

EIGHTEEN

WE'VE GOT THIS!
THEY STOLE IT!

I start the work day with a 7:10 AM radio hit with Bobby Gunther [Walsh] in Allentown Pennsylvania. Bobby's been around for 35 years, he has a perfect radio voice, he's pure Trump, and he understands exactly how his town has been screwed over by bad trade deals.

It's a cordial conversation and I get through to him by talking about the Philly shipyard and how all job creation is local. It is a great theme.

Once I get into the sweatshop, I do another radio hit [in] Gainesville Florida. . . . From there, I go out on the White House North Lawn and do a CBS live stream for something like 20 minutes. They let me run, no bad questions, and it's a good solid conversation. Nice.

*That's about it for the day. I'm a burnt out case.
I've left it all on the floor.*

—PETER NAVARRO, JOURNAL ENTRY, DAY BEFORE ELECTION

I do a five minute hit on [Fox Business'] Charles Payne as my [TV] swansong for the election. Biden is in Scranton to beg forgiveness for destroying the manufacturing base in Pennsylvania with NAFTA and China. I joke with Charles that if Biden wins, you should [buy] Plexiglas, guns, and antidepressant stocks. . . .

I have a nice talk with Johnny Mac [John McEntee, the White House director of personnel]. We're just waiting to

see how this goes but Johnny is ready to clean house . . . [FBI director] Chris Wray, [Secretary of Defense Mark] Esper, Fauci, Mnuchin [all gone]. . . .

At the 11th hour, Deborah Birx leaks one of her memos to the Washington Post whining about how serious the crisis is. She might as well be [campaigning for] the Democrats. . . .

At the East Wing [reception] . . . I see Rudy Giuliani crunching numbers and have a nice brief talk with Laura Ingraham. . . . I see [former acting attorney general] Matt Whitaker—a good guy who should be inside the building, not out. . . . The shining knight and light is Florida.

I see Pam Bondi and have a nice chat with her and [Florida campaign chair] Susie Wiles. [Both] did a great job down there [and] we cruised to a win.

There is indeed much at stake in this election—maybe for the country. The media once again did a great disservice to the president and this country by getting it so wrong. The question is whether this was hubris or intention.

—PETER NAVARRO, JOURNAL ENTRY, ELECTION DAY

Election day, November 3, 2020, is also officially Pizza Night in the Roosevelt Room for the junior staff and communications team, courtesy of National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien. Starved as I am after working the phones and media all day, I drop by for a couple of thick-crust slices and a chat with Robert. Then, with heartburn on deck and heartache on the way, I leave the Roosevelt Room and head out the doors of the West Wing for a short stroll to the East Wing along the beautiful Colonnade.

This haunting historic corridor runs alongside the effervescent Rose Garden, and it was from the Colonnade that my favorite photo in presidential history was snapped: President John F. Kennedy in deep consultation with his brother Robert outside the Oval Office during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Today I am walking in the footsteps of this history over to the East Wing of the White House. There I will watch the evening's election returns and schmooze with the star-studded throng.

POPS ON MY MIND, A FOX BACK STAB

My favorite feature of any East Wing social event is always the US Marine Band. Maybe it is because my father was a bandleader himself and I have fond memories of him on ballroom stages with his clarinet and sax directing his swing band ensemble, which usually included a drummer, a big stand-up bass, a waw-waw trumpeter (Frankie was the best), and an always beautiful female vocalist—I had my first crush on one of Pops' beauties after she sang her sultry version of "On the Street Where You Live" one very serene night in Lake George.

Though Pops' Glenn Miller style of music was as far from the playlist of the US Marine Band as the Waldorf Astoria ballroom is from the halls of Montezuma, there is just something about this supremely talented uniformed group of musicians that triggers memories. Like Marcel Proust's madeleine, this band always makes me drift back to my childhood days and remembrances of venues past, such as the Eden Roc, Fontainebleau, and Mount Washington Hotel—and Pops before he left Mom and Brad and me.

That night, as I walk up the stairs to the gala in the East Room and am greeted at the top by the sight and sounds of the Marine Band, I immediately see one of my favorite peeps, Judge Jeanine Pirro. She's holding court with a group of friends and admirers so I just give her a big smile and howdy wave. Then, as I walk past the band and into the crowded hallway, there's Brother Corey. I stop for a quick man hug and high five to his wife and kids.

Down the hall, Sarah Sanders pops up as though it is a college reunion. In one of the ante rooms, Kellyanne Conway looks as if she never left. There are Matt Whitaker, Pam Bondi, Director of Operations for Political Affairs Caroline Wiles, the first lady's chief of staff, Stephanie Grisham, and the Cipollone clan (all dozen of them). And strolling through the crowd, I can smell more than a little Big Money in the room as a gaggle of donors have earned one last return on their investment with front-row seats to history.

As the polls close and the returns begin to roll across the TV screens scattered around the rooms, the mood is all nerves, and the down-home sliders, chicken tenders, and fries all come with nervous chatter. I've got a pit in my own stomach—from either O'Brien's pizza or nerves. Hell, let's not kid ourselves. It's nerves.

And let's not kid ourselves about this, either: by midnight, the Boss is very well on his way to winning a second term. He's an absolute lock to take Ohio and Florida. And he has huge, seemingly insurmountable leads in the Blue Walls of Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

The only off-key note in this second-term song is a far-too-early call at 11:20 p.m.¹ of Arizona for Joe Biden by Fox News. As groans and boos ripple through the East Wing crowd, you can almost hear the Boss over in the residence bellowing at the TV. And you can almost see Roger Ailes do a triple spin in his grave.

As soon as I see Fox's pissant move, I know that it will cost us votes in Arizona, where the polls are still open and at least some discouraged Trump voters are likely to stay home. I think to myself as I watch this sacrilege—one not even justified by the voting patterns we are witnessing—*With Ailes in*

the ground, no true Trump Republican is on guard in one heck-uva divided Fox henhouse.

Shortly before midnight, my phone rings above the din, and it's Steve Bannon. He's doing an Election Special on his *War Room: Pandemic* podcast broadcasting live from the rooftop of 101 Constitution Avenue—hands down the best view in town, at least of the US Capitol, National Mall, and Washington Monument. Says Steve with barely contained ebullience, “We’ve got this!”

And that's my cue to head home. If Steve says we've won, we've won—no one crunches electoral vote numbers better than Steve. And in 2016, he had gotten it exactly right early on election night, when everyone else had been moaning that the sky was falling.

So I leave the East Wing, backtrack along the Colonnade and past the Rose Garden, wend my way through the labyrinth of the West Wing basement, and head over to my office in the Eisenhower building. There, like Clark Kent, I pull off my suit and change into my workout clothes.

I then throw my coat and gloves on, grab my bike propped up against a wall in my office, walk down the stairs and out the door, and pedal to the metal home in the brisk night air.

At 6:00 a.m., Bannon wakes me from a fitful sleep with a second phone call and this outrage: “They stole it!”