creators.com.

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