

One World Is Ending. Start Working On the Next.



Align our interests with the earth, not the wealthy!

By Dr. Alan K. Betts

The day after the election was dreary, but the vegetable garden was still vibrant. My cover crop of rye grass was growing well, and I had spread crushed leaves in other places. As I write in late November, the Brussels sprouts and kale have survived some hard frosts, and there are still a few beets in the ground. I even have a few lettuce plants heading up under glass, where I planted for the spring when more food may be needed!

The election showed the dark side of the American dream: the arrogance of power, the self-indulgent sense of entitlement and the strange concept of exceptionalism, masked as 'greatness,' which has been both a strength and weakness of this country. We saw different aspects on both sides and the darker side won. The country rebelled against the rich political elites, and neo-liberal global market capitalism. They elected a demagogue, who encouraged fear and hatred.

Many people are angry and suffering. To quote Naomi Klein: "Under neoliberal policies of deregulation, privatization, austerity and corporate trade, their living standards have declined precipitously. They have lost jobs. They have lost pensions. They have lost much of the safety net that used to make these losses less

frightening. They see a future for their kids even worse than their precarious present."

Where this will lead is still unknown. From the perspective of the global environment, the situation seems at first bleak. The triumph of the beliefs that we have unlimited power, climate change is a myth, and global treaties must be canceled could be a disaster both for the U.S. and the world. It could lead to global sanctions against the U.S. This political revolution might lead to chaos and the collapse of the US economy, which would also be bleak. Most likely we will have to survive four years of national paralysis, so start planning regular community events. This too shall pass.

A smooth transition to an efficient renewable energy economy now looks far less likely, although market forces will continue to drive renewable energy in New England with supportive legislatures. Remember to send your legislators letters of thanks and encouragement this holiday season!

But it looks as if the rest of the world will rise to the challenge and move forward with the Paris agreement without the US if necessary. We are ceding global leadership to China, which is taking over the manufacturing of many components of the global renewable energy transition. Massive air pollution problems have accelerated China's clean energy revolution, and they expect to profit from the global transition. This will not make our next government happy, but the Earth will be grateful. We should be grateful also that our temporary insanity is not the

Dr. Alan K. Betts's Climate Prediction for Mid-December 2016 to Mid-February 2017 is "warmer than average with more snow than last year."

*It is time for everyone to do their part and help lift the earth to greatness.
Photo: <http://trogdon-stoutwhs.wikispaces.com/>*



end of the world.

Keep your sense of humor and be creative with new diktats from Washington. Create elegant solar stickers, "Installed in the USA" to go over the "Made in China" stickers. When you reorganize your mission statements to emphasize that you are providing jobs for New Englanders, stress that you are using American sunlight to power American homes and protect the American climate for your children. Add the asterisk and fine print that says "This will make America great again". I suggest someone number and catalog the myriad 3 a.m. DT-tweets; so we can all find a fragment of a tweet to comply with - should the thought police

come. Plan to build some tiny passive solar rooms hidden within your fields of solar panels for the next underground railroad.

Above all, reconnect with the Earth, and plant more crops in American soil – this too will keep us on track. It is not too late to plant spinach and lettuce seeds under glass, to sprout next spring when you need consolation. It will be a long struggle to reclaim our humanity in the face of darkness, but the sun will be shining on us!

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