

# Emanuel could save Democrats from Biden

John Kass  
Columnist

Should former Democratic Chicago mayor turned TV talking head Rahm Emanuel just drop the punditry nonsense and get into the presidential race himself?

It's worth a thought. Emanuel is a multimillionaire – there are obvious benefits to public service – though he's not as rich as enviro-billionaire Tom Steyer, who has qualified for the Democratic presidential candidate debate in October.

But Rahm knows politics, and he displays his knowledge of these dark arts weekly on that ABC Sunday morning talk show, the one I don't watch that is hosted by Clinton Donor Zero.

If he were a presidential candidate, Rahm just might be able to save the Democratic Party from Joe Biden, who recently appeared under the withering lights at the third Democratic presidential debate.

Admit it, with all his gaffes, old Uncle Joe's campaign is teetering. Though he's the last hope of the old Democratic establishment, Biden is just a drop or two of blood in that already bloody eye of his from absolute disaster.

"I want to be clear," Biden said the other day in addressing his confusion about whether he was in Vermont or New Hampshire, and sniping at pesky reporters insisting on questioning his mental health. "I'm not going nuts."

OK, Joe. You're not going nuts. What time do you want your Jell-O? Think of it: President Rahm Emanuel.

President Rahm as boss of America's vast intelligence apparatus, the CIA, the National Security Agency, the FBI and don't forget the Internal Revenue Service. Democrats wouldn't mind. And since most journalists are Democrats, we wouldn't have a "revolution," or scribes suffering from Emanuel Derangement Syndrome.

Emanuel's career ended when Chicago realized he'd sat on that police video of black teenager Laquan McDonald being shot 16 times by a white Chicago cop.

But think of what he could accomplish with the FBI, CIA and IRS at his beck and call?

Hollywood stars would love him, since his uber agent brother Ari is the boss of Hollywood. And he'd be the first president to hang a portrait of himself as a Hollywood gangster in the White House.

The portrait, which I presented to him, is called "The Rahmfather," and it shows Rahm in the Al Pacino pose from the movie poster for "The Godfather." He placed it proudly on the wall of his City Hall office.

Could Rahm Emanuel defeat President Donald Trump?

He's vicious enough to go for the throat. Or, more likely, he'd have his contacts at The New York Times and the Washington Post go for his enemies' throats.

Though Rahm has little in common with Trump, they do share a unique superpower:

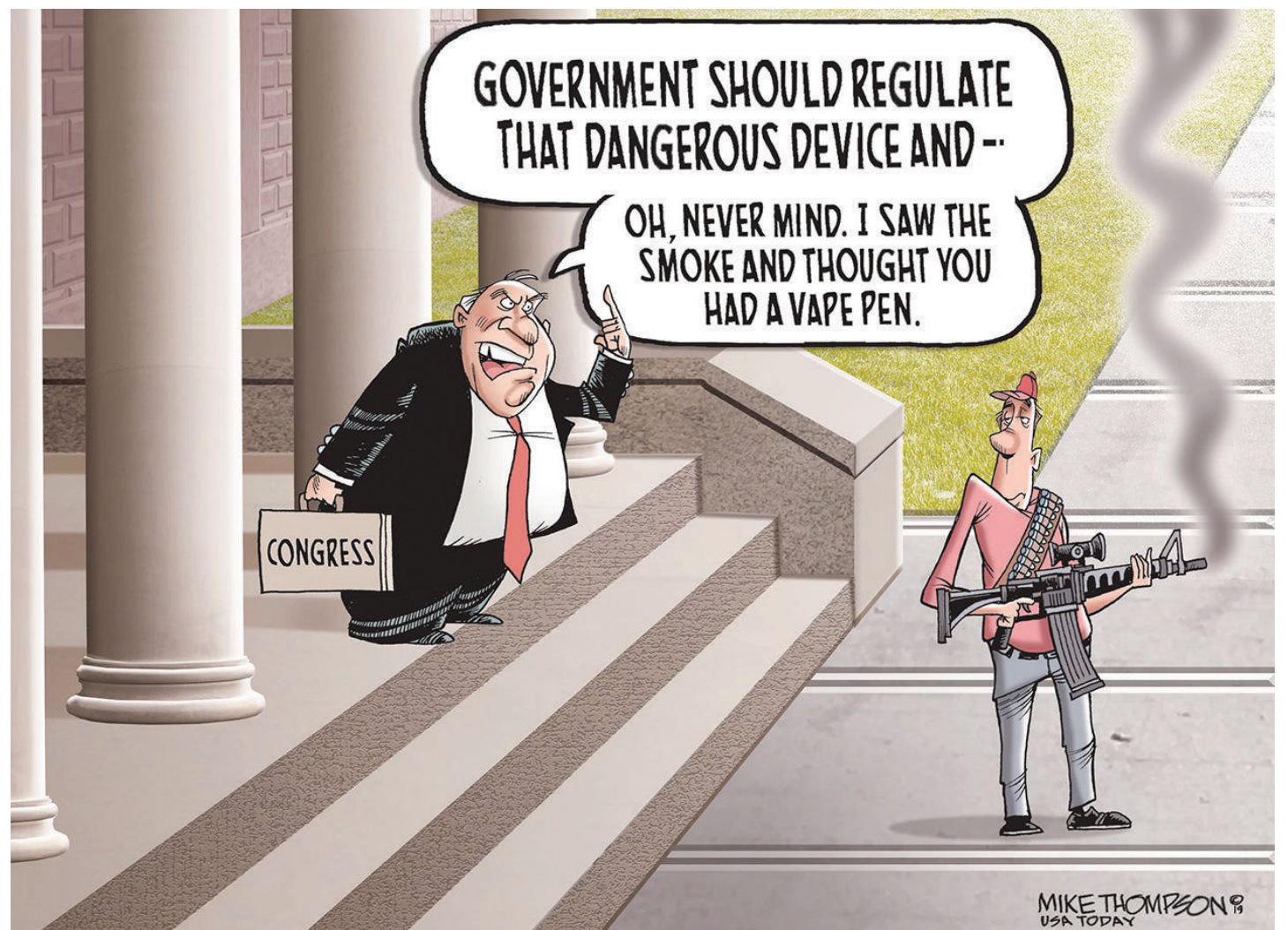
All they have to do is open their mouths, and leftist political heads explode across America.

