

Globe and Mail fails on Trump



by Conrad Black

It is a painful duty for me, once again, to take issue in these pages [originally in the National Post] with the Globe and Mail. Because of the competition between these newspapers, there is a natural element of rivalry. But that has never diluted my acceptance that the Globe and Mail is an important and distinguished national institution. (I was a founding columnist with its future editor William Thorsell in the ROB magazine until my late friend Norman Webster genially fired me on Christmas Eve, 1997, because of my role in the founding of the National Post). I have had many friends there over many years including in the Webster and Thomson families, which between them have owned the Globe and Mail for about 65 years. In 1979, I joined with the late John Bassett and George Gardner in an effort to buy the Globe and Mail and affiliated publications in 1979 but we were outbid by Ken Thomson. The following comments on that newspaper's lead editorial on Tuesday, March 12, are accordingly made from a perspective of respectful concern that the Globe and Mail not deviate from being a source of reliable information and enlightened and sensible comment.

My concern about that editorial is not about the preference

that the newspaper's editors express in the upcoming United States presidential election. While I have frequently been derided for stating that Donald Trump has more merit as U.S. president and as a presidential candidate than is generally believed in this country, the fact that on the advice of the White House legal office, he gave my co-defendants and I a full pardon from charges made against us in that country, which the White House counsel, after meticulous review, considered were unjust, and after we had effectively won legal vindication anyway, does not prevent me from seeing the former president's limitations or the arguments that can be made against him, as a perusal of my book about him shows, "A President Like No Other."

With these disclaimers, I dissent from the editorial mentioned because of its portrayal of this coming election as a clear case of the incumbent President Joe Biden as a champion of "liberal democratic values around the globe," while a victory for Trump would be a victory for a "neo-autocratic" xenophobe who attempted to perpetrate an "insurrection" after the last election.

Trump did absolutely nothing when he was president to justify the charge that he seeks to alter or violate the constitution, diminish the democratic safeguards of the American political system, reduce anyone's civil liberties or abuse the justice system. Those who wish to judge the issues in this presidential election fairly should remember that Trump's opponents politicized the Central Intelligence and National Security agencies and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other parts of the Justice Department in 2016 to facilitate the production of a pastiche of lies and defamations assembled at the behest and expense of the Democratic National Committee and the Hillary Clinton campaign that was presented to the American media as the product of authentic and impartial intelligence gathering.

They should also recall that Trump was impeached

unsuccessfully for asking the president of Ukraine to let him know if the Biden family had acted with propriety or not in its commercial dealings in Ukraine. The transcript of the conversation that gave rise to the impeachment charge is available to the public; Trump asked for the facts, not for a cooked-up smear job on the Bidens. He was acquitted in the impeachment trial and we now know that the conduct of the Biden family in Ukraine is open to very serious question. They deserve the benefit of the presumption of innocence, but if Trump had ever been involved in anything remotely as compromising, the constitution would have been amended to require that he be tarred and feathered prior to life imprisonment on a ration of bread and water.

It would also be useful to remember that the present secretary of state, Antony Blinken, ["triggered"](#) a letter from 51 past senior intelligence officers on the eve of the 2020 election that attested that evidence against Joe Biden's son, which has now been completely authenticated, was "Russian disinformation." The directors of the National and Central Intelligence agencies, [James Clapper](#) and John Brennan, who signed the letter, had previously lied under oath to congressional committees and Clapper publicly announced that Trump was a Russian intelligence asset and Brennan accused him of "treason."

The March 12 Globe editorial accuses Trump of attempted insurrection on Jan. 6, 2021. As everyone knows, he faces a number of indictments and impartial legal experts, including political opponents, such as Alan Dershowitz and Jonathan Turley, are almost unanimous in regarding these indictments as politically motivated and legally dubious, and it may safely be assumed that if there was one scintilla of evidence connecting Trump to an attempted insurrection that would have been charged. It has not.

Readers might wish to reflect what the reaction would be in this country if the leader of the opposition were indicted on

scores of far-fetched charges in the run-up to a general election. Trump asked the hundreds of thousands of his supporters in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, to demonstrate “peacefully and patriotically,” and it may be safely assumed that if he had intended an insurrection it would have been a more substantial challenge than a group of hooligans and lunatics in ludicrous costumes wandering aimlessly about Congress. Trump told former acting defence secretary Christopher Miller to “fill” a request for National Guard reinforcements, but this was not done.

Trump was understandably annoyed that the courts declined to hear any of the 19 lawsuits taken against the constitutionality of the changes to voting that permitted millions of unsolicited mail-in ballots. He should have been more careful to distance himself from the trespassers and vandals at the Capitol; but the last thing he wanted was an insurrection or the appearance of an attempt at one.

The editors of the Globe and Mail credit President Biden with a successful term and make no effort to explain why President Trump is leading the polls. The answer is that most Americans have higher taxes and lower disposable incomes than they had four years ago when there was effectively no unemployment, minimal inflation, petroleum exports exceeded imports for the first time in nearly 70 years, no serious war in the world and almost no illegal immigration compared to the eight- to 10-million people that have been allowed to enter the country in the last three years, including several thousand rapists and murderers. There is also a steadily increasing number of people who are more alarmed at the threat to constitutional democracy posed by the politicization of the justice system than they are averse to the return of the ex-president.

Both President Biden and Trump have their shortcomings. It is indeed an important election but the desirable outcome for America and the world was not clarified by the Globe and Mail’s preposterously one-sided presentation of the merits of

the candidates on March 12. More is expected of a major national institution.

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