



THE TORCH

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Can a Red Wave Actually Happen?

Condensed from an article by **Larry Alton**, The American Thinker, 9/5/18

The midterms are right around the corner and political pundits everywhere are sounding off about the most likely outcomes. And despite the feeling that Democrats are about to regain majorities, there's plenty of reason to believe that Republicans can maintain their stronghold.

It's hard to believe that we're already

nearing the halfway point of President Donald Trump's first term in the White House. But November 6 is quickly approaching, which means it's once again election season.

While midterm elections rarely get the hype and turnout that presidential elections do, they're arguably just as important—this year especially. If the Republicans can keep control, President Trump will be able to keep

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VOTE!

The Midterm Election is November 6. Early voting is October 22–November 2. Check texaseagle.org for our endorsements.

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up the momentum he's gradually built over the last 18-plus months. But if the Democrats regain majorities in either the House or the Senate, the tides would begin to change.

In the Senate, the Republicans currently hold a 51 to 49 lead. There are 35 seats up for grabs this year, of which 26 are held by Democrats. Considering that they need to gain two seats in order to take control, the Democrats face an uphill battle. They'll essentially need a clean sweep—plus two additional seats.

The problem for the Democrats is that they have to defend ten seats in states that Trump won in 2016. On top of that, there aren't very many opportunities to take seats from Republicans.

The best chance the Left has of regaining some control in Washington is to reclaim the House. They need to flip 24 seats here, which is neither unprecedented nor uncommon.

"There have been swings of 24 seats or more in half of the midterm elections since 1994," Jasmine Lee writes for the *New York Times*. "The last time Democrats took the House with that kind of swing was the 2006 midterm election, when they picked up 32 seats. In 2010, as the Tea Party movement against President Obama's policies shifted the political landscape, Republicans took control of the House by flipping 64 seats. They have held the chamber ever since."

All 435 House seats are up for grabs this year, with more than 10 percent of them considered highly competitive (tossups or slight leans towards one party).

Most pundits are predicting the Republicans hold on to their narrow lead in the Senate, while the Democrats regain control in the House—albeit by a slight margin. So the idea of a red wave or blue wave doesn't seem all that likely. However, as history has shown, it's never smart to postulate the impossible. And while the blue version is certainly more probable, don't count out a fiery red wave.

NOTE: Fourteen of 15 Texas State Senate seats now face a Democratic opponent. On the federal level, according to the polls, the Senate race between Ted Cruz and Beto O'Rourke is a close one, with Hollywood, the media, and east coast elites pumping money behind O'Rourke (see the stark differences in Trayce's letter). **We cannot lose that seat to a liberal, Democratic-Socialist!**

It is imperative that you, your family and friends vote on November 6. Check TEF's website texaseagle.org for our candidate endorsements. Early voting begins October 22 and ends November 2. **Don't let the Democrats turn Texas blue! VOTE!**

Trump Economy Lifting Fortunes of Every American

Remember those warnings of an economic implosion if Donald Trump was elected President? Well, instead, the economy has broken out of the 2 percent growth doldrums from 2009–2016, and Barack Obama is suddenly elbowing his way back into the public debate to claim credit. Yet the U.S. Census Bureau's annual report on U.S. income underscores how the Obama policies of redistribution retarded growth for so many years. Real median household incomes ticked up 1.8 percent to \$61,372 between 2016 and 2017, while the poverty rate dropped 0.4 percentage points to 12.3 percent, according to the Census Bureau. Income gains were strongest among Hispanic households (3.7 percent). The poverty rates for blacks and Hispanics fell to 21.2 percent and 18.3 percent, respectively, the lowest since at least 1972.

