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Goodbye Nunes: It Seems the Cow Won

FRESNO_Rep. Devin Nunes (R–Tulare) has announced that he will be leaving the U.S. House of Representatives at the end of 2021 and will not serve out his full term. Known for frivolous defamation lawsuits against anonymous Twitter handles, unhinged conspiracy theories and funneling in millions from outside campaign fundraising, he is now set to be CEO of Donald Trump’s newest media company. What will become of all that donated money, \$11.3 million already as of this spring, something we will have to watch for together?

Forecasters had already projected that Nunes would no longer be as competitive a candidate after the new Congressional districts are finalized. Under redistricting maps currently being considered, much of Nunes’ winding district that snaked from north Fresno down to select spots in the South Valley would be absorbed by Rep. Kevin McCarthy’s (R–Bakersfield) expanding district. Apparently, Nunes has taken the first chance to flee his job rather than see it through to the end.

Nunes has always faced complaints of being an absentee representative who rarely faced any of his constituents who were not paying for fundraiser tickets. It should not be a surprise that he would abandon the job that he was elected to do and leave his constituents without a representative once he no longer saw that job as a potential tool of personal advancement. Public service has never been in Nunes’ vocabulary.

However, when it came time to serve Trump’s ego, Nunes has always been willing and inventive. Nunes claimed that Ukraine conspired with Democrats to rig the 2016 election for the benefit of Russia and Trump, Robert Mueller and James Comey were secret Democrats and the FBI was bugging Trump Tower microwaves.

Then witnesses testified that Nunes met with ousted Ukrainian officials in a failed attempt to dig up dirt on Joe Biden. A *Sacramento Bee* editorial at the time wrote, “Devin Nunes has betrayed the truth, betrayed the trust of voters and, quite possibly, betrayed our country.”

Luckily, Nunes was largely ineffectual during his preoccupied tenure. His economic policy was to eliminate all deductions and replace all state and federal taxes with sky high sales taxes, ensuring that working-class people who spend their entire paycheck to survive the month would be taxed at 40% while the investment class would pay less than 5%. His hostility to the media manifested in multiple personal lawsuits filed in a cherry-picked Virginia court.

In one of his two books, Nunes declared the disastrous consequences of partisan dominated media more concerned with political agendas than facts. In a move that to him might seem unrelated, he is now joining the Trump Media Group to do just that.

We shall see if his new business fares better than his previous business experience, a minority stake in a winery he purchased to combat legal challenges that he was falsely listing his occupation as “farmer” on campaign documents. Of course, when reporters came asking about

that winery's sexual-harassment allegations or suspicion of PPP fraud, Nunes claimed to be much less of a business operator.

In the end, California is losing representation in the House after the last Census, which will further dilute our voice compared to sparsely populated Republican strongholds. But at least here in Fresno we are also losing an embarrassment. Hopefully, no matter what opportunity Nunes has found, the people of Fresno County will never again find it their civic duty to hear updates on a grown man's legal battle with a fictional cow on Twitter.

As Nunes leaves to head the ominous Trump Media Group and surely do his best to further damage the fabric of our nation, we can take a prescient last warning from one Devin Nunes himself (who no doubt misses the irony of its applicability to him):

“Stay out of the Disinformation Funnel—it's powerful and destructive. It can confuse and misinform people even about the most basic facts and most crucial issues related to the place where they live.”

For more information, contact the Fresno County Democratic Party at 559-495-0606 or dems@fresnocountydemocrats.org.