

Community Comment
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An Illegitimate President

For more than 200 years, this great country has engaged itself in an activity that is still [I hope] a beacon for the rest of the world. This beacon shines a light on the idea of a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The mechanics are simple; one citizen, one vote, every four years for the Presidency of the United States of America.

To be historically accurate, it started as one man, one vote. Women were not invited to this opportunity for over a hundred years. Slaves were part of the culture and were considered property and had no rights.

For more than 100 years we struggled with the idea of women and black people voting. People fought and died for this right. I don't mean only in wars that could have lost this country; I mean in protests and marches and strikes. People died at the hands of fellow citizens who enjoyed the right to vote and didn't want to include women and black people to the club. We casually say with pride that we are a free people and take it for granted that we all, who are citizens of this country, have the right to vote. But, in fact, we didn't give this right to others willingly.

Even with a more universal opportunity to vote, to have a say in the direction our country would move, it has taken various laws along the way to specifically allow the vote for so-called minorities. Many of these laws came to pass in the 60's. The 1960's. I was a teen then and couldn't believe we were still dealing with this. Over the past decade or so, it is disheartening to see many states passing laws to discourage voting. We pass ID laws that can be difficult for poor and elderly people to know about and afford. We strip voter roles of people with last names that don't sound right, and many other voter suppression laws and rules. We still vote on a Tuesday when many, if not most, people work. The lower your rank, the harder it is to make it to the poll. We limit the number of polls in a given area and regularly hear of waiting times that extend in to many hours. We don't see that in Humboldt County or even the State so much and are lucky. Our's is not everyones experience.

This right to vote demands that our voting system or method is reliable and accountable. We must trust that the votes are counted and accurately displayed.

It is now clear to anyone who is paying attention that the Presidential election of 2016 was not a legitimate election. There are facts that are known.

We know the Russians interfered with the election. They hacked voting machines in at least 18 states. They spread falsehoods through social media outlets. They met with members of Trumps campaign team offering negative information on Hillary Clinton.

Russians have been indicted for this activity as have Trump campaign members. We don't yet know what Trump knew and when he knew it.

We know enough to not trust the 2016 election results. We must not let this stand. It would, quite simply, be un-American. Voting is too important to let this slide. Corruption and foreign interference must not be tolerated.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.