

Election 2020: A Time for Change

By Don Sutherland

Election 2020 arrives with the nation stuck in the teeth of a vicious pandemic that has claimed the lives of more than 235,000 Americans. All of those lives were lost in less than one year's time. Hundreds more are being lost each day.

Even worse, the COVID-19 pandemic is surging to new heights in the United States. On Friday, the U.S. became the world's first country to register 100,000 new daily cases. More such days lie ahead. The status quo approach dismisses the reality of the pandemic and rejects science has made it possible for the deadly SARS-CoV-2 virus to spread in increasingly uncontrolled fashion.

The enormous human toll and tsunami of suffering it has brought to families all across the nation could have been avoided. Had the nation had competent leadership whose decision making placed a premium on a preservation of life and embraced objective science, the outcome would have been far different. South Korea, New Zealand, and Taiwan provide examples of some of the alternative scenarios that had been available to the United States. Voters should remember that "it is what it is," is a lazy rationalization for a colossal failure to take the appropriate measures necessary to protect the nation's people from the coronavirus.

When those placed in positions of leadership abdicate their responsibilities, abandon reason, reject facts, oppose truth, and endlessly shift blame for their failures, they cease to have any mandate to govern. They lack legitimacy. That's where President Trump stands today. Voters should cast this historically failed President out of office, along with all those in the House and Senate who relentlessly empowered and enabled his ruinous time in office. That they stood by him despite the mounting costs of his failures makes them as unfit for office as he is. They sacrificed the national welfare on the altar of partisan loyalties. They, too, abandoned their fiduciary responsibility to the people who elected them and the people whom they serve.

From his having turned the pandemic into a catastrophe, President Trump squandered the long economic expansion and prolonged period of rising job creation that he inherited from President Obama. In addition to that devastating failure, he walked away from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the multinational Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, and the multilateral Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement leaving the United States in a weaker global position than when he took office. In a monumental domestic human rights abuse, his Administration separated children from parents who simply were seeking asylum in the United States, permanently shattering some families. He coddled white nationalists, lent encouragement to extremist groups such as the Proud Boys, and flirted with QAnon conspiracists. The combination of the catastrophic loss of American lives, shattered economy, abrupt retreat from the world stage, human rights abuses at home, and inability to distinguish between right and wrong, has damaged the nation's credibility to an extent that may require years, if not, decades to repair.

The fate of the nation—what today's generations will pass on to their children, grandchildren, and future generations—is now in the hands of the voters. Voters face a consequential but simple

decision.

A simple vote for the Biden-Harris team will open the door to national healing. That outcome offers the nation its best chance to return to the path that leads to a brighter future from renewed pursuit of “a more perfect Union” that has long defined the nation’s history up to the time the Trump Administration took a destructive detour.

Today’s voters still possess the ability to choose the nation’s destiny. Should the Trump Administration and its enablers be returned to office, tomorrow’s voters might well lose that capacity. The time to restore competent leadership to the nation’s highest office is now. Election 2020 is a time for profound change.