

Informed Citizens

Background Summary

America's Challenges

The middle class being left behind and a declining trust in government are resulting in social unrest and political divisiveness that is threatening our democracy, free market economy, and society.

The Middle Class is being Left Behind

Over the past forty years the percentage of income going to 90% of taxpayers has declined with the percentage of income going to the top 10% increasing significantly.

Because 90% of the people drive consumer demand and consumer demand drives economic activity, this shift in income has limited consumer demand and therefore the economic growth and prosperity of the country.

During those forty years the purpose of a corporation had been defined as being to maximize shareholder value. Shareholders are primarily in the top 10% of the people in our country. The theory was that if the shareholders did well, the benefits would "trickle down" to the remaining 90% of the population, but that did not happen in the same proportion. The 90% haven't done as well as the top 10% resulting in them rightfully believing they aren't being treated fairly.

A Declining Trust in Government

Over the past forty years the percentage of people who trust the Federal government has declined significantly. Political leaders have promised to fix the increasing income inequity and many other things but have not.

During that period political leaders have modified election and legislative process rules and procedures to advance their own self-interests, primarily getting re-elected, rather than balancing their self-interests with the public interest. The number of meaningful laws enacted by Congress has declined significantly. The laws that are passed are becoming more and more partisan.

Most voters evaluate candidates for elected office based on the issues and their beliefs on those issues. The result is elected leaders who must stand up for those issues and not solutions that balance the beliefs of others on those issues. Since each major issue is represented by a spectrum of beliefs the only possible outcome is gridlock and lack of leadership.

Increasing Social Unrest and Political Divisiveness

The middle class being left behind and a declining trust in government is resulting in social unrest and political divisiveness that is threatening our democracy, free market economy, and society. A frustrated middle class is turning to far right, authoritarian leaders to overcome what has become a futile and worsening situation for them.

The increasing social unrest and political divisiveness is made worse by our politicians. The politicians use and misuse the increasing unrest and divisiveness to get elected. Those political

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leaders are funded and influenced by the wealthy, upper class shareholders and are therefore unable to fix the increasing income inequity.

The increasing unrest and divisiveness is made worse by the mainstream and social media corporations. Those corporations have the same goal of maximizing shareholder value and management incentives tied to maximizing shareholder value as all other corporations. The mainstream and social media corporations use and misuse the unrest and divisiveness to generate users and therefore revenue and profits for their shareholders.

America's Opportunity

Advances in technology and communications, increases in education, and greater access to information, along with the fundamentals of who we are as a collective people, provide us with the opportunity to realize America's potential. It is up to us to take advantage of that opportunity.

America's economic, political and population foundations provide a strong platform upon which to realize its potential. A fair and honest free market economy is a great economic system with which to provide for America's prosperity. A fair and honest democracy is a great political system with which to fulfil America's potential. America's diversity of race, nationality, culture, and religion provides an excellent opportunity to be a shining example for the world.

Shared Values

Following are shared values and principles which are fundamental to our society:

- Faith
- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Free Market Economy

Common social values can only come to the surface if people believe their political and business leaders are treating them fairly.

Trust in leaders is fundamental to a successfully functioning society. Trust can only be achieved with honesty and fairness. Marketing has become important to political and business leaders. Marketing can be informative or misleading. Knowingly using selective truths to mislead is dishonest.

Beliefs and Balance

Beliefs are necessary to process and respond to complex aspects of life. They are a product of our personalities and experiences and fundamental to who we are. They may be refined with additional information and perspectives, but we each have fundamental personal preferences on issues.

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Proper balance of all individual beliefs is the only way to function successfully as a society. Balance, not compromise or moderation, is the complete and honest consideration of all aspects of issues prior to determining a solution that best meets the interests of all people.

Shared beliefs:

- In treating others as we want others to treat us
- In honesty, integrity, and right over wrong
- In the collective goodness of people

Short-term and long-term perspectives also require balance. Our self-interests are more important in the short-term (food, shelter, safety, family, etc.), but the common good is important in the long-term for our long-term self-interest. Today we need leaders who will honestly consider the perspectives on challenges and opportunities of those on both the left and the right and who are willing to work to find the appropriate balance and therefore achieve long-lasting solutions.

Faith in a Higher Power

Fundamental to faith in a higher power is honestly treating others as you would have others treat you. Accomplishing that is done by seeking the common good through the pursuit of truth and balance in all things.

Informed Citizens for a Successful America

People can't individually, or even as a group or groups, solve the issues facing government, business, and society; however, collectively people can require that political and business leaders solve the issues in the best interest of all people. No one leader can be the focus of change; equally important are all other leaders and people supporting the leaders. We each need to do everything can for the development of our best government, economy, and society.

A Successful America has:

- A government that represents everyone
- An economy that benefits everyone
- A society that respects everyone

Informed citizens are fundamental to a successful democracy and prosperous free market economy. Informed voters elect leaders who will seek solutions to issues that balance the interests of all citizens. Informed employees make employment decisions that result in management balancing the interests of shareholders with those of the employees, resulting in a fair sharing of income. Informed elected representatives enact legislation that balances the interests of all citizens. Adequately and accurately informed citizens result in fair and efficient markets.

Only the government can ensure that corporations provide adequate and accurate information to employees and consumers, that candidates provide adequate and accurate information to voters, and that elected representatives are provided adequate and accurate information on issues. See www.informedcitizens.com/informed-citizens-commission.