SOURCE: Canada Free Press, 9/13/18

AP History Book Riddled With Liberal Bias

An expert on American history has slammed the left-leaning history textbooks in American schools today, saying that the books have "liberal inaccuracies" on "almost every other page." Daniel Oliver, chairman of the board of the Education and Research Institute, recently attacked the popular AP U.S. History textbook, *The American Pageant*. His "favorite" example is the book's section on Alger Hiss. It's well known that Hiss was a communist who was supplying information to the Soviet Union. Yet, in *The American Pageant*, the authors write that Hiss was being chased by Richard Nixon, a "red hunter," and that he got caught in "falsehoods." Oliver and his team expose what they believe are other misinterpretations in trueamericanhistory.us and suggest parents can counter this liberal indoctrination by exposing kids to better options at home. He suggested Bill Bennett's two-volume history series, *America: The Last Best Hope*. But he also hoped that communities could rise up to confront liberal school boards that pick these slanted books for the classrooms.

SOURCE: Godfather Politics News, 9/13/18

Just Raid Texas Poker Houses!

By Rodger Weems, Texans Against Gambling chair, 8/7/18

I couldn't make up this stuff, even if I tried. Just when I thought I had seen gambling operators pull every trick in the book, a commercial poker club in Austin sued another commercial poker club in San Antonio. The plaintiff, Austin Card Room, essentially told the defendant, San Antonio-based FSS Venture, "You're not doing it right."

One thing is certain: the lawsuit stopped the Texas Attorney General's office from addressing the legality or illegality of commercial poker clubs. The Attorney General's office doesn't issue opinions on matters that are subjects of pending litigation—a policy that's been in place seven decades.

Incidentally, some organizations representing Texas poker houses were invited to file briefs with the Attorney General addressing their legality or illegality, but those organizations did not do so. No great surprise there. The Texas Constitution prohibits most gambling, with just a few limited exceptions: the Texas Lottery, charity bingo, charity raffles, and parimutuel betting on horse and greyhound races.

Texas law provides a limited defense to prosecution for "kitchen-table poker"—social poker games that occur in a private place. Texas Penal Code Section 47.01 defines a "private place" as a place to which the public does not have access. Texas commercial poker clubs claim this exception, unlawfully in our view, by holding themselves out as "private clubs." But in reality, these commercial operations are anything but private. Any adult with identification and money can join. What's private about that? One poker club—not a party in the lawsuit—operates from a commercial building on Interstate 35 in Austin. It's hard to think of a more public location anywhere in the state.

Another element required to claim an exemption from

prosecution is that no one associated with the game may receive any economic benefit, except each player's own personal winnings. In commercial poker, the house usually receives a cut—generally called a "rake"—of the proceeds at the end of each hand or game. To attempt to get around this, some Texas commercial poker houses do not take a rake at the end of the game, but find ways to charge participants before or during the game. These include membership fees and hourly or half-hourly "seat charges." The legal term "economic benefit" is more than broad enough to cover all fees the poker houses charge, and many law enforcement officials recognize it.

Unfortunately, some municipalities, including Abilene and Webster, have sent the poker houses "cease and desist" letters asking them to close their doors voluntarily. Polite requests seldom have resulted in voluntary closure. The typical response is for the poker houses to stall by going to court to try to invalidate the cease and desist letter or simply to ignore it. Either way, delayed closure allows the establishments to continue operating until the cases are resolved.

There is no legal requirement to send a cease and desist letter, it is merely a courtesy. In some cities, including Dallas and Plano, law enforcement has not wasted time with cease and desist letters. Instead, they have conducted raids. That sends a strong message, resulting in far fewer of these establishments than in localities where polite but mostly ineffective cease and desist letters have been the principal law enforcement tool.

We note from the court-filed pleadings that Austin Card Room alleges a violation of the Texas Penal Code against the San Antonio-based card room, and the San Antonio group in reply pleads "unclean hands" and "illegality" among its defenses against the Austin group. We agree with both parties on those pleading points.

With that in mind, Texans Against Gambling has a respectful suggestion for local law enforcement: **Skip the mostly useless "cease and desist" letters, and just raid the joints.** That approach has worked in Dallas and Plano. It can work in the rest of the state.

Rodger Weems is state chair of Texans Against Gambling, a volunteer advocacy organization, also known as, Stop Predatory Gambling Texas.

