

Community Comment
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Fear and Politics

Perhaps it's just my perception. We do live behind the redwood curtain. I think we have a more practical and independent view of life than many parts of this country. Even better, we combine that with a real sense of community and giving back. So, I wonder if we are more like the country was before and during WWII. We hung together, produced necessary goods like never before and heeded the advice that the only thing we had to fear was fear itself.

Since those horrible and despicable attacks on 9-11, my sense is we are different as a nation. We seem fearful. It started with the Patriotic Act and has gotten worse. We seem to have lost our sense of confidence. To be sure, the economic crash in 08 didn't help and the decade long war in Iraq was far from a success. But our collective response seems more a wringing of the hands and a throwing up of our arms.

Politically, we have turned to fear as a way to motivate our people to vote. Look at the ads. It's more doom and gloom and holding some one or some party to blame. The result has been political obstruction and stagnation, cutting budgets that would result in real capital improvements. Our actions have ensured that we get more and more behind on practical things that need to get done. The politics since 9-11 has pushed us further apart than I remember in my life. Our current state of affairs is as about as far from American ethics as I can imagine.

America comes before politics and party. When it doesn't, we end up with what we have now. No guidance and no confidence. We have an ageing infrastructure that needs repair or replacing. This includes roads, bridges, rails and electrical grids. This stuff is expensive and a ten year unfunded and unnecessary war has drained our resources. The private sector banking crash just about killed a world economy. Our progress to come back has been slowed to a crawl by cheap politics and the politics of fear. With the 24 hour news cycle where everything is a crisis, the fear factor gets elevated without real justification.

A month ago, the crisis was ISIS. All the news all day was about how to stop this newest crazy group from further messing up the middle east. Then Ebola came to Texas. No doubt, the local hospital screwed up. But we have had one death due to Ebola and four or five recoveries in the U.S. We could have done better at the Federal State and local level but look at the news. We didn't hear a peep about Issis for a month. The crisis of the moment was Ebola and political blame.

I don't care what your party affiliation is, we have got to start listening to the majority of Americans, work together to solve problems, and get back to work.

We are acting like scared, spoiled children. Snap out of it America. We are much better than this.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.