“MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN”

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Since rather a promising and bright Democratic National Convention is over, let us focus on the other side, the Republican National Convention, held from 24 th to 27 th August. It frankly seems that Mr. Trump and his party, in their campaign for votes and funds, attempted to appeal to voters on an emotional level. While they also attacked Joe Biden, the Democrats’ presidential nominee, for only speaking and failing to deliver despite being in Washington D.C for 47 years, no real promises were offered to the citizens by the Republicans to strengthen their already weak case for reelection. The only thing they offered was their slogans “Make America Great Again” and “America One”, and unabashed rhetoric. On Day 1 of the Convention, Republicans like Nikki Haley, Vernon Jones, Kimberly Guilfoyle and Republican Whip Steve Scalise went on an offensive against Biden and the Democrats, condemning their ideas and also stating that they aim to establish a “socialist utopia”, which will do nothing but stop US economic recovery and lead to misery of the citizens. Moreover, the speakers also claimed that Democrats’ ideas would dismantle and destroy America’s law enforcement, which is in response to the row between both the parties with regards to the police reform bills.

They also criticized him for including a tax break that would affect high earning taxpayers in states like California and New York and said, “And now Joe Biden wants to come for your pocketbooks. Unless of course you’re a blue state millionaire”. Apart from a speech by Donald Trump Junior, the most notable speech was by Senator Tim Cook, where he defended Donald Trump as one promoting the rights of the Black people, Hispanics and other communities taking an example of his own personal life and in essence, using it to tug on the emotions of the people. He took up the same topic to criticize Biden while mentioning his bill, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, as one which contributed to mass incarceration and put more black people behind bars. The Republicans brought out the idea that the fight is for the “kind of country you want”.

The Day 2 of the Convention was marked by Mr. Trump using his presidential powers quite directly to promote a political message to advance his and the Republican Party’s chances for reelection. In pre-taped videos, the President issued a pardon for a man who had robbed a bank in Nevada and later founded an organization for former inmates, and then Trump presided over a naturalization ceremony for new American citizens. This comes in the light of the fact that Trump has already been accused by the Democrats of violating norms and traditions by utilizing the White House to make his speech on the last day of the Convention.

The First Lady, Melania Trump, came forward offering her support to her people who are suffering during this pandemic and to the frontline workers, while being perhaps the first one to make mention of the coronavirus pandemic at the Convention - especially considering the fact that Trump has been downplaying the pandemic, its impact on the nation and the importance of essentials like masks. Furthermore, the First Lady also stated that her husband’s administration would not stop fighting until there is an effective treatment or vaccine for the virus, which is available to everyone.

Apart from Eric Trump and Tiffany Trump also speaking on Day 2, the inclusion of former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo throwing Foreign policy into the mix - with the speakers trying to justify and defend Trump’s actions in the international community. Bondi criticized Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden and accused them of nepotism in that Joe Biden was the man in charge of distributing US aid to Ukraine while Hunter Biden served on the board of a Ukrainian energy firm. Mike Pompeo went on to praise Mr. Trump for being the one to actively work towards peace in the Middle East by helping Israel and United Arab Emirates to sign an agreement to normalize relations. He also praised Trump for being the one to bring the North Korean leadership to the table, although no real results have been shown. But the fact remains that from exiting the Paris Climate Agreement or the United Human Rights Council or the World Health Assembly to practically isolating the country by portraying an “America First” philosophy, and being the laughing stock of world leaders like Boris Johnson, Emmanuel Macron and others, it can be rightfully questioned whether Trump’s foreign policy was sound.

Day 3 of the Convention was marked by Vice President Mike Pence formally accepting the Vice-Presidential nomination for the 2020 election. In his speech from Fort McHenry in Baltimore, he defended the Trump administration’s COVID-19 response saying that they have worked to provide the best of medical facilities while he also attacked Biden on various issues. The emotional angle was played yet again when the Second Lady Karen Pence took the stage and stated how the Trump Administration has provided for military families, considering that her own family is one of them. Next, Kellyanne Conway spoke about how Trump has advocated for, promoted, and worked towards women rights by elevating them to senior positions in business and government. She also praised Trump for his unwavering support when she was coordinating the White House efforts on combating the drug crisis. Iowa Senator Joni Ernst also spoke about Trump’s support for farmers while she also criticized and slammed the Democrats’ Green New Deal. But it should be kept in mind that despite the Phase One Deal between USA and China, relations between both the countries are still unstable and well, considering Trump’s philosophies, nothing much can be said. One interesting fact about Day 3 was that one of the speakers, Representative Dan Crenshaw of Texas, did not mention Trump by name although he did state that The Trump administration by defeating the ISIS caliphate, has restored America’s power.

On the last day of the Convention, many speakers like Alice Johnson, Kayleigh McEnany and Daniel Cameron provided for a diverse line-up, all with a personal story to share, of how Trump had helped them and supported them. This has really put the emotional angle in place with Trump having people sharing personal stories and having all his four adult children speaking in the Convention.

But soon enough, the pandemic again came into question in the pandemic considering the fact that the crowds on Days 3 and 4 of the Convention were not wearing masks which even further highlights how Trump has downplayed the pandemic. Another highlight was how the statements passed by the Republican speakers and Trump himself were nothing but false allegations against Biden with almost all of them proving to be the exact opposite of the ideas that Biden has promoted and spread publicly. Last but not the least, Trump used the White House not only to deliver his speech but also use it as a tool in his speech to try to promote his chances for reelection. Trump and his party did not shed light on their policies and beliefs with regard to the upcoming elections.

While the Biden campaign is chugging along with a successful Democratic National Convention, and Trump leaving no stones unturned to attempt to secure his reelection, it is yet to be seen who wins. However, it is clear that the odds are looking in Joe Biden’s favour. As Kimberly Guilfoyle exuberantly said as part of her speech, “The best is yet to come”.