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OPINION | COLUMNISTS | WONDER LAND

The Clinton Default Mistake

Her presidency will use the federal enforcement agencies to entrench political correctness.



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By

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The decision to default one's vote to Hillary Clinton comes in many forms. She is the lesser of two evils. She is the devil we know.

By all accounts, hell is still hell. Before volunteering to spend four years in it, voters about to commit the sin of despair might consider the consequences of a default vote.

The greatest is the economy. Mrs. Clinton will contribute nothing to lift the flatlined aspirations of the eight Obama years.

There is also the matter of Clinton mores, revealed again Monday in a Washington Post story about the way former Sen. Clinton dealt with the economic plight of upstate New Yorkers. Most relevant was the account of Sen. Clinton pushing federal money to the Corning company on behalf of its emissions-reduction technology:

“Corning’s chief executive co-hosted a 2015 fundraiser for her. The company paid her \$225,500 in 2014 to speak to Corning executives. Corning also has given more than \$100,000 to the Clinton Foundation, its records show.”

Also worth reading are details of the \$315,000 eBay gave her for a 20-minute speech last year, but we digress. Our subject is what surely will be the decline and final fall of the American higher-education system under a President Clinton.

The onslaught of political correctness that overwhelmed American campuses the past year may not come up in the presidential debates. But for many voters the campus pillaging of free speech symbolizes a country off the rails.

The New York Times recently ran a piece describing how colleges and universities are experiencing a pull back in alumni giving because of the PC madness. Donations at Amherst fell 6.5% in the last fiscal year. A small-college fundraising organization named Staff reports that giving in fiscal 2016 is down 29% from the year before.

Enraged alumni vent frustration throughout the piece, but one in particular asks, “Where did this super-correctness come from?” There is an answer to that question.

A Clinton victory will empower, for a very long time, the forces now putting at risk one of the country’s incomparable strengths, its system of higher education.

What happened can be explained in one word: diversity.

This is an idea that degraded into a set of destructive obsessions. Those obsessions then became official, destructive federal policy.

At its inception a few decades back, “diversity” described American social structures absorbing new immigrants, alongside blacks and women via affirmative-action commitments. Yes, the immigrant influx is part of the presidential debate, but it is not the subject of this column. Only one political mess a week.

When the schools’ presidents began to create offices of diversity affairs, alumni and trustees waved them in as the right thing to do. Bureaucratize an idea, though, and what do you get? More of it than any normal person could want. It is not an overstatement to say that diversity offices are now running American higher education.

Higher-ed’s trade newspaper, the Chronicle of Higher Education, publishes a yearly supplement called “Diversity in Academe.” Its May cover story was “Who Sets a College’s Diversity Agenda?” The most telling piece inside was: “Auditing Diversity: An interest in assessments is rising as officials strive to show they are committed.”

The National Center for Education Statistics reports the U.S. has more

than 7,000 postsecondary Title IV institutions serving some 21 million students. All university administrators know their next job depends on showing evidence of achieving diversity metrics. So they push them, relentlessly. In 20 years, diversity went from an idea to an industry.

Enter the Obama presidency and the cultural left on steroids. In 2011 the Obama Department of Education sent a “Dear Colleague” letter to all higher-ed schools, providing “guidance” on creating sexual-abuse surveillance systems. This is the letter that shut down traditional due process for college students.

For the presidents of these institutions, the “guidance” notice had one key passage. It said that “if a recipient does not come into compliance,” the federal government may “withdraw federal funding.”

Readers of this newspaper do not need more dots connected to understand why nominally sensible college presidents are rolling over like trained puppies to the PC mobs. Resist and Washington will terminate their federal cash flow. None will. All comply. That is raw power.

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A President Clinton won't rein in any of this. Accommodating the ascendant anti-intellectual left across America's campuses is easy, because the institutions' own leadership—presidents and trustees—don't care. So why should she?

In fact, using the full “guidance” powers of the federal enforcement agencies inside Justice, Education, Labor and the EPA against the states and private institutions will be a primary and unaccountable weapon of the Clinton presidency.

This administrative federal power is virtually beyond the reach of Congress. The idea that a President Cruz or Kasich will “roll it all back” in 2020 after 12 years of the federal cement drying is just not serious.

The Nov. 8 vote is the last hurdle of accountability for Hillary Clinton. The price of the Clinton default option looks much too high.

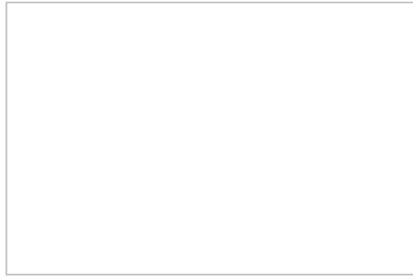
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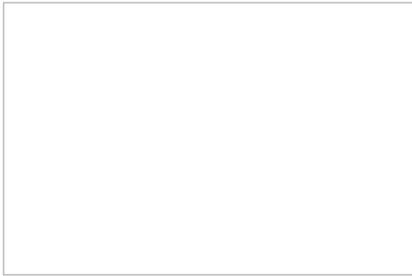
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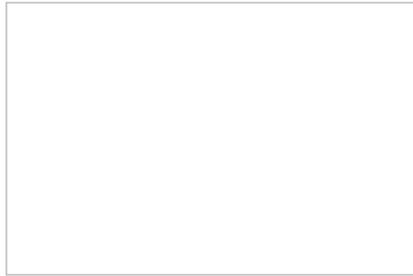
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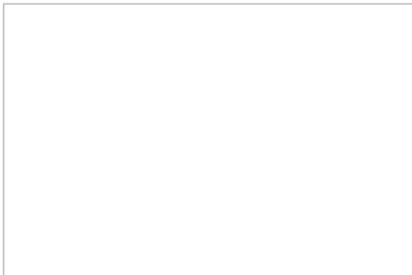
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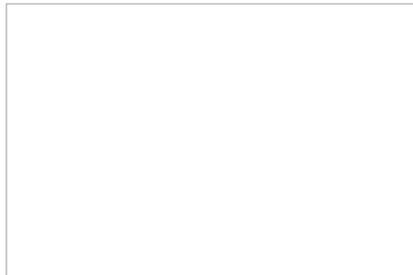
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