

# They had a dream. Now Trump will scrub the melting pot clean

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By Democratic Audit UK

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*On 20 January, Donald Trump will become the 45th President of the United States. His victory is a definitive break with the vision of America that has prevailed for the past century: a land open to migrants and capable of assimilating different cultures and ethnicities, says **Takis S Pappas**. The great melting-pot is about to be scrubbed clean, and the checks and balances on presidential power that Americans took for granted will come under strain.*



There was once a country with a dream of epic proportions. As one of that country's many bright [writers](#) put it in 1931, the dream was about living in a land "of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable." The idea seemed attractive to other people in faraway places who, spotting the opportunity, decided to migrate to that land, soon turning it into a pot of cultures, religions, languages, races and ethnicities. All those elements melted together in the pot, and became integrated into that country's dominant culture and its old institutions.

Among the most important of those institutions were those concerning that country's leadership, which, said the Constitution, should be checked and balanced. One major check was the leader nomination process, which for a long time was [controlled](#) by special interest groups and other political insiders who made sure that the people eventually nominated would meet the high standards expected in the role. But even after electing the leader, there were other institutions intended to balance political power at the top. For years and years, it all went reasonably smoothly in that country until one day the people realised that the great dream was moribund. And then, after elections, that country was not the old America any more, and its institutions were not in place any longer, and its new leader was called Donald Trump.

How did it happen?

Well, it happened for three inter-related reasons: **poor individual life prospects, imperilled majority group status, and a yearning for bold and aggressive leadership**. In today's America, the predominant emotion among

the majority of citizens is their dissatisfaction with not getting what they deserve, fear of the mixture brewing in the American melting pot, and anger with established politicians who offer them hope rather than decent jobs which can make them upwardly mobile again. Enter Trump. He is voted into office intent on punishing both the political establishment inside the country and its many outside enemies, scrubbing the pot clean of whatever ingredients are unappetising to the ordinary folks in the majority, and reinstating the American dream – “Make America great again!”

Americans’ general dissatisfaction with their lives is not hard to discern. For many decades, commercial banks, corporations and government agencies had facilitated consumer lending, eventually turning America into a [debtor nation](#). And when the economy became sluggish, it was primarily the blue-collar, white working-class people across the country who felt the brunt. “There’s no American dream for anyone who isn’t a lawyer or banker,” a Trump voter [said](#), while another voter from Clarington, Ohio, was even more explicit when talking about her life prospects: “Clarington is a shithole. Jobs all left. There is nothing here anymore. When Ormet Aluminum factory closed, jobs all disappeared.” She bemoaned the lack of options for a better life: “I have five kids and two have addictions. There is nothing else for kids to do here but drugs. No jobs. No place to play.” And explained her voting choices: “I voted for Obama the first time, not the second. Now I am voting for Trump. We just got to change things.”

Trump’s promise to scrub the melting pot and reinstate majority rule was the second reason why Americans voted for him. As he made quite clear during his campaign, he dismissed accepted social norms of “political correctness” towards any minority and, without caring about whether he was accused of racism, misogyny or bigotry, he spoke in the name of the majority of “the forgotten men and women of our country,” vowing that ordinary people who work hard should have a voice – [pledging](#): “I am your voice.” Interestingly, that message made full sense to [naturalised minorities](#) such as Latinos, Muslims and other former immigrants, who by now felt themselves “proud daughters and sons” of America.

But above all, Trump painstakingly ridiculed, delegitimised, and in every other way possible trashed the old political establishment, especially his presidential opponent, (“Crooked”) Hillary Clinton, but also his own Republican party and its elders. Nowhere was that better and most powerfully expressed than in the [ad](#) concluding his electoral campaign in which, using perfect populist language, he rebuked:

*“Our movement is about replacing the failed and corrupt political establishment by a new government controlled by you, the American people. ... The political establishment that is trying to stop us is the same group responsible for our disastrous trade deals, massive illegal immigration, and economic and foreign policies that have bled our country dry.”*

As Trump assumes office, America is another country. The American dream now seems to lie in tatters, and there is growing support for [mass deportations](#) of illegal and other unwanted minorities. As the new president-elect will soon have to deliver upon his promises to blue-collar and middle-class Americans, many believe him entirely [unfit](#) to govern. With no concrete plan yet, it is unlikely that his policies will turn around the lives of Americans living in downtrodden areas that have lost factory jobs. Nor is it easy to imagine how scrubbing the melting pot will bring harmony and reduce the polarisation and racial conflict in American society. By far the most contentious terrain will be the institutions of federal government. The traditional checks and balances of the American political system may withstand a presidential political assault, but will certainly be strained and, perhaps, partially violated. Parallel institutions controlled by the presidential family may also emerge, especially in the media. One thing is certain: America no longer has a grand dream, and risks spiralling into epic failure. May God bless her!

*This post represents the views of the author and not those of Democratic Audit.*

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