



Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump shakes hands with Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton during the second presidential debate at Washington University in St. Louis, Sunday, Oct. 9, 2016. (AP Photo/John Locher)

[IS] OPINIONS [Politics](#)
(<http://www.insidesources.com/category/politics/>)

Point: President Trump Should Pardon Hillary Clinton

Posted to [Politics](#)
(<http://www.insidesources.com/category/politics/>)

November 20, 2016 by [Antony Davies and James R. Harrigan](#)

(<http://www.insidesources.com/author/daviesharrigan/>)

Editor's Note: For an alternative viewpoint, please see: [Counterpoint: Why Obama, Trump Should Reject Calls for Clinton Pardon](#) (<http://www.insidesources.com/counterpoint-why-obama-trump-should-reject-calls-for-clinton-pardon/>)

To the winner goes the spoils. And having won the White House in a surprising upset, Republicans are understandably giddy, perhaps no one more so than Rep. Trey Gowdy, who once again has Hillary Clinton in his investigative crosshairs.

And why wouldn't he be? His party's president-elect, Donald Trump, was clear on his plans for Mrs. Clinton. In the second presidential debate, Mrs. Clinton said, "It's just awfully good that someone with the temperament of Donald Trump is not in charge of the law in our country." Trump's immediate response: "Because you'd be in jail." Candidate Trump then went on to promise that, if elected, he would assign a special prosecutor to investigate Mrs. Clinton's exploits as secretary of State.

Democrats, understandably, are calling for President Obama to issue Mrs. Clinton a blanket pardon before leaving office in early 2017. Obama shouldn't pardon her. President Trump should. And he should announce his intention to do so immediately.

There is evidence that Obama was aware that Clinton was storing classified communications outside of protected government computer systems in clear violation of federal law. If he was aware, then Obama also lied to the public about his knowledge. Further investigation into Clinton's emails would bring Obama under scrutiny, which gives him a strong incentive to pardon Clinton at the 11th hour of his presidency. But if we are serious about healing the divisions that plague our nation, Obama should have absolutely nothing to do with pardoning his own former secretary of State. Even if he were ignorant of her malfeasance, he should have nothing to do with pardoning a fellow Democrat. Because Obama potentially has much to gain from pardoning Clinton, his doing so would exacerbate the animosity between those on the left and the right.

But a pardon from Trump, who has nothing to gain, would go a long way toward quelling that animosity. The pardon should be strictly restricted to Clinton's actions while secretary of State. If she violated the public trust, it was in this capacity. One cannot violate the public trust when behaving as a private citizen. On that note, there is evidence that the Clinton Foundation has engaged in the trading of political favors

for donations. For the type of non-profit the Clinton Foundation is, engaging in politics is strictly prohibited. If there is wrongdoing here, the foundation and its directors should have to answer to the IRS. But did Clinton commit crimes while secretary of State? FBI Director James Comey didn't think so. Then he did. Now he doesn't. About half of Americans seem to agree that the Wikileaks evidence, if not enough to convict her of being a criminal, is more than adequate to disqualify her from holding public office. To this half of Americans, a rigged system gave Clinton a pass that a "regular" person in a similar situation would never have received.

Meanwhile, the other half of Americans would argue that our criminal justice system, after considering the facts and giving her a fair hearing, determined that she committed no crime. To this half of Americans, pursuing Clinton further has nothing to do with justice. It is merely about using the veneer of legal action to extract a pound of political flesh.

Dragging this out further will cost far more than the effort is worth. And the cost will be paid in the form of a widening rift between the American people. The only path to healing is for President Trump to pardon her.

At this point, whether she did or did not breach the public trust is a lesser concern. What matters more is that we have become a people divided. To survive the many challenges that lie ahead, we must unite. To unite, we need to let festering wounds heal. President Trump will have a rare opportunity to demonstrate that he is everyone's president by healing those wounds. He can do this by pardoning Hillary Clinton.

About the Author

Antony Davies and James R. Harrigan

(<http://www.insidesources.com/author/daviesharrigan/>)

Antony Davies is associate professor of economics at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.

James R. Harrigan is director of academic programs at Strata in Logan, Utah.

More from Inside Sources