

THE CARLSON CHRONICLE

One Absolute Requirement

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There ought to be an amendment to the Constitutional amendment that limits the terms of a president to two consecutive terms which would require each major political party's nominee for President come only from the ranks of that party's governors.

There simply is no substitute for executive experience, in particular government executive experience; and, while we are at it, let's ban that asinine phrase usually uttered by members of the United States Senate, that they're going to run the government like a business when they become president.

If ever there was an ignorant phrase, that's it. Government is not a business as any governor will tell one.

Think how much better off we would be today if both party's nominees for the presidency were governors. As a nation we would not be despairing over the Hobbseian choice we are facing in the fall with a narcissistic, egomaniac billionaire who claims he alone can change the federal government and run it like a business (Ignore his three bankruptcies please) on one side.

On the other side we have a U.S. Senator who, like most senators, has run nothing larger than a Senate staff, if senators run their own staff at all, and after 30 years of government service still demonstrates a lack of judgment and a tendency to let staff run her instead of the reverse. The net effect is the electorate has little confidence in her abilities, not to mention her ethics.

One need look no further than our current president for an example of how difficult it is for one to master the levers of power and move the bureaucracy when one has had no previous executive experience. It took six years for President Obama to begin to command the office and run the government.

Looking to the past is a good guide for almost all of our good presidents were first governors. The most notable exception of course was President Lincoln. Examine the list of presidents who were governors:
Franklin Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, George W. Bush, and Thomas Jefferson are just a few names that leap out.

The list of duds who were senators but thought they saw a president in the mirror every morning include Andrew Johnson, Lyndon Johnson, John F. Kennedy (Yes, JFK---his record of accomplishments was thin, and having sex with an underage intern during the Cuban Missile crisis was inexcusable), Richard Nixon, and Warren G. Harding.

If each party would have to have nominated a governor today we would be weighing the merits of Ohio's Governor John Kasich or former Florida Governor Jeb Bush against New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, or California Governor Jerry Brown, or Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper.

Just think how much better we'd all feel, knowing that there was competency, skill and ethics on the part of both party's nominee and that no matter the outcome the nation would still be in experienced hands.

Idaho voters over the years have shown an uncanny ability to choose as governors people who have already been vetted by the voters in other government roles and thus have a record that can be reviewed. The Idaho Republican party in particular has figured this out much better than the Democrats.

Idaho Democrats in recent years have shown a distressing tendency to put up candidates for major offices people who have no record and have never run for anything else. Not surprisingly the Idaho electorate has rejected folks like Keith Allred, Jerry Brady, and AJ. Balukoff who sought to be governor.

One need look no further than the upcoming 2018 election. The Republican primary will see former state senator and current Lt. Governor Brad Little, former state senator Russ Fulcher, and former state representative and current congressman Raul Labrador squaring off.

Democrats are expected to nominate A.J. Balukoff again who may have no primary opposition as Boise Mayor Dave Bieter is expected to stay where he is.

Democrats should take a page from the Republican play book and start cultivating a farm team of young Democrats who they can bring along by providing support (such as a political job that pays more than minimum wage).

Here's a list they could start with: Mike Kennedy, former Coeur d'Alene City Council; State Rep. Matt Erpelding; Lewiston City Councilman Jesse Maldonado; Latah County Commissioner Tom Lamar; Boise City Councilman T.J. Thomson; former American Falls Mayor Amy Wynn; and, North Idaho College Young Democrat president A.J. Konda. Add two young members of the state party staff to that list---Tom Hamilton and Shelby Scott.

The bottom line is there is no substitute for experience whether at the state level or the national.