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**Rude Boy**

 In his 2000 presidential campaign, George Bush was marketed as the “uniter” who would work to soothe the poisonous partisanship that plagued the final years of his predecessor’s term. But starting with the Florida recount and the questionable circumstances of his ultimate appointment to office, Bush’s wistful words of reconciliation were quickly confirmed to be empty rhetoric as the new president enacted an unwavering policy of arrogant unilateralism on both the home-front and abroad. In the upcoming primary season, Republican voters will have a new chance to reject this insensible legacy by nominating Rudolph Guiliani whose centrist positions and popular reputation as “America’s mayor” appeal to the moderate majority of Americans. In an election where the GOP is already being handicapped as the underdog, Guiliani may well have the best chance of escaping Bush’s unpopular shadow and successfully challenging what will no doubt be a well-funded, well-focused Democratic challenger.

 In addition to being pro-gun control and affirmative action, Guiliani also stands out by being pro-choice. His socially-liberal background is a turn-off to the intransigent evangelicals whose enthusiastic support secured Bush’s 2004 reelection bid but it’s just the thing to attract the far more significant bloc of swing voters who are dismayed by religious fanaticism but interested in the traditional Republican values of fiscal conservatism and a strong foreign policy, both cornerstones of Giuliani’s portfolio. As mayor of New York, his pro-business policies ushered in a period of economic revitalization that transformed a $2 billion deficit into a $2 billion surplus, saw the creation of over 300,000 jobs, and reinvigorated the city as a major tourist destination. Meanwhile, his swift, dignified, and decisive handling of the 9/11 terror attacks speaks for itself: here is a man who truly understands the importance of fighting the enemy over there before they bring that fight over here.

 While the beginning of the primaries is still more than two months away, Guiliani continues to solidify a comfortable lead over his Republican rivals for the nomination. There is still plenty of time however for these opponents to cast the first stone at Guiliani for his admittedly rocky family life, which includes a messy public divorce and alienated grown children. We hope that voters will reject these tactics and weigh their politicians on the merit of their public policies, not their private lives. It should be noted that the last time Republicans took a chance on a former Democrat and divorcee, they ended up with Ronald Reagan, one of the most successful and popular presidents in American history.

While it is unlikely that Guiliani is the second-coming of The Great Communicator, he is certainly not the latte liberal in elephant’s clothing his few detractors characterize him as. For his tough, 9/11-informed foreign policy and moderate Rockefeller Republican social positions, we endorse Rudolph Guiliani for the Republican nomination for president.