



SPOTLIGHT

Snap, Crackle, and POP!

By Dale M. Glading

If you are a Baby Boomer like me, you grew up watching the Rice Krispies commercials featuring Snap, Crackle, and Pop, the three elfish cartoon characters that mimicked the sound the cereal makes when you pour milk on it. Not so coincidentally, Snap, Crackle, and Pop first appeared in Rice Krispies ads in 1933, at the height of the Great Depression.

Fast forward 92 years and a different kind of SNAP is getting a lot of attention in Washington D.C. these days. The acronym stands for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the food assistance program for poverty-stricken Americans.

As anyone with a TV, radio, smartphone, or internet connection knows by now, SNAP benefits were delayed due to the 40-day federal government shutdown. What you may not realize is that the delay has affected 42 million people or 1 in every 8 Americans.

That's incredibly sad for two reasons.

First, I can't imagine what it's like not knowing where your next meal is coming from. That must be extremely frightening, especially if you are a parent with young children.

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Will America Have a Second Fort Sumter?

By Dale M. Glading

With each passing day, it is starting to look more like a question of "when" and not "if"...

Six days after South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860, Major Robert Anderson of the U.S. Army relocated his troops from the vulnerable Fort Moultrie to the better fortified Fort Sumter. However, the Confederates organized a naval blockade that prevented Anderson and his men from being resupplied by a ship sent by President James Buchanan.

The stalemate continued until Abraham Lincoln was sworn in as president on March 4th, after which he informed the governor of South Carolina, Francis Wilkinson Pickens, that he planned to send more supply ships to Fort Sumter. The Confederate government responded by issuing an ultimatum to Maj. Anderson demanding his immediate withdrawal, which he promptly ignored.

At 4:30 AM on April 12, 1861, Brigadier General P. G. T. Beauregard gave the order to open fire on the Union forces stationed at Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor. The tinder box had been lit, and America's Civil War began in earnest.

Those first cannon volleys initiated four years of bloodshed and death that ripped America in two and claimed the lives of an estimated 620,000 soldiers on both sides, while

another 876,000 men were wounded, captured, or listed as missing in action. Roughly 50,000 civilians and 60,000 slaves also died as a direct result of the war.

Fast forward 160 years from the end of the Civil War to what increasingly appears to be the foundation of a second one. Think I'm kidding or being melodramatic? Consider the following...

Podcaster Joe Rogan recently said on air that America is at "Step 7 of 9" on the road to inevitable Civil War... and radio host Glenn Beck agrees.

Step 1 is the Loss of Civic Trust.

Both Gallup and Pew polls show that faith in Congress, the media, the judicial system, the FBI, and the federal government are at all-time lows. I don't know about you, but these days I trust Uncle Sam about as far as I can throw him... which isn't very far.

Step 2 is Polarization Hardens into Identity.

In other words, people no longer consider those with different political views and ideologies as being wrong; they now see them as both evil and dangerous. Goodbye, civil discourse; hello, referring to your political opponents as existential threats to democracy along the likes of Nazis, Hitler, and Mussolini.

Step 3 is the Breakdown of Gatekeepers.

Remember when journalists like Walter Cronkite, a closet liberal, used to report the news without bias? Well, those days are long gone... and so is the time when societal institutions like churches, civic groups, the

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public school system, and statesmen in both parties worked together to maintain law and order, let alone uphold and promulgate a universal standard of morality.

Step 4 is Parallel Information Realities. That means people on both ends of the political spectrum increasingly receive their news and information from diametrically opposed sources. Here is how Glenn Beck put it on The Blaze...

"Conservatism and progressivism are undoubtedly rooted in antithetical worldviews. One sees gender as immutable; the other sees it as a social construct. One believes experimenting on children is evil; the other calls it 'care.' One says crime rates are surging in blue cities; the other blames spikes in violence on poverty, guns, and systemic inequities. One sees secure borders as a critical protection for citizens; the other calls it inhumane and xenophobic."

There is no longer any middle ground... and with each passing day, the two sides become more polarized and more entrenched in their positions. Sounds like Charleston harbor, circa April 1861, doesn't it?