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) and other sources note the following statistics:

- Fifteen percent of Americans gamble at least once per week.
- Approximately two to three percent of Americans meet the criteria for problem gambling. That's around six million adults and about a half million teens.
- Youth risk developing a gambling problem at a rate of about two to three times that of adults, and approximately six percent of college students in America have a gambling problem.
- About 40 percent of people with a gambling problem started gambling before the age of 17.
- Nevada has the highest prevalence of problem gambling in the country. [Texas ranks 29th, per wallethub.com]

- NCPG notes the *annual* cost associated with gambling (crime, addiction, and bankruptcy) is \$17 billion.

However, gambling addiction is not the only problem, according to Texans Against Gambling chair Roger Weems. Even for gamblers who are not addicted, there can be serious problems. In a recent Bloomberg article, the poor buy lottery tickets in far higher amounts than the rich. Also, governments themselves seem to become "addicted" to gambling. Case in point: in 2012, the Texas House of Representatives voted to end the Texas Lottery. But then two hours later, they undid the vote on a Motion to Reconsider after realizing they had no immediate source of funding to replace the state's cut of the lottery sales.

The Texas Legislature may take up legalizing casinos, eight-liners, and fantasy sports in the upcoming 2019 session. TEF opposes state-sponsored gambling.



Twice As Many

A new study highlights just how disastrous our border security and immigration policies have been in recent decades. The study estimates that there are probably twice as many illegal aliens in the U.S.—more than 22 million—rather than the widely accepted and reported figure of 11 million. It is worth noting that this study was conducted by researchers at MIT and Yale—hardly right-wing, anti-immigration think tanks. And it exposes a huge problem: If we can't even count how many illegal immigrants are here, how can we possibly know who they are and how many came here as enemies of the United States? For example, Iran has been hinting that it has sleeper cells prepositioned to carry out terrorist attacks in the U.S. There's no reason to doubt these claims. But this is what happens when one party wants to fundamentally transform America through open borders, and elements of the other party want cheap labor.

SOURCE: Gary Bauer, End of Day Report, 9/24/18

Bolton Goes After the ICC

U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton condemned the International Criminal Court (ICC) "as a free-wheeling global organization claiming jurisdiction over individuals without their consent." He announced that the Trump administration would consider strong steps to protect the American people if the ICC oversteps its bounds, such as imposing sanctions on any ICC judges and prosecutors who bring legal action against Americans and even pursuing prosecution in U.S. courts against such ICC judges and prosecutors. "Americans can rest assured that the United States will not provide any form of legitimacy or support to this body," he vowed. "We will not cooperate, engage, fund, or assist the ICC in any way. This president will not allow American citizens to be prosecuted by foreign bureaucrats, and he will not allow other nations to dictate our means of self-defense. No committee of foreign nations will tell us how to govern ourselves and defend our freedom."

SOURCE: Canada Free Press, 9/13/18

China Crackdowns on Religious Liberty

Concerns have been raised over China's apparent crackdown on Christianity as the ruling Communist party continues to intensify its control over religious freedom in the country. Churches were raided and demolished, Bibles and holy books were confiscated, and new laws were established to monitor religious activities in the country's province of Henan, which has one of the largest Christian populations in China. Under President Xi Jinping, China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong, believers are seeing their freedoms shrink even as the country undergoes a religious revival. The crackdown is part of a broader push by Xi to "Sinicise" all the nation's religions by infusing them with Chinese characteristics, such as loyalty to the Communist Party. "Chinese leaders have always been suspicious of the threat that Christianity poses to the Communist regime," said Xi Lian, a Chinese scholar at Duke University. "Under Xi, this has intensified."

SOURCE: UK Daily Mail, 8/7/18

Quote of the Month

"It will be the voters' job to separate the candidates' life experiences from the policy differences they espouse before determining whom to support. If voters ignore policy and focus solely on a candidate's life experience, they do so at their own peril."

~ Janet Gingrich Cushman,
"Elections have consequences,"
Townhall.com, 9/6/18

Great American Quote

"Let each citizen remember at the moment he is offering to vote...that he is executing one of the most solemn trusts in human society for which he is accountable to God and his country."

~ Samuel Adams, known as the "Father of the American Revolution," and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

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