

**Is GOP Still a National Party?**by **Patrick J. Buchanan** ([more by this author](#))

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As President Barack Obama delivers his inaugural address to a nation filled with anticipation and hope, the vital signs of the loyal opposition appear worse than worrisome.

The new majority of 49 states and 60 percent of the nation Nixon cobbled together in 1972, that became the Reagan coalition of 49 states and 60 percent of the nation in 1984, is a faded memory. Demographically, philosophically and culturally, the party base has been shrinking since Bush I won his 40-state triumph over Michael Dukakis. Indeed, the Republican base is rapidly becoming a redoubt, a Fort Apache in Indian country.

In the National Journal, Ron Brownstein renders a grim prognosis of the party's chances of recapturing the White House. Consider:

In the five successive presidential elections, beginning with Clinton's victory in 1992 and ending with Obama's in 2008, 18 states and the District of Columbia, with 248 electoral votes among them, voted for the Democratic ticket all five times. John McCain did not come within 10 points of Obama in any of the 18, and he lost D.C. 92-8.

The 18 cover all of New England, save New Hampshire; New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland; four of the major states in the Midwest -- Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota; and the Pacific Coast states of California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii.

Three other states -- Iowa, New Hampshire and New Mexico -- have gone Democratic in four of the past five presidential contests. And Virginia and Colorado have ceased to be reliably red.

Not only are the 18 hostile terrain for any GOP presidential ticket, Republicans hold only three of their 36 Senate seats and fewer than 1 in 3 of their House seats. "Democrats also control two-thirds of these 18 governorships, every state House chamber, and all but two of the state Senates," writes Brownstein.

In many of the 18, the GOP has ceased to be competitive. In the New England states, for example, there is not a single Republican congressman. In New York, there are only three.

"State by state, election by election," says Brownstein, "Democrats since 1992 have constructed the party's largest and most durable Electoral College base in more than half a century. Call it the blue wall."

While that Democratic base is not yet as decisive as the Nixon-Reagan base in the South, and the Plains and Mountain States, it is becoming so solidified it may block any Republican from regaining the White House, in the absence of a catastrophically failed Democratic president.

What does the Republican base look like?

In the same five presidential contests, from 1992 to 2008, Republicans won 13 states all five times. But the red 13 have but 93 electoral votes, fewer than a third of the number in "the blue wall."

What has been happening to the GOP? Three fatal contractions.

Demographically, the GOP is a party of white Americans, who in 1972 were perhaps 90 percent of the national vote. Nixon and Reagan rolled up almost two-thirds of that vote in 1972 and 1984. But because of abortion and aging, the white vote is shrinking as a share of the national vote and the population.

The minorities that are growing most rapidly, Hispanics and Asians, cast 60 to 70 percent of their presidential votes for the Democratic Party. Black Americans vote 9-1 for national Democrats. In 2008, they went 30-1.

Put succinctly, the red pool of voters is aging, shrinking and dying, while the blue pool, fed by high immigration and a high birth

rate among immigrants, is steadily expanding.

Philosophically, too, the country is turning away from the GOP creed of small government and low taxes. Why?

Nearly 90 percent of immigrants, legal and illegal, are Third World poor or working-class and believe in and rely on government for help with health and housing, education and welfare. Second, tax cuts have dropped nearly 40 percent of wage earners from the tax rolls.

If one pays no federal income tax but reaps a cornucopia of benefits, it makes no sense to vote for the party of less government.

The GOP is overrepresented among the taxpaying class, while the Democratic Party is overrepresented among tax consumers. And the latter are growing at a faster rate than the former.

Lastly, Democrats are capturing a rising share of the young and college-educated, who are emerging from schools and colleges where the values of the counterculture on issues from abortion to same-sex marriage to affirmative action have become the new orthodoxy.

The Republican "lock" on the presidency, crafted by Nixon, and patented by Reagan, has been picked. The only lingering question is whether an era of inexorable Republican decline has set in.

Mr. Buchanan is a nationally syndicated columnist and author of [Churchill, Hitler, and "The Unnecessary War": How Britain Lost Its Empire and the West Lost the World](#), ["The Death of the West,"](#) ["The Great Betrayal,"](#) ["A Republic, Not an Empire"](#) and ["Where the Right Went Wrong."](#)

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