

H A R L A N   R I C H A R D S

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Make American Great Again:  
What Trump Really Means

Let me start out by saying I don't like Trump, didn't like him when he was a reality TV star, don't like most of the things he has done since becoming president and have no respect for him or anyone who supports his destructive agenda. Needless to say, this will be a biased editorial rather than a rational, fact-based expose.

I was watching PBS news the other day and the moderator was asking a focus group what they thought of Trump's presidency. One man made a comment about Trump's slogan: "Make America Great Again" and asserted that what Trump really meant was "Make America White Again."

Trump's immigration policies make sense once you understand that he doesn't want the white American population diluted any further by allowing other races and ethnicities into the U.S. His comment about "shithole" countries in Africa (and Haiti) accurately reflect his world-view. I think it is shocking and shameful that once he made the shithole comment that he subsequently denied he ever made it. Senator Cotton (and the other Republican senator - I forget his name) at first said they didn't remember what Trump said, then denied that Trump ever said it. Two more racists who put their party ahead of their country.

Republicans know they are the party of old white people. As demographics in the U.S. shift to include more people of color, Republican political power is waning. Trump's presidency may be their last hurrah. His bigoted, elitist ideology is so extreme that most Americans (including Republicans) find his hypocrisy and duplicity revolting.

I don't believe in stereotyping people based on their racial or ethnic origins. While it is true that some ethnicities are mostly unwelcome in the U.S., that is not because of their genetic make-up. It is because the society in which they grew up (and whose values and mores they embrace) are the antithesis of ours. We believe in freedom, equality and women's rights. Many Mid-Eastern countries don't. It is not that Muslims are unwelcome in the U.S. or are inherently bad people, it is that many of them don't agree with the founding principles of our constitution yet still want to come here.

Those who believe in theocracies (where religion controls the government) should stay at home. We should only allow those who are willing to put our Constitution ahead of their religious dogma. Freedom of religion does not mean freedom to impose one's preferred religion on someone else.

I welcome all immigrants (regardless of country of origin) to the U.S. if they accept these principles. If they don't, exclude them. Also, obtaining citizenship should be mandatory for anyone who wants to live in the U.S. There should be no such thing as a permanent green card. Anyone who remains in this country for 5 or more years should be required to become a citizen in the next 2 years. If they don't, out they go. We should also limit payouts from social security to U.S. citizens. If an immigrant wants to come here to work and pay into our national retirement system as part of the price of living in the U.S., that's fine. But no noncitizen should be entitled to claim a payout from our social security system.