



## Republicans, Caught Between Their Own Hard Places, & Trump



Republicans are not shy about their desire to keep Democrats from power at almost any cost, and in all fairness, as politicians, it is their job, and the Democrats would harbor the exact same sentiments in their position. But in their mission to gain and retain power, the Republicans (*and we are talking primarily about politicians here*) have been less than truthful with the American people on numerous issues. In the past decade they have been downright racist, hateful, obstructionists, and vindictive towards President Barack Obama in his two full years as the first African-American President of the United States, and, in many of their actions prior to that, they have been egregiously damaging to the America they purport to love so much, and the America that the World so admired once. It is no longer that America, and the Republicans had a lot to do with ruining its global image.

Today, the Republican Administration and the Republican controlled Congress and Senate are undertaking economic and social policies that by most progressive global standards are pushing America backwards, and are causing the World heartburn. The Republicans justify their regressive policies on the basis of being 'free market' proponents, and hearken to times when America was truly a great free market economy. But at most times markets in general, and America is included here, were never truly 'free market', as those with influence, whether commercial or political (*J.P. Morgan et al*), could seldom resist skewing the odds or conditions in their own favor, however, more recently, political and monetary policies through pervasive interventions of the Federal Reserve, starting with Reagan's two terms, increasingly prevented market forces from functioning independently. Thus Republican pronouncements of freeing markets from 'government over-reach', to borrow one favorite Republican phrase, are blatantly false.

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Besides anyone that becomes powerful enough in a ‘free market economy’ exercises their power to influence politics and markets to favor themselves (*Carl Icahn, special advisor to Trump; the Koch Brothers; Wall Street Banks paying Billions in fines for manipulating markets; and so on and so on*).

As a note: Let’s make it quite clear here, our Western democracies with their flawed ‘free markets’ are still decidedly more preferable than authoritarian systems with their ‘centrally controlled’ economies, but having said that, we are also not so naive, or so uninformed, as to believe the Republicans or Trump, or other self-serving business interests, when they solemnly swear to free up markets for the common man’s good, as is being touted under the present regime.

The current tortured revisions of Obamacare by the Republicans and Trump is a case in point. As with the proposed revisions, the wealthy would benefit the most from the tax credits, while the elderly and the underprivileged would suffer the most.

As ‘free market’ is the holy grail choice the Republicans want to offer the American people as the path to better and cheaper health care, let us also point out that capitalist ‘free market’ economies of Britain, Germany and Canada, have far superior Universal Healthcare systems at about half the cost. Willfully ignoring that singular fact makes the Republicans less than truthful with the American people (*now supplemented with Trump’s legendary habit of ignoring truth altogether*), particularly when they site Government involvement in healthcare as the prime reason for poor service with higher costs. No Brit, German, or Canadian would swap their almost full coverage government sponsored system, with the nightmare that is the Health Industry dominated healthcare system of the United States.

Since the Republicans would protest our assertions, let us remind them that this critique is not out of partisan sentiments, after all we are Canadian, but we are more critical of their actions and words because what they say and do is inherently more untruthful and hence more objectionable, on most given days, by universal standards, than what the Democrats generally do or say. This is partly because liberal values are generally more accepted as progressive by humanity’s standards in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and mostly because the Republicans are just plain wrong.

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Let's not forget that it was under recent Republican Administrations, and by their direct actions, that some of the greatest damage was done to America, economically and politically, and by extension of America's global economic and political influence, to the rest of the World. In both, the spheres of national and foreign policy, and in managing the economy, the disasters of recent foreign wars (*Iraq and Afghanistan*), and the financial crisis of 2008, can be laid without hesitation, argument or doubt, at the Republican's very wide doorstep.

Today the Republicans are again caught by their falsehoods in trying to maintain their 'Republicanism'.

They have come to absolute power, controlling all three branches of Government, on the rather seamy and objectionable coattails of a Candidate that most of them absolutely despised, Donald J. Trump. Now they are beholden to him, regardless of his unsuitability.

And, now that they are in power, much to their utter surprise and delight, they certainly were not expecting it but rather expected to be decimated in the last election, they are caught unprepared to govern, and it shows. Their proposed economic and social healthcare policies are not well thought out, and are in fact knee-jerk, right-wing, conservative, run-of-the-mill policies that are downright damaging, economically speaking, and potentially very costly, in both social and healthcare terms, to their constituents.

Economically speaking, the Republicans have fallen back to their old standbys, reduced taxes (*particularly to the wealthy*), and deep deregulation across the board. Both of those old standbys have not delivered what they promised in the past, as proven by the governing terms under Ronald Reagan and George H. Bush and later under George W. Bush. In each case, whatever prosperity was generated, was at the very high cost of deficit spending and mounting record national debt. Taxes were cut repeatedly and revenues were not enough, under Reagan and the Bush(s), and deficits climbed. And all the years of deregulating resulted in the gross abuses of the financial industry that culminated with the financial crash and crisis of 2008. It took Bill Clinton (*a Democrat*) to come in and clean up the books a bit and turn the deficits into a surplus, and Barack Obama (*another Democrat*) to walk in and deal with the greatest financial crisis triggered under the Bush Republicans since the 1929 Great Depression. Obama dealt with the crisis by being forced to inject massive amounts of cash into the system, to try and prevent the entire global financial system from collapsing. The Republicans happily blamed him for the run-up in debt since, without taking responsibility for their central part in engineering the near collapse of the American and Global economy. But now they have inherited a relatively robust economy from the Democrat Obama and will have no excuse when they screw it up yet again, as they are generally prone to do with their standard but unbalanced policies.

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Watching the Republicans today, it is apparent they have not learned any lessons from the past mistakes, as they are at it again with the same ossified dangerous policies that prove that they are the same old Republicans. They are proposing to deregulate massively, cut taxes, increase spending, especially on the most wasteful of government entities, the Military, while disadvantaging the working class in favor of the wealthy and big business, thereby increasing inequality, gutting social spending, and as a result, turning parts of America into ghetto, again. All of this while dropping health care insurance for some 20 million that didn't have any coverage previous to Obamacare.

But this time, the Republicans are not just by themselves run-of-the-mill-Republicans, they also have Donald Trump within their ranks.

While he was in large part responsible for bringing them to power, his erratic, dangerously cavalier attitude poses a grave threat to the Republican brand (*already tarnished with the irresponsible excess of the past*) with the anti people policies that are being proposed and implemented currently. Even though opposed by most Americans that never voted for him, Trump and the Republicans control all the levers of power to push through their agenda. But it's a deeply flawed agenda that will disrupt trade, gut healthcare, increase inequality, increase the national debt, bring back financial and corporate crime through less oversight, further damage the environment, weaken America's already notoriously bad educational school system, and build internal and external walls. All of this potential damage to America because of the unrealistic and unethical policies that the Republicans have trapped themselves with.

Add to those existing Republican flaws, Trump's outrageous, abnormal behavior and the Republicans are truly caught between a rock and some very hard places, that are already starting to bruise them badly (*Repeal & Replace Obamacare; Tax, Trade and Economic Policies; Immigration & Refugee Bans; FBI investigations against their President and his team, for potential 'coordination' between them and Russian operatives, no less*). Those are some real hard places, and Trump is a big rock.

