cartoon by Gavin Hamilton

WORD STATIC *In politics, sometimes there is much to say and never time to listen. Ignore all of the political noise and listen to what others are saying; you may surprise yourself with what you hear.*

editorial

Divided between two "you's"

Last Friday, America watched Donald J. Trump get sworn in as the 45th President of the United States of America. Many citizens speculated that his inaugural address failed to provide details or specifics on his plan for the country, adding to their apprehension of his administration. Many other citizens see his administration as a beacon of hope and change. Throughout the first half of his speech, President Trump made a point of differentiating between a "you," the American people and "them," the American Government. He told the American people that "everyone is listening to you now." Now, a week since his inauguration, the nation finds itself split into two separate "you's."

"You" may be anyone who supports President Trump. Yes, you are victorious. Your candidate has won the election and is the President of the United States of America; that is a fact with which no one will disagree. However, understand that many people did not support your candidate, which is not unlike other elections. But be mindful of his rhetoric. Maybe the individuals he offended do not look like you, have the same God as you or love the same gender as you. Regardless, they have reservations about the president that you may not understand because you were not offended throughout his campaign. Listen to these concerns. They are voicing these concerns, putting them on your time line, marching them through the streets. These are valid fears and thoughts. People have reasons not to support the President of the United States of America because he has given them reason not to. Many people have felt threatened and targeted throughout his campaign and fear this threat transferred to his presidency. If you were not offended by President Trump, acknowledging the privilege of your situation may put in perspective the fears of the other individuals. You may not understand things you have not directly experienced, but be empathetic toward these concerns.

There is another "you" the president may be addressing. You are individuals offended, frightened or apprehensive because of our president. This you was not victorious, and 24 hours after the nation celebrated President Trump, this you took to the streets of cities around the world in protest. Women's marches stirred Saturday in D.C., Chicago and New York; Women are this you. This you is members of the LGBTQ+ community which feel unheard and underrepresented. This you may be Americans with origins in other countries. These men and women of color find themselves on the outside, looking in. You are fighting an uphill battle against many people who do not denounce the offense rhetoric the president used throughout his campaign; instead you encounter individuals who support and maybe even repeat this rhetoric in your direction. This you is Muslims, followers of a religion unfamiliar to many Americans, despite being the largest religion in the world. A religion targeted since 9/11 and a religion President Trump, in their eyes, has created a bigger divide for in this country. These are real concerns. These are valid concerns. To all of the you's: stay strong in your convictions, but understand America is not built on radicalists. Instead it is founded and sustained on pioneers who found their situation to be undesirable and rose to make a change.

OUR TAKE

This election opened a long-standing divide in the country. The two sides differ in many ways, but in the end, we need to come together to make one country

And to either side, do not fear the other "you." Instead, lend an ear. So, to all of you: everyone is listening, but are you listening to anyone else? Politics is a two-sided game and sometimes compromise seems impossible. However, if you do not listen to the other side of the argument, you may not learn on which side of the argument you truly stand.

In his inaugural address, President Trump spoke plenty about giving the country back to the Americans. His tone shifted to an inclusive "we."

He said, "We are one nation. Their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams; and their success will be our success. We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny." Each one of you are the new generation. The youth of America. And you may find yourself on differing sides of the argument when it comes to the fate of this nation. But if you listen to each other's dreams, successes and desired destiny, you may find some of you want the same things. And maybe you will always disagree on how to obtain those things, but you will learn that you all come from a home in this country—— your foundation does not differ that greatly.

So a week after the inauguration, everyone is listening to both of you. But more importantly, what do all of you hear?

One last vote

Students reflect on this year's past election

81.4 % students believe their vote matters

source: survey on Google forms of 501 responses from Jan. 19-25

CRIER

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