

Looking Past Our Lilliputian Leaders

All of the presidents of the 21st century—Bush, Obama, Biden, and yes, even Donald Trump—seem a cut below the gravitas and statesmanship of the founding fathers.

The first three were—and are—globalists, and as anyone with eyes can see, Joe Biden and his crew are busy taking a wrecking ball to our liberties. Regarding Donald Trump, I believe his love of America is sincere, but his pandemic economic policies, followed up by the Biden bailouts, have done grave damage to the economic health of our country.

The founders put America first. While they too made mistakes, in both domestic and foreign policy, in general they came across as Americans who loved their country, and those who became president did their best to honor their oath of office to “preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.” Those who were legislators also seemed to uphold their oath to the country.

Compared to these individuals, and even 20th century members of Congress, today’s legislators also seem smaller in spirit and ability as well, Lilliputians who lack the gravitas of their predecessors.

Likewise, in the corporate world, operators like Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos seem more like some teenagers I’ve known than grownups: cocky, snide, ignorant of human nature, and contemptuous of those they “serve.”

Meanwhile, the rest of us suffer the consequences of their policies. Here are just a few examples:

We spend a fortune on our elementary and secondary school students, yet our system is miserably failing most of them,

with only 37 percent of [high school seniors proficient](#) in reading, while less than a quarter are proficient in math.

Our politicians brag about our coronavirus vaccines and continue in many places to favor lockdowns and masks, all while allowing COVID-19 positive [illegal immigrants to cross our borders](#) and enter our nation.

We boast of our military might, but when was the last time we actually won a war? One wonders if we could win one anymore, for as Brian T. Kennedy [writes](#) in “Facing Up to the China Threat,” our country no longer has “enough ships and munitions to defeat China’s navy absent the use of nuclear weapons.”

When’s the last time any of us heard one of our vaunted leaders speak in defense of the family? A number of them regularly tout transgender rights, but it’s hard to remember hearing any of our politicians actually praise the traditional family. Not so long ago, we considered the family the cornerstone of culture and society. Today we hear little or nothing about it except from some of our religious leaders.

In the December 2020 issue of *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, S.T. Karnick’s [article](#) demonstrates how an army of politicians, bureaucrats, and judges “have exploited a vast web of laws and regulations to undermine the nation’s culture.” From schools to motion pictures, from radio to art, our government has played a major role in shaping today’s ugly culture.

And who is accountable for such insidious changes?

By and large, our leadership must bear the blame.

Karnick concludes his article this way: “Systematically removing the vast web of laws and regulations that enable the state to dominate the culture is a necessary element of any attempt to reassert traditional American values.”

I agree, but how exactly does that dismantlement take place? Given the direction taken by the state and our leaders in the last century, how do we reverse course short of some sort of revolution, or a commitment to making the required changes over a period of decades?

Given our present circumstances, I do have some suggestions. Yet none of them, to be frank, offer any sort of solution to the problem of our dearth of leaders interested in the welfare of the rest of us.

First, the majority of us already mistrust our elites. They have earned that lack of faith, and we should continue to regard all of them with suspicion.

We should begin to focus more of our attention on local politics. We've all heard the "trickle-down" theory of economics, the idea that tax cuts for the rich will benefit the rest of us. What if we practiced a "trickle-up" theory in politics, in which local leaders and local elections might improve our lives and eventually have an effect on state and federal policies?

Finally, we should continue to build, as many are now doing, small groups that enhance our culture and preserve our history, and that allow us to share opinions and ideas. Book clubs, homeschool co-ops, pod schools, investment clubs, prayer groups: all these and more can help keep alive the ideals and dreams of America.

Our leadership is morally bankrupt and even corrupt. It's time we stopped looking to them for to fix our problems and turn instead to those around us and to our own selves for solutions.

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