

The real winners and losers of 2020

Thank God that this year is nearing an end. For most of us, it's been one we'd like to erase from all memory, and in fact, when you think about it, it's a year that's been ripped from our lives and stomped on while we stood around and watched, helpless, angry and frustrated.

Some of us have seen loved ones die and watched as friends and family members have lost their jobs and been forced to move in with relatives because they couldn't afford their rent or house payments. We've experienced high-tension political battles, and many of us are afraid that we're in the early stages of America's newest Civil War. While it may not be a physical confrontation between Left and Right (the new North and South of the 1860s) yet, we're worried that it could explode any day now.

We Americans have been through our share of internal and external conflicts in our long 240-year plus history, and God willing, we'll get through this one, too, but 2020 has radically changed our 'playing field' in ways we hadn't dreamt of a few short years ago. In 2016, we entered a new phase in politics - the Age of Trump. Admittedly, it was a phase during which half the country was outraged and wringing its hands in both disbelief and in fear. Trump was declared 'illegitimate' and a *pretender President* because the Left couldn't conceive of so many people not loving the past eight years of Barack Obama and were willing to trade it all in by taking a chance on an untraditional leader which they had judged to be to the right of Vlad the Impaler.

That set the stage of mass Left-wing discontent which was to be added to by years of hyperactivity by the new President as he set about dismantling everything BHO had done. To add to the discontent and dismay, Trump stuck his thumb in the eye of the Democratic 'bear' while poking it, repeatedly. The bear responded by calling all of its regular supporters which included the media, academia, Hollywood, the Deep State and the radical elements of the Congress and certain NGOs to come to their aid. THIS President was going to pay the price for daring to go up against the 'settled science' of American political thought and an orthodoxy that they had spent years promoting to specific demographic groups.

No sir, he wouldn't get away with an 'America First' policy that negated decades of globalist achievements made by an elite band of one-world brothers-in-arms. They were determined to make him a one-term President, so they manufactured a case of Russian collusion and spun a tale of treason and treachery for the rest of us to lap up like housecats savoring cream from a saucer. By using the 'Big Lie' practice (repeat a lie long enough and it becomes the truth), the anti-Trump factions almost turned their elaborate quilt of prevarication into the truth. What they didn't count on was the sensitive BS detector of the Right and that many of us who've lived among the Left recognized their tactics from the very outset and were willing to challenge them.

While the embattled President and his millions of staunch supporters managed to hold the line on the attacks from the Progressive Left for three long years, the fourth year of Donald Trump's term started to come apart. It was clear that even the world's best economy and an America that had reinvented itself couldn't compete with the double whammy of a pandemic and an election. It is said that the winners of today can easily become the losers of tomorrow. All we have to do is look at our capitalistic, free market system, our frequent elections and the generational changes we've had throughout history to know that we can't all be winners all of the time, and that goes for Donald Trump who promised us that we'd get tired of winning.

There are many ways to deal with defeat. We can deny it; we can decry it or we can delay it. This is the current Trump strategy with respect to all the election irregularity and fraud charges that have been brought against several states. Under normal (pandemic-free) circumstances, this might work, but I doubt seriously that it will gain enough traction to reverse the defeat, not because there isn't more than a kernel of truth in what the Trump campaign is charging, but because we're just flat exhausted.

We are all suffering from Coronavirus battle fatigue and we just want things (Presidential politics included) to just settle down and be something we can count on...even if it's not the politics WE espouse. Many on the Left and even some on the Right are openly asking the President to just concede the election and drop his lawsuits so that the country can get on with its business, but those people have forgotten who Trump really is. He's not about to go that route because he is equally concerned with the future as he is with the present. It's why we chose him. We wanted someone who would keep his eye on the ball, knowing that by doing that we have an insurance policy for the future.

That brings me to the winners and losers of 2020. Some of these choices are reflective of my politics, but others are easily proven to be true. Here we go...

The first group is the winners: Donald Trump and his family for dedicating themselves to serving the American people; the Democrats for electing the oldest person ever to become President; the Republicans for hanging on to every incumbent Congressional seat and picking up even more when faced with the prospects of a projected 'Blue Wave'; the pharmaceutical companies for producing more anti-depressants than at any time in history and for taking up the challenge of finding not one but several vaccines to prevent the Coronavirus; Progressive mayors and governors for sidelining their police forces and turning their cities into tourist-*unfriendly* destinations for the rest of us; Black Lives Matter for successfully promoting a phony 'America is systemically racist' theology; Antifa for avoiding prosecution for its domestic terrorism; big city teachers' unions for pressuring communities into letting them stay home AND collecting a paycheck for the better part of a year; social media companies for seeing their membership rolls explode (which wins them new advertising dollars) and for amassing the power to censor views they don't like; online retailers (like Amazon) who have seen their profits soar because of the Covid-19 lockdowns; high-tech companies (like Apple) that are successfully selling overpriced, thousand-dollar smart phones; supermarket chains that can't keep their store shelves stocked because of public panic buying; trucking companies who are racking up record profits due to public demand for foodstuffs, personal hygiene and household cleaning products; surgical mask manufacturers that can't keep up with demand for questionably useful products; Internet-streaming companies like Netflix that have attracted hundreds of thousands of new, house-bound customers; teleconferencing software platforms like Zoom and Webex that have gained important new users; firearms and ammunition manufacturers who have seen their products' demand skyrocket because of Americans' fear of being unprotected (especially in communities where local police forces have been severely reduced); and finally power-hungry politicians who have hitched their wagon to the pandemic as their chance to rule with an iron hand over their constituents.

The next group is the losers: among them is all of us for being terrorized by overreaching state and city officials who have assumed extraordinary and in many cases unconstitutional power by locking us down; children who have been removed from their social learning environments; parents who cannot keep their children adequately stimulated at home because of school closures; graduates of college who can't find employment; small business owners (restaurateurs, especially) who've lost their livelihoods because of Draconian measures instituted by abusive officials; ordinary retail establishments that have been forced to reduce store hours or close because of being named 'non-essential businesses'; families who have been told to suspend gatherings on holidays for fear of being 'spreaders' of Covid-19; religious institutions for having their services severely limited or banned altogether by overreaching officials; Republicans and Conservatives for missing out on another Donald Trump term and his 'America First' policies; older citizens who have been 'confined to barracks' (in nursing homes and elsewhere) because the dangers of contracting the Coronavirus are too great; and finally, the First Amendment which has been ignored as the Left has consolidated power.

I am sure that you can add many others to both lists, but these are the principal ones that have been on my mind as I considered ripping down my 2020 calendar many months ago.

There is one group, however, that deserves special mention and that is all of us who have lost loved ones to the virus and to other diseases. Under normal circumstances we would deal with our grief in the traditional way, by holding memorial services and wakes and mourning, together. The Coronavirus and the fear-frozen public officials who have forbidden us to hold these services have seen to it that our grief will be unresolved, and for that alone, I would vote every single one of them out of office who has decided to play God and deprive us of our right to grieve.

We must somehow, each of us, find the strength to persevere, despite everything that has been thrown at us in 2020. That resolve is an inextricable part of our national character, and no matter how many roadblocks there are, the journey must go on. One thing we must never forget, while we are making that journey, is *how* we were treated by the people we chose to lead us. Everyone, including them, has a day of reckoning and we need to convince them that they're not immune from it no matter how many masks they wear

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