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## Boston's Suffolk University Pollster Paleologos Saw Trump Momentum

November 8, 2016



David Paleologos Director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center in Boston

BOSTON – David Paleologos, the Director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center in Boston, an acclaimed polling expert and political analyst spoke to The National Herald in an exclusive interview a few days before the election.

He believes that "the momentum right now is with Donald Trump."

Asked about how much harm was done by the latest revelations about Hilary Clinton by FBI Director James Comey, he said "it is too early to tell," but also thinks that it comes down to "the undecided." The entire interview follows:

**TNH:** A week before the elections, where do you think this Presidential campaign is headed?

**DP:** Well, right now the momentum is with Donald Trump. The James Comey announcement has energized Trump's supporters, a few among the still-undecided, and among Gerry Johnson voters who are looking to the Democrat or Republican. So, I think what you are seeing and will see in the next couple of days some of the national polls trending to Trump, which will tell people one story, but the electoral map is a different story and it is a little a bit complicated because you have early voting in states like Florida and North Carolina and at least on the surface look encouraging for Hilary Clinton and those are must-win states for Trump. So the question really is, is there enough support for Trump on next Tuesday to head off that early lead that Clinton had in some of the must win states like North Carolina and Florida?

**TNH:** Are you convinced that this latest revelation by the FBI has done harm to Clinton?

**DP:** It is too early to tell. We are at the point where actually in the field we are asking that question in our next poll, what is the status of independent voters? Most Democrats and most Republicans that we poll will say it doesn't matter. So that 60% or 70% is an inflated number because Republicans would say "I was not going to vote for her anyway," and Democrats would say "I would always vote for her anyway." So what is important is that 30% or 40% among independents, that's really where the race lays.

**TNH:** Do you have an explanation why at this very late stage of the campaign the FBI came out with this announcement and without giving any specifics?

**DP:** I don't know the answer to that, but I do know that Comey under oath did say to the Congressional Committee that if any further information that he thought related to the case was revealed that he would immediately report that information to the Committee. So he of kind boxed himself in, in a way. If he had documented information sent to him from an FBI office in New York and it was found that he sat on that information and didn't act like he promised to the Committee, then he himself would be responsible for that action and would be accountable to Congress.

**TNH:** You have covered and polled many presidential races. What is the unique characteristic of this campaign?

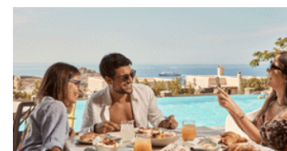
**DP:** There are several, but the first two are number one both candidates Democrat and Republican are not seen as honest and trustworthy, both of them. Number two, both candidates are not seen as likable. There is a difference; you can be not liked by some people but still trusted. In this case, you've got both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump who are seen as not honest and trustworthy by 60 percent of likely voters. Similarly, you've got unfavorable ratings for both candidates that are above 50 percent and that hasn't happened in the polling that I have done ever. The third is that this time around you have those so-called persuadables, because you have a block of voters maybe 5 or 6 percent who are undecided and then you have another block of voters of 5 or 6 percent who are third party voters, and therefore you will



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when you have another block of voters or a bloc present with the majority voters, and therefore you will see a bigger fluctuation in the polling probably all the way to the end.

**TNH:** Speaking about the issue of trust, what does this say about our political system in the US?

**DP:** It tells me that there is a flaw in the primary nominating process and this is a comment addressed to both political parties. When you have potentially two flawed candidates in terms of trust and favorability it speaks to the process of the primary. I am not saying that Bernie Sanders is a better candidate than Hillary Clinton, or Marco Rubio than Donald Trump, I am just saying that the process rewards candidates who have flaws and I don't know if that is indicative of the human side of who we all are to nominate those people to the highest office of the land. I don't blame the media, I don't blame the pollsters, I don't blame James Comey. There is a process.

**TNH:** How and why does this great country of ours the United States fail to produce one, two, five, ten thousand decent, educated, balanced, honest candidates, instead of ending up with Clinton and Trump?

**DP:** There is a void among young people because of the scrutiny.

**TNH:** How do you explain the Trump phenomenon?

**DP:** I think it started with the Brexit and I think a kind of perfect storm of people believing that the country is not going in the right direction. When Trump speaks about that, there is movement, there is a movement and it is not necessarily that they like or trust him, but they don't like what they see in Washington, DC.

**TNH:** Do you have any idea how Greek-Americans are leaning?

**DP:** I think it really depends on their party affiliation and the state.

**TNH:** Do you agree that a third party is needed?

**DP:** We do the polls for USA Today and many times we put the question do you think the United States should have a third party or multiple parties and the majority of people say we should.

**TNH:** Do you worry about the day after the election?

**DP:** I don't. We ask the question do you think it is going to be a peaceful transition of power and most people say it will be. We ask the question are you worried about violence on Election Day? About half of the people are very concerned about that, but people generally believe that the United States will have a peaceful transition of power, however it goes. I read this morning that both the Clinton and the Trump campaigns are preparing for recounts and legal challenges. It could be a somewhat stressful couple of weeks, but generally the people accept the verdict of the voting.

David Paleologos is the Director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center (SUPRC), where he has worked since 2002 conducting polling at the local, state, and national level. SUPRC primary polls and bellwethers have predicted outcomes in many key battleground states, and its cutting-edge survey research has gained both national and international attention for its high degree of accuracy.

In 2014, Paleologos and SUPRC were selected as the polling partner for USA TODAY's coverage of the 2014 midterm elections.

In Massachusetts, SUPRC predicted a 3-point margin of victory for Republican Gubernatorial candidate Charlie Baker; he won by 2 points.

In Louisiana, SUPRC correctly predicted a 1-point victory for Democrat Mary Landrieu in the US Senate Open Primary.

In New Hampshire, SUPRC also correctly predicted Democrat Jeanne Shaheen's 3-point win over Republican challenger Scott Brown.

As of the 2016 elections, Paleologos is the polling partner for The Boston Globe (regional polling) and USA Today.

Paleologos is also the author of a proprietary bellwether model that has an 89% record of accuracy in predicting outcomes through November 2016.



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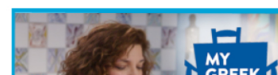
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