Just days before the Democratic presidential debate in Texas, Emanuel went on the attack, trying to draw blood from the Democratic Party's dominant left wing by targeting a serious vulnerability.

Rahm lashed out at progressive candidates – authentic lefty Bernie Sanders and faux lefty Elizabeth Warren, who is playing the Hillary Clinton role this cycle – for supporting government health care for everyone, including people in the country illegally, whether they want it or not.

"We've taken a position so far, the candidates have ... few have not, about basically 'Medicare for All,' which is we're gonna eliminate

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# City Council was wrong to censure Hontos

Should a City Council member be allowed to criticize decisions made by fellow council members? The St. Cloud City Council has said NO. They even made a rule to support their position. That rule states that a council member is not to undermine or sabotage implementation of ordinances, policies or rules.

Council member George Hontos has criticized actions of the council, even writing a letter to the editor in the St. Cloud Times, to the irritation of other council members. So on Sept. 9, they let it be known they would not tolerate this any longer. By a secret ballot 4-2 vote, they censured Hontos for, in their judgment, violating that rule.

But is expressing opposition, criticizing or disagreeing the same as sabotaging or destroying? Hardly! Federal and state legislators have no such gag rule. The U.S. Supreme Court publishes minority opinions.

We want open government, where elected officials can, and should, state their positions, whether they are in the majority or minority. If they do not like something that has been implemented, they can work to improve it. This is not sabotaging!

The council can certainly expect appointed department managers to support their majority decisions and refrain from criticizing them. But council members should be free to state

their position. This can and should be done respectfully, but it should be done. The electorate should know the position of their representatives on both existing and proposed policies.

We do not need, nor do we want, a bunch of elected folks to just "go along to get along," to be simply "yes" people and to be told that once a vote has occurred they are then to be quiet and stop working for the betterment of what exists.

The St. Cloud City Council members work hard for the good of the city, but they got this one wrong!

Chester Rorvig, St. Cloud

## Our view

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Hontos' commentary was hardly disrespectful, and it certainly didn't sabotage anything.

Yes, he *disagreed* with the majority of the council. However, disagreement does not equal disrespect. In fact, disagreement is inherent in and required by the democratic process.

If council members can say only positive things or nothing at all about decisions, Conway better temper any support he's shown for measures that go against this being a welcoming community. After all, the council adopted that measure long before he was elected.

Really, though, this is democracy, not a private business nor a nonprofit organization.

In those environments, yes, it's imperative leadership teams stand united on policies and procedures, especially when in the public spotlight.

However, a vibrant and truly representative democracy relies on disagreement in public – before, during and after votes are cast. To say nothing of revisiting decisions when things change.

After all – and as Hontos has rightfully noted in the past month – council members are elected to their seats to represent their constituents. In that role, they must be willing to speak out,



Mike Conway was among those on the St. Cloud City Council unhappy with a letter by fellow council member George Hontos. DAVE SCHWARZ/ST. CLOUD TIMES

even if it's contrary to their elected body's majority view.

Yes, such opposition should be raised respectfully. And perhaps Hontos has fallen short in that regard at times. But not with the letter in question.

To be honest, the council members who cast secret votes Monday night (possibly illegally) to censure Hontos should explain why they have a problem

with a peer who is on the record as opposing the minimization of voters' voices.

That's more disconcerting than any elected official acting rudely.

*This is the opinion of the Times Editorial Board, which consists of News Director Lisa Schwarz, Engagement Editor Randy Krebs and Content Coach Anna Haecherl.*

## Cyson

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U.S. in 1979. That's only 40 years ago. Will it come back? Look at what is happening with mumps and measles. Is that the dystopian future we want for our children? Do we want to tell them: "We had a way to keep you safe and

healthy, but we gave up on that due to the medical advice of a social media personality?"

I don't see any reality show contestants or retired pro-sports participants speaking up about what it was like to contract these diseases, so someone has to speak up and tell today's parents what it was like before vaccines, back when children suffered and incurred permanent injuries and sometimes

even died.

I'll go first:

I had mumps, measles, chicken pox, rubella and tuberculosis. TB left me with permanent lung damage that leaves me susceptible to pneumonia every winter.

Now it's your turn. Our children are depending on you. Speak up.

*This is the opinion of Karen Cyson, a member of the Times Writers Group.*

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