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The Quadrennial Distraction

As the leading Republican candidate for the presidency ascends into the air in a helicopter filled with kids, and makes his most astute declaration yet — “I am Batman” — it becomes clearer than ever how distracting these presidential campaigns are.

Much of American Big League politics is theatrics, with some pandering for good measure. Of course, all people running for the presidency are by definition over their heads, at best . . . posturing attention-seekers at worst. Fretting about what they believe and “would do” if voted in as President of these United States is mostly a waste of time. Experience tells us that what they promise is perhaps the least likely outcome of all.

What *is* more effective? Affecting the political environment by getting together with like-minded folk to advance principled causes closer to home. As a side effect of your activism, a successful issue in a single city or region — especially one that spreads — can have a dramatic influence on present and future presidential wannabes.

With organization and consistent activity at the local level, your voice can be heard. But you have to *do* something. That activity doesn't have to be to “run for office”; you can turn up the volume by proposing (and sometimes opposing) ballot initiatives, constitutional and charter amendments in the state, county and city where you live.

There is so much to be done at this level that could create political climate change, which in turn would invariably make federal-level candidates better, that it seems a shame to see us so focused on long shot bets.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

