

Resignation of President and Vice-President

It seems clear that some members of the Trump election team and family colluded with Russian spies and financial allies of President Putin to win the 2016 Presidential election. Trump had tried to build a hotel in Moscow. At the time he cooperated with persons under sanction by the United States and praised the leadership of Putin who had invaded the sovereign country of Ukraine twice. He requested Russia's help in hacking Secretary Clinton's e-mails, and Russia did invade her campaign chairman's mail and used it to discredit her through WikiLeaks. Our social media companies cooperated with the KGB in targeting selective voters to promote the election of President Trump. Foreign money was illegally used to interfere in the U.S. election. Cumulatively these and other illegal actions are grounds for concession of the election.

Athletic teams are sanctioned when they grossly cheat by forfeiting games and titles. In 1972, I argued in the *Post-Gazette* that President Nixon should resign for his involvement in the Watergate scandal. Certainly President Trump interfered more significantly than President Nixon had in his election victory of 1972. Yet it took impeachment proceedings before President Nixon resigned over a year later. Those elected in the Russian corrupted-election of 2016 should now resign and save the country from further embarrassment and chaos. The Constitution provides for their resignations, but it may be that the Cabinet, or Congress or the Supreme Court will need to intervene to ensure a new election or to guide the succession.

In my opinion, President Trump's behavior and confessions disqualify him from moral and political leadership of the country. His continued ownership of hotels and resorts that foreign diplomats and governments pay to use violates the emolument clause of the constitution. His campaign manager accepted millions for serving Russia, and the Attorney General is so compromised by Russian contacts that he has to recuse himself from his duties. Likewise his national security advisor was compromised with Russia and left the administration.

The commandment not to bear false witness is particularly directed to those with public responsibility to bear witness. I think the majority of Americans who participate in the political process know they cannot trust President Trump to bear truthful witness.

Political morality may be a step removed from personal morality, but even Nicolai Machiavelli recommended political action for the unity, safety and good of the country in his *Discourses*. In *The Prince* he sanctioned fooling the religious people into thinking he was one of them. *The Prince* is subject to various interpretations, but certainly one is that the smart ruler will lie, betray, and stoop to anything politically to rule. One interpretation is that "Old Nick," a synonym of the Devil, was derived from the immorality Nicolai Machiavelli recommended in *The Prince*.

We Americans refuse to accept such morality. We mix together realism and idealism, and we do not accept purely self-centered politicians as our leaders. How can we accept polemics against migrant labor, by one who invokes special exceptions to staff his resort with migrant workers? Unscrupulous, ill-informed behavior may succeed in business with the protection of bankruptcy proceedings and the cost of legal redress being too great for small contractors to be reimbursed for their contributions, but it ought not to suffice for the highest offices in the land.

Even more terrifying is his control of the nuclear arsenal while threatening total destruction of a population of 25 million persons. He does not seem to know that the American way of dealing with nuclear weaponry is through Deterrence, Diplomacy, and measured Disarmament. We have a long way to go but the reduction of the nuclear arsenals of Russia and the U.S. is a remarkable achievement given continuing political tensions. Several major nuclear powers, mostly former states of the Soviet Union, have disarmed nuclear weapons. While threatening Korea with nuclear war, our President attacks the agreement with Iran that promises its refraining from nuclear armament while we abstain from attacking the country. The President apparently does not understand that monies returned to Iran were for undelivered weapons purchased by Iran.

There are significant forces wishing the U.S. to strike Iran, but the threat of nuclear war with Korea is more threatening, even though no other country is encouraging us in that direction. He seems unaware that a détente was reached under President Clinton which dissolved under the Bush administration. There is no evidence that he has read the major works on nuclear warfare or that he understands it. His expressed appreciation of war and nuclear weapons during the campaign may have exaggerated his macho standing, but it was totally irresponsible given American traditions of political discourse and theory. He is in over his head on almost every aspect of U.S. military and foreign policy. It would be very decent of him to resign along with his Vice-President.

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