Step 5 is the Loss of the Natural Rule of Law. Glenn Beck calls this the "pivot point"... and he may be right. According to a YouGov poll, 67% of Americans believe that the judicial system is used for political purposes. That may be why some of the January 6th defendants were given lengthy prison sentences while the BLM and Antifa rioters during the "Summer of Love" in 2020 went Scot-free, despite causing an estimated \$2 billion in dam-

ages to cities across America.

A two-tiered justice system - one for the rich and powerful and one for the poor and downtrodden - is not sustainable. Neither is a system that is used to shelter those who are politically well-connected while simultaneously punishing those who oppose the party in power.

Step 6 is the Normalization of Political Violence. The latest PBS News/NPR Marist poll shows that nearly a third of Americans now believe political violence may be necessary to get the country back on track. That's up from 19% just a year-and-a-half ago, and follows a series of high-profile attacks, including the June killing of a Democratic state legislator and her husband in Minnesota, and the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk in Utah in September.

Meanwhile, a recent YouGov survey found that 72% of Americans said political violence is never justified, while 11% said it can sometimes be justified. Another 12% said they're not sure, and 6% preferred not to say, so you can read into that what you will. The September 10th poll also showed that the more liberal respondents were, the more likely they were to say violence can sometimes be justified.

A quarter of respondents who identified as "very liberal" said violence can sometimes be justified to achieve political goals, along with 17% of those who identified as "liberal," 9% of moderates, 6% of those who said they're "conservative" and 3% of those who identified as "very conservative." That means that 42% of Americans who describe themselves as liberal or very liberal think that political violence is sometimes O.K. versus just 9% of those who call themselves conservative or very conservative.

Hmmm... sounds to me like - despite the media portrayals to the contrary - political violence is becoming more and more a left-wing option.

Even more troubling is the fact that the younger the respondent, the more likely he or she was to think that political violence is justifiable. Twenty-six percent of liberals under 45 years old found nothing wrong with political violence whereas only 12% of liberals 45 and older agreed.

When asked whether it's acceptable for a person to be happy about the death of a public figure they oppose, liberals were again more likely to say it's usually or always acceptable with 16% holding this position, including 24% of "very liberal" respondents and 10% who said they identify as liberal but not very liberal. Conversely, only 4% of conservatives and 7% of moderates held this view, so you tell me which party is responsible for ramping up the violent rhetoric?

Wait... it gets worse. Much, much, worse.

According to a snap poll conducted just five days after the assassination attempt on President Trump in Butler, PA in July 2024, the Manhattan Institute reported that one-third of all Democrats agreed with the following statement: "I wish Trump's assassin hadn't missed." And a NCRI poll showed that 55.2% of left of center respondents thought that assassinating President Trump would be at least somewhat justifiable.

I simply cannot wrap my head around that type of evil and irrational thinking.

Step 7 is the Rise of Militias and Parallel Forces, something that we

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are beginning to see with organized groups funded by George Soros and others targeting ICE officers and other immigration officers who are simply doing their jobs... and who knows what is really going on behind the scenes?

Step 8 is the Trigger Event. Leading up to Fort Sumter, it was only a matter of time before something sparked a military confrontation between the industrial north and the agricultural south, which was heav-

ily dependent on slave labor.

In similar fashion, it took the explosion of the battleship Maine in Havana harbor for the United States to declare war on Spain in 1898, and the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand to initiate World War I. The sinking of the Lusitania by a German U-boat in 1915 helped draw America into that European war two years later and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, led to a declaration of war the following day.

What (or who) will it take to walk America back from the brink of a second Civil War? Will we realize

that, as Americans, there is more that unites us - including our shared history and our common values - than divides us? And will God raise up a Lincoln-like statesman who will call us to "the better angels of our nature"?

Or, heaven help us, have we already splintered so far apart that all the king's horses and all the king's men can't put us back together again?

Time will tell... but time is also ticking.

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Second, what kind of country has 12.5% of its population living near or below the poverty line? After all, to qualify for SNAP benefits, your gross monthly income must be at or below 130% of the federal poverty level and your net monthly income - after deductions for things like rent and childcare - must be at or below 100% of the federal poverty level. There are also asset limits starting at \$3,000 per household and increasing to \$4,500 for seniors or those with disabilities.

So, here is the quandary as I see it.

We have 42 million Americans who depend on Uncle Sam to put food on their tables... and 294 million Americans who are paying for those groceries in addition to their own. That can't continue in the long-term, because it creates a permanently dependent underclass on one hand and a permanently resentful middle class on the other.

