

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Time has come to tone down senseless political rhetoric

The year was 1968, and much like 2024, it was dominated by a presidential election campaign that was marked by anti-war protests, divisive rhetoric, racial tensions, and alarming acts of gun violence that shook a nation to its core when Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated months apart.

The turbulence then – in time warp fashion – has become the political reality of today when former President Donald Trump narrowly escaped an assassination attempt last Saturday during a campaign rally in Pennsylvania.

In Saturday's case, the would-be assassin seems to fit the profile of so many other killers bent on ensuring their own ignominy by using high-powered weaponry as a means of political expression.

In the wake of the shooting, in which the 20-year-old assailant was killed and one innocent bystander also was slain, various partisan extremists have chosen not to condemn the violence, but instead have elected to further inflame political tensions by engaging in name-calling, finger-pointing, and promoting conspiracy theories.

Such is the state of our body politic, which each side views in terms of a tug-of-war between the forces of good and evil. It is a battle where there will be no winners, unless the goal of the

combatants in this internal warfare is to further heighten strife, hatred, intolerance, and misunderstanding.

Wouldn't it be refreshing to take a different approach to settling our political differences? Opting to put an end to partisan bickering for the betterment of society. Without something changing, we will bear testimony to the timeless words of famed physicist Albert Einstein, who offered the ultimate definition of "insanity" as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

Einstein's thinking seems particularly meaningful in this high-stakes presidential election year, when the rule of law and the fundamental freedoms of the First Amendment are coming under daily assault while those in positions of power and influence stand seemingly idly by while the country loses its moral rudder.

Regrettably, the battle for our election souls is not being waged by the best and the brightest that America has to offer. That ship sailed years ago when our political parties became mired in seemingly intractable disputes over social and economic disparities, causing partisan fragmentation that threatens to send the time-honored principles of cooperation and compromise into full scale retreat.

That is unless we decide to chart a



different course by writing a new political script featuring high-quality candidates of competency and character who believe in the fundamental truths framed within democracy itself.

The events of last weekend, troubling and tragic as they are, could (and should) serve as a catalyst for change, providing the impetus for a unified approach to political problem-solving, particularly as it relates to the scourge of gun violence that threatens our safety at home, at school, at work, at play, and in sacred places of worship.

America needs to be reminded that the treasured Second Amendment "right to bear arms" was born during a long-ago era when the Founding Fathers felt that citizens should be able to protect themselves against threats to their well-being. It was not intended to provide for a license to kill by random acts of violence that defy all reason and understanding.

That point became tragically clear last Saturday and hopefully will inspire

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leaders from both sides of the aisle to change the current narrative, deciding instead to work collaboratively with those of all persuasions to forge a new national identity, this time by harnessing the enormous power of political unity.

Such a mission can only be accomplished, of course, if we put our political differences aside with a new-found determination to engage in meaningful and respectful dialogue, embracing the wisdom of our forefathers who knew the high cost of preserving our most precious freedoms for the common good.

Best regards,

Jack Buchanan, President