

Richard Viguerie: I'm Very Much #NeverRomney

One of the things that convinced many conservatives and populists to vote for Donald Trump was his promise to “drain the swamp.” So, let’s be clear—it isn’t that Mitt Romney would get in the way of draining the swamp— it is that he, and other establishment Republicans like him, are the swamp.

However, the idea that President-elect Donald Trump should appoint establishment Republicans who opposed him to important positions in his administration began to be circulated by the establishment media almost as soon as Trump was declared the winner. And now, with the promotion of Mitt Romney as secretary of state, it has reached a fever pitch.

If we look at the experience of Ronald Reagan and his post-election decisions to bring his opponents into his administration, it is hard to think of a worse idea—and a worse signal to send to Trump’s base—if Trump wants to drain the swamp than the appointment of Romney or any other #NeverTrumper to a position in the new administration.

- **President-elect Ronald Reagan bought the “unite the Party” argument and made a similar mistake** by first bringing aboard George H.W. Bush as his vice president and later compounded the error by appointing James A. Baker III as his White House chief of staff, both of whom regularly sought to undermine Reagan’s revolution.
- **Mitt Romney would be a Trojan horse within the Trump administration.** As James Baker was in Reagan’s day, Romney would be a constant advocate of exactly the kind of foreign policy, national security and international economic policies that voters so resoundingly rejected in 2012.

- **Romney has made it plain he opposes Donald Trump's foreign policy ideas.** During his infamous March 3 Trump-bashing speech at the University of Utah, Romney said, "Let me put it plainly, if we Republicans choose Donald Trump as our nominee, the prospects for a safe and prosperous future are greatly diminished ... He inherited his business, he didn't create it ... A business genius he is not ... What he said on *60 Minutes* about Syria and ISIS has to go down as the most ridiculous and dangerous idea of the campaign season: Let ISIS take out Assad, he said, and then we can pick up the remnants ... I'm afraid that when it comes to foreign policy he is very, very not smart..."
- **Personnel is policy.** Mitt Romney and his former running mate, Paul Ryan, are the kind of globalists who subscribe to the econometric philosophy that says there's a global race to the bottom in the market for labor and American workers are just going to have to get used to a lower standard of living.
- **Mitt Romney could be counted on to bring into the state department hundreds of anti-Trump operatives.** Many of the #NeverTrump gang's most vocal members are former members of Romney's campaign or Massachusetts staff; Dan Senor, Ryan Williams and spoiler candidates Evan McMullin and Mindy Finn all once worked for Romney.
- **Inviting his most vocal and die-hard opponent into the highest profile Cabinet post would be a cancer in the Donald Trump administration.** Mitt Romney and his operatives at the State Department would constantly eat away at the policies and promises Trump made to get elected, particularly with regard to international trade and our overseas commercial interests.

- **Donald Trump's appointment of Romney would disillusion his base before he starts his first session of Congress and begins the traditional 100-day introduction of his program and policies.** Using a shopworn establishment Republican like Mitt Romney to introduce a new foreign policy will stifle the enthusiasm of Trump's supporters when he needs them fired up to keep the heat on Congress and the establishment media.
- **Appointing Romney would signal that Trump is throwing overboard his new conservative-populist coalition** and resuscitating the dying Republican establishment voters so thoroughly rejected during the 2016 primary season.

History tells us the idea of bringing your political enemies into your inner councils is the pathway to failure.

"I'm all for party unity, but I'm not sure that we have to pay for that with the secretary of state position," my good friend Kellyanne Conway, Trump's campaign manager, said in an interview with CNN. "We don't even know if Mitt Romney voted for Donald Trump."

I agree, and the same could be said of Ohio Governor John Kasich, the Bush Clan, Representatives Martha Roby, Fred Upton, Charlie Dent, Scott Rigell, Reid Ribble and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Senators Rob Portman and Susan Collins and former elected officials, such as Rep. Mickey Edwards, Sen. Norm Coleman, Sen. Gordon Humphrey, Sen. John Warner and a host of pundits and alleged conservatives such as George Will, Bill Kristol and David French, who did everything they could to elect Hillary Clinton by undermining Donald Trump's campaign.

As I argued in my book *Takeover*, the first and greatest impediment to governing America according to conservative principles isn't the Democrats like Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. Instead, it's the Republican establishment that shares their Big Government, anti-constitutional and globalist views.

Bringing Mitt Romney or any of the other members of the #NeverTrump gang into the new administration is the equivalent of giving CPR to the dying Republican establishment. Better to let it die without heroic intervention and allow its leaders to sink into the obscurity to which the marketplace of ideas has consigned them than to keep it on life support by bestowing upon them the credibility of association with Trump's election victory and likely successful presidency. {eoa}

Richard Viguerie transformed American politics in the 1960s and '70s by pioneering the use of direct mail fundraising in the political and ideological spheres. He used computerized, direct-mail fundraising to help build the conservative movement, which then elected Ronald Reagan as the first conservative president of the modern era. As the "Funding Father of the conservative movement," Viguerie motivated millions of Americans to participate in politics for the first time, greatly expanding the base of active citizenship. He is our era's equivalent of Tom Paine, using a direct-mail letter rather than a pamphlet to deliver his call to arms.

This article was originally published at . Used with permission.