

The election is over. The American people have spoken. The overwhelming reaction of most people I know is relief. Not so much that a long, rancorous campaign is past, since some acrimony during an election is not unusual, but that we can at least anticipate returning to something approaching “normal” in this country. After four years of vitriol and untruths, four years of a leader demanding the imprisonment of his political opponents, four years of a President demonizing immigrants and people who are “other” in some way, we can rest assured that we will be spared that for the next Presidential term.

I don't envy Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. The jobs they will be taking on are difficult enough under normal circumstances. And to the work they will be expected to perform is now added the response to a global pandemic. This is complicated by the fact that the present administration has done little or nothing to ameliorate the situation and has not relied on science to deal with it. And the coronavirus pandemic has also caused economic, social, and educational dilemmas for millions of Americans.

On the world scale, the Biden/Harris administration has an enormous task ahead of it. To repair the damage caused by their predecessors will not be a simple job. Alliances have been weakened, useful agreements on everything from climate change to nuclear weapons have been scrapped, and our allies have been given the “cold shoulder” in favor of authoritarian regimes. Fixing all of this mess created by the previous administration will be an enormous challenge.

Restoration of kindness in the way we think, talk, and act in regard to other people has already begun to show itself in this coming government. Joe Biden is not a vindictive person. And he understands how government is supposed to work. The Vice-President Elect Kamala Harris has proven herself—in previous jobs—to be a tough negotiator on behalf of the people and also a woman of compassion. This should be a time of hope in this country, as we look ahead to improvement in our standing among the family of nations and to policies that are meant to help all of us, regardless of race, status, ethnicity, or economic standing.

And wear that mask. Contrary to what a lot of uninformed people thought, the coronavirus pandemic did not cease to exist the day after the November 3rd election.