



Truth, Trust, and Promises

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It's time everyone stepped back and simply appreciate Democracy and all this incredible governing process has given humankind, and as importantly - acknowledge no nation on this planet has ever provided so much for so many in such a short time while using so much diversity in the governing process.

What I write next is my truth, from an agenda based on opinion, research, and decades of experience. I've traveled this world and held leadership positions as president of a South African company, served on the Board Director for six Fortune 500's, was the founding General Manager of Honeywell's Telecommunication Business, served as Global Executive VP- Corporate officer for Honeywell; was co-Founder and President of the Black Executive Leadership Council, followed by 15-years ownership of the Harlem Globetrotters and Chairmanship of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. These roles afforded three things. First, confidence that my opinions are both relevant and earned, second; I was afforded economic independence years ago, and thirdly; the opportunity and lessons learned from being hosted by several Heads of State expanded my strategic awareness, all this occurred while representing several of the world's largest and most significant organizations.

American values, ingenuity, and technology have been role models for the world to emulate. No doubt this nation's process and achievements have made the world a better and safer place for the achievers, the mistreated, and the underclass. Much of USA success and its domestic tranquility should be credited to the Constitution (a blueprint for American Leadership and rules of Law). I fully understand the Constitution has had legislative flaws tolerating decades of racial, class, and gender bias, and has often turned a blind eye to issues in medical care, criminal justice, and education. Most hideous were restrictions on Women and minorities' rights to vote.

Recently "creeping ignorance" and greed have gained a larger seat at the table of unappreciation and a curious tolerance for untruths and negativity. It doesn't matter whether such views are true or simply bluster; deceit and distrust have the grave

potential for destroying cities, the political process, and this nation's rapidly changing supply-driven economy.

President Nelson Mandela would often give his views of USA Democracy and Capitalism as a "great nation navigating the acceptance of greed and distrust"; he felt both along with a bias for "winner take all" were terminal without truth-based education.

He further proclaimed; we should tightly legislate all leadership candidates from making questionable claims and promises (not backed by science or research.)

In my own experience, no Hall of fame sports coach ever achieved perfection; every acclaimed coach and significant business leader speaks in terms of continuous improvement with goals of "best in class." The strongest leaders I've met discuss the process as the key element to sustainability. Many of today's political candidates build their campaigns around complaints and promises, only a few speak of real cost, process, and outcomes.

A 2020 story in the ATLANTIC reported on America's sluggish and often politicized responses; which allowed the coronavirus to gain a deadly foothold. The nation's chronic underfunding of public health allowed the virus to spread, as did this nation's inefficient and underfunded healthcare systems. It was obvious that racist medical policies left over since slavery also made Black folks, indigenous citizens, and the poor unprepared to handle the waves of infections and deaths. Untruths and misinformation from elected leaders and media with political bias aided the shattering of the nation's social safety net causing millions of innocent deaths. Many citizens witnessed times when White House leadership publicly proclaimed the virus was no more than a common cold. At one point, Leadership recommended a pill (Hydroxychloroquine) as a treatment and further stated the virus would soon become yesterday's news. The other side of the same Government would be claiming otherwise while promoting science and caution. To this writer, it showed three things a) how critical competent leaders are in crisis b.) how careless our nation can be in tolerating mistruths from leaders and c.) that future crisis preparation has to cover and demand truthful media reporting as well as the welfare of all citizens.

The Atlantic further reported that by mid- 2020 around the world 10 million people were infected with about half a million killed; the USA had just 4% of the world's population and 25% of the then-reported global deaths. These numbers alone should have been an embarrassing wake-up call for Americans who have grown wary of misinformation.

I've lived in a wide variety of zip codes and I've seen firsthand the differences between the lives of the haves and have-nots. I've paid attention to what citizens believe and who they are taught to trust.

My eight-year-old grandson, Rollins listens intently to most adult conversations; he recently asks, "Pop-Pop why is there no truth?" this was a profound question, especially from an eight-year-old. In today's world where everyone has access to a wide variety of information platforms; many promote untrue promises.

Democracy is an imperfect "work in process" and, in my opinion, simply a roadmap to a more perfect union. This nation and the world will very soon face even greater crisis adjustments and disruptions. Whether it be a major economic/currency collapse, climate change, global wars, water rights, or whatever- the speed and complexity of future problem-solving will demand fewer politics and greater credibility.

In closing- When communities, organizations, and companies reward employees, leaders, and participants on the basis of integrity and merit; capitalism and democracy are sustainable and good things happen.

Families and communities must spend time discussing the concept of "work in progress" and ways of measuring current and future Leaders on the basis of Truth, Trust, and Promises.