Speaking from personal experience...

When our family relocated from New Jersey to Florida in 2011 to launch a new ministry from scratch, my income dropped from \$75,000 to \$18,000 our first year in the Sunshine State. No matter how you slice it - with a mortgage and three kids in college - we were living well below the federal poverty line.

However, I was raised by parents who instilled in me a sense of pride and personal responsibility and so, the thought of applying for government assistance never even occurred to me. I simply went out and worked three different part-time jobs while getting our new ministry up and running. Thanks to a lot of hard work, some strict budgeting, and God's abundant favor, I was able to go full-time with our new ministry within nine months... and haven't looked back since.

In other words, staying off government assistance even in the toughest of times can be done if you want it badly enough and are willing to work hard enough. It just takes the humility to accept whatever job is offered and to live within your limited means. If one job doesn't suffice, go and get a second or a third one. Your kids will

learn a valuable life lesson watching their parents work their fingers to the bone to support themselves rather than sitting back and letting Uncle Sam do it for them.

Yes, I realize that there are exceptions to every rule and that's why programs like SNAP, CHIP, WIC, SSI, TANF, and Medicaid exist. But they are intended to be temporary hand-ups, not permanent hand-outs. We, as parents, must strive to demonstrate a spirit of independence and self-reliance for our children to emulate.

That is the American way.

(Editor's Note: When I ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2008 and 2010, I advocated the following limit on unemployment benefits: six months at a time and two years over a lifespan. I would like to see similar limitations - and stronger work requirements - placed on some of the federal welfare programs that are not only driving up our national debt, but also disincentivizing personal responsibility and a strong work ethic.)

The Reshaping of America's Political Landscape

By Dale M. Glading

I've said it before, and I will say it again...

If Harry S. Truman and John F. Kennedy were alive today, they would both be moderate members of the Republican caucus. No way, no how would either man - one a World War I vet and the other a World War II combat hero - have anything to do with the Democrat Party and the leftist loonies that control it today.

Truman was a no-nonsense family man who would tell modern-day Progressives and their radical LGBTQ+ agenda to take a hike. And Kennedy was a foreign policy hawk and an economic conservative who would be aghast at the anti-Semites and free-spending Socialists that dominate his former party in the year 2025.

Simply put, this is NOT your grandfather's Democrat Party anymore... and it hasn't been in quite some time. Not since the likes of Henry "Scoop" Jackson, Sam Nunn, and

Bob Casey Sr. retired or died. Unfortunately, their ranks have been filled with radicals like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren in the Senate; and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, and Rashida Tlaib in the House. And let's not forget those "intellectual heavyweights" such as Jasmine Crockett and Maxine Waters, whose combined IQs remain in double digits.

The Democrat Party was once known as the home of the working man. Today, it marches to the beat of billionaires and the Hollywood elite. And when will Black Americans realize that the only color the Democrats care about is G-R-E-E-N... as in money and energy?

Conversely, the Republican Party used to be associated with the fat cats on Wall Street. Well, not anymore. Just ask Warren Buffet, Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, and Mark Zuckerberg who they voted for in the last five presidential elections. I'm willing to bet their names were Obama, Clinton, Biden, and Harris... not McCain, Romney, and Trump.

Meanwhile, minorities and even labor union members are starting

to wake up to the fact that the Democrats have taken them (and their votes) for granted for decades. As a result, they have started flocking to the GOP and so have young men in record numbers.

That leaves the Dems with an ever-shrinking base of angry white women who demand the "right" to murder their own preborn children; older minority voters who still think the Democrat Party has their best interests at heart despite 60 years of failed social programs; emasculated men; and sexual deviants.

That is not a winning coalition in the short-term... and it is a recipe for extinction in the long-term.

Bring it on, baby!

Want more?

Read more of Dale Glading's political blog posts at www.daleglading.com

"America's Trojan Horse Is Already Inside the Gates"

"Turn Off the Spigot"

"Bigger Doesn't Always Mean Better"

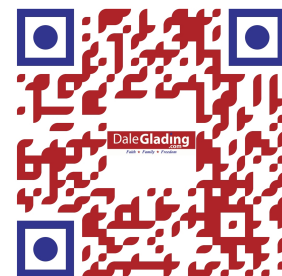
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