

PWPA USA: Comments on the April 4, 2023 Indictment of President Trump

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Frank Kaufmann, April 5, 2023, New York - The indictment of President Donald J Trump yesterday at the Manhattan Courthouse in the southern district has drawn literally gallons of print ink and miles of video and media commentary.

This is one of the reasons why I have been reluctant to speak on the matter. with so much being said by important, thoughtful and knowledgeable people, it is a bit intimidating or feels a form of hubris to imagine that you have something in particular that also needs to be said on the matter.

On the other hand, the event is so world historical that there would be an element of being irresponsible not to speak publicly in response.

The external facts of the case are well known.

New York County district attorney Alvin Bragg successfully moved an impaneled grand jury to proceed with indicting President Trump on 34 counts of fraudulently falsifying New York business records to conceal crimes. Ordinarily falsifying business records exist legally as misdemeanor crimes but district attorney Bragg managed to elevate these misdemeanors into felonies primarily due to the latter half of that statement attaching to these misdemeanors "to conceal other crimes."

A grand jury is a body of between 16 and 23 people who are tasked with determining whether or not sufficient evidence has been provided to justify moving forward with a case. The prosecutor in charge of providing evidence to the grand jury strives to establish in the consideration of the grand jury that there is sufficient evidence to move forward. An indictment means that the grand jury believes there is enough evidence to formally accuse someone of a crime.

What happened yesterday in New York is that a County Attorney General arraigned and arrested a former United States president based on the grand jury decision sufficient evidence exists to accuse president Trump of having committed a crime.

The events of the day are equally simple to follow. President Trump with his lawyers appeared at his arraignment on time to listen to the reading of the indictment presented publicly for the first time. In this case the details of the indictment had already been leaked illegally out of Attorney General Bragg's office to Trump tiresome, hating journalist Michael Isikoff the week prior. This felony crime of leaking a sealed indictment has resulted in calls for the indictment and resignation of Attorney General Bragg himself. But this matter is secondary to the larger questions at hand

President Trump after hearing the details of the indictment read at the time of his arraignment plead not guilty to all 34 counts, left the courthouse, flew home and gave a speech at his Mar a Lago estate later that evening. President Trump's speech delineated the history his detractors trying to destroy him beginning with spying on his campaign, the false Russia collusion hoax that failed under the costly, years-long life-shredder under Robert Mueller, up through the heavily armed swat raid on President Trump's home in his absence over documents, and finally up through the indictment prosecuted by County Attorney General Bragg.

President Trump is an unusual political figure so far as the degree to which his personality arouses extreme fondness in many and all consuming disdain in many others. This has been nicknamed as him being "a divisive figure." He might or might not be a divisive figure. But the verifiable facts are that 10s of millions of people admire, respect, and adore him, and perhaps as many something like loathe him.

Completely independent of whether President Trump is liked or hated, there is also the fact that American politics itself is deeply divided. This is in part due to the extreme amount of wealth and power involved. This extreme amount of wealth and power at stake makes American politics one of the most deadly and

vicious arenas of political activity in history. America has survived despite this, in large part due to the God-inspired genius of its design at the time of its founding. With so much at stake it is borderline miraculous that the United States has retained a patriotic unity that transcends parties of extreme difference, and has grown for human good throughout the time of its ups and downs



The breakdown of this transcendent American unity that holds parties of extreme ideological difference with massive amounts of wealth and power at stake in conversation has been in steady and precipitous decline since the 1960s, the period after the Second World War. There is much to say about the influences and developments that brought us to the state of extreme fracture. It is tragic, we must find true leaders to get us past this.

Sadly this is the political reality of our current situation. Add to this tragic the intense split in reactions to the person of President Trump, great love, and the great disdain, and we have a perfect storm and a watershed moment in our history.

This is the point of my commentary this morning.

Let us accept honestly that the depth and intensity of our divisions threatens our country. We could lose our country. And let us accept that for good or for bad, President Trump is what has been branded "a divisive individual."

This is the context and reality that should be our starting point of reflection with forming our views about yesterday's indictment. And thus we should ask, is the criminal indictment of a former President of the United States healthy and good for the future of our country. More pointedly is it good to have United States presidents made into a criminals based on matters of bookkeeping? Do we believe this will help and make our country better, healthier, stronger and more stable in the long run?

For those who truly feel that President Trump is a person of significant harm to things we hold dear, I imagine it may be considered legitimate (or even virtuous) to attempt to incapacitate him and destroy his political opportunities and aspirations by whatever means necessary.

Nevertheless I would ask even the most committed members of this community to pause for a moment to look at matters primarily for from the perspective of the long-term health of our country as we hope for the chance to continue our efforts be strong and good through difficult times and more helpful to the world in better times

There are many countries in the world that automatically destroy and imprison former leaders almost immediately upon change of administrations. These countries are brutal, unstable, utterly incapable of proceeding and progressing for the positive welfare of their people.

The United States of America has managed to retain a shared sense of country and purpose even among people who strongly differ. And this blessing and shared efforts even among political and ideological enemies has kept us above this primitive, low-grade violence and base and violent political culture.

I beg us all to seek what is sacrosanct in our hearts for where we live. What is honorable for ourselves and our children, and with this mind look for ways to preserve and rebuild a dignity, honor, and maturity that would never allow personal or political feelings to involve us in activity that threatens the promise and beauty of our country.