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**Democracy moves along**

On December 14, the US Electoral College cast their votes. As expected, Joe Biden received 306 votes against Donald Trump's 232. While this is not news, Trump's obstinate refusal to accept the voters’ verdict had created much angst. Given Trump's hold on Republican voters, most Republicans in the US Congress have been reluctant to acknowledge Biden as the president-elect.

Following the vote in the Electoral College, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell congratulated Joe Biden on his election and urged his fellow Republicans to do the same.

Since the election on November 3, Trump has acted in increasingly erratic ways, refusing to accept the results while attacking anyone who acknowledges that Biden won. His team of lawyers have filed dozens of lawsuits almost all of which have been dismissed as lacking merit, including rejections twice by the US Supreme Court. Even Trump's attorney general Bill Barr, known to be one of his strongest supporters, has publicly stated that the Justice Department has found no evidence of fraud that could overturn the results of the election.

Being president has shielded Donald Trump from legal action. He will lose this protection on January 20. It is being said approaching such legal jeopardy may be causing his erratic behavior.

In the meantime, the country is suffering greatly from having a president who is missing in action, while a pandemic rages on.

Joe Biden, to his credit, has paid no attention to Trump’s wild claims about election fraud. He had promised to create an administration that reflects the diversity of the country and he has proceeded to do exactly that. After picking Kamala Harris, a woman of color, as his running mate he has continued to appoint several members of minority communities to key roles. He has nominated the first African-American to the post of defense secretary and the first Native American to the post of secretary of interior. He has also appointed the first openly gay person to his cabinet.

A source of great pleasure for the Pakistani-American community has been Biden’s appointment of Ali Zaidi, a young but highly accomplished lawyer of Pakistani descent, to the post of deputy national climate adviser. Zaidi had worked on the Paris Climate Accords and will now again work with John Kerry who will be the climate envoy.

Biden has nominated several highly accomplished and respected people to his team. People such as John Kerry, and Antony Blinken from the Obama administration, as secretary of state. Janet Yellen, former chair of the Federal Reserve will be treasury secretary. It is clear Biden is trying to make sure his cabinet is not only diverse but also includes highly accomplished people who can hit the ground running. He will be inheriting a country in deep crisis and with no time to waste.

There is much work to be done, starting with the distribution of Covid-19 vaccines, and getting the economy back on its feet. Much work is also needed to repair relations with allies across the world and to attend to several global crises made worse by Trump's unpredictable approach to international relations.

In the meantime, Trump has even attacked Republican officials responsible for the election in state of Georgia, resulting in threats of violence against them and their families. They have pleaded they shouldn't be threatened as they have been steadfast supporters of Trump. Perhaps they wouldn't have faced such a predicament had they shown empathy for the many others from the opposing party, and from the media, who have been threatened and mistreated by Trump.

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