

## **Withhold hate and fear and expect justice**

by Ralph C. Martin

Antoine Leiris lost his wife in the Bataclan theatre in France, on November 15, 2015 and later in an open letter to terrorists he declared “you will not have my hate ... I will not give you the satisfaction of hating nor of fearing you...I will stand and not respond as you want me to respond.” When interviewed recently by Kate Kellaway of the Guardian Weekly, about his new book, You Will Not Have My Hate he thoughtfully said, “when you are plunged into shadow you have to find some light in yourself. It is an instinct.”

Many also felt the darkness of the election of Donald Trump. Three days later we paused on November 11 to recall, among other conflicts, what was fought for in WWII. Surely it was not to praise the triumph of bullying, blustering and insulting people for their gender, religion, race and place of origin. Furthermore, all creation was groaning before this election and now those who hear, have even more reason to be tearful.

The uncertainty and potential disruption associated with this new political scenario creates anxiety for opponents of Trump. The contrasting mirror image as developed by Doug Sanders, (Globe and Mail, Nov 12), is that Trump supporters feared social and political change, even if broadly beneficial, and instead craved order, stability and authority. According to Carol Anderson, “people previously privileged, see equality as oppression.”

Do Trump supporters believe that we will now have more order and stability? His strongest vote base is from white middle class people and not from low income folks. Why did people like me roll the dice in this way?

There is a sense of loss for people who want the Western world to be inclusive. Human creativity and collaboration have never been about a zero-sum game. From the Flaring Forth of the universe 13.5 billion years ago until now, increasing complexity and integrative possibilities have emerged in successive spillages over the limits of previous patterns. For example, by not clinging to the habits of the Stone Age, we went beyond quarrelling about who has the most stones, to more options for all of us.

To those maligned by Trump during the election, the result represents a reality of loss and fear. As a white male, with privilege, I might be expected to embrace putative gains. However, the hurt felt by blacks, women, Muslims, Mexicans and others who feel pushed away, is, in the end, my hurt and my downfall too. They suffer now and I choose to link arms with them now. They know the urgency for humans to mature. It is time to put teen-age petulance behind us.

Within every bullying and blustering man is a damaged, little boy with unresolved pain. I'm guessing that Mr. Trump is no different. He too warrants understanding, appreciation and love. It is also necessary to address his behavior.

Following the example of Antoine Leiris, we do not have to resort to giving the President-elect our hate, our fear, nor our supplication. He seeks attention, and it appears that negative attention has been especially potent in propelling him as a differentiated politician. He successfully won a contentious election but has not earned the title of 'leader of the free world.' In contrast, Gandhi without a title or political office, was a true leader. He earned recognition as a moral and inspirational leader of millions in his time, and well beyond.

Trump's strategy of fanning flames of fear could be suffocated, if people in the U.S. and beyond, withhold their fear. Opposition could come from within the Republican party, to which he is only conveniently aligned, for now. They will want to protect their long term relevance. Republican Congressmen and Senators should hear that current actions will have implications in the future.

Although Trump wants to reduce commitments for U.S. greenhouse gas emissions cuts, it will take four years for any country to legally withdraw from the Paris COP21 Climate Accord. Gwynne Dyer noted several years ago that the U.S. military has long understood the risks of climate change to the stability of American interests. They may strongly resist the recklessness of ignoring such a risk.

The entertainment of a reality TV type election crashed out through our screens and now Presidential power is in the hands of a volatile and unpredictable man. Across democracies it is up to us, the voters, to show dignity, grace and determination. We can withhold our hate and fear. Let us expect civility, social justice and respect for Earth, in a journey with more steps.

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