



# Earth Manifesto

## An Open Letter to the Presidential Electors of the Electoral College

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain, Creator of the Earth Manifesto  
December 15, 2016

The American people have finally gotten so fed up with the status quo in American politics that they resoundingly declared, "I'm as mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore." In expressing this justified anger, they were emulating the exasperated Howard Beale, a fictional anchorman for the nightly news in the great film *Network*, who added in his most famous soliloquy, "I'm a HUMAN BEING, God damn it! My life has VALUE! ... Things have got to change."

In a true democracy, candidates for office would appeal to the best interests of the greatest number of citizens. Our democracy in the USA has been insidiously corrupted to make it into a plutocratic oligarchy -- that is, rule by the wealthy few. Both major political parties pander primarily to the financial interests of the richest 1% of people, who own more wealth than the bottom 90% of the American people. This is a grotesque level of inequality, and it is growing increasingly dangerous to social cohesion and social stability.

A surprising confirmation of the fact that our system has been profoundly corrupted by economic elites and Big Business and other moneyed interest groups was found by two professors who made a detailed study of almost 1,800 public policy issues and determined that "the preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule, near-zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy."

But here's the odd and unacceptably calamitous thing about the preliminary outcome of the November 8th national elections. The people have been broadly deceived, and they are now in the process of being double-crossed and betrayed by the ruling elite. This is NOT mere hyperbole.

A cabal of extreme partisans and establishment politicians is being assembled right now that is planning to implement changes that are diametrically opposed to what really needs to be done to fairly represent the best interests of the vast majority of Americans. Think about this treachery: Donald Trump is naming a Cabinet of hard-right loyalists whose records and ideological bents reveal that they intend to shred the social safety net in order to give the biggest tax breaks in history to the already ultra-rich. Their priorities are crystal clear: to finance lower taxes on the rich by undermining public education, repealing the Affordable Care Act, and reining in the costs of Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security by cutting the benefits that these programs provide to more than 100 million Americans. And they are going to do this while discriminating more unfairly against immigrants, Hispanics, African Americans, Muslims, students, young people and women. In the process they clearly intend to eviscerate environmental protections to artificially boost private profits so that money will gush even more narrowly into the bank accounts of the wealthy few.

The Electors of the Electoral College should reject Donald Trump's candidacy for president in their crucial vote on December 19th for a long litany of compellingly valid reasons. I urge all Americans to read these words carefully, and to understand our national predicament clearly, and to lend your voice in demanding that the Electors act responsibly to ensure more democratic leadership of our great nation.

It has become normal in our current skewed version of democracy NOT to fairly represent the best interests of

all Americans, but the recent national elections reached a dismal new low in our political history by featuring a shrewdly slick billionaire candidate who sold himself by dishonorably deceiving the people about how he would govern. He made many false promises to his supporters and used a devilishly demagogic appeal to the fears and resentments of the masses. He shrewdly tailored his rhetoric to provoke the anger and frustrations and insecurities of white men in particular, who feel left behind as employment opportunities become less attractive in our society and the populace becomes more racially and culturally diverse. But instead of honestly offering policies that would really be in the best interests of the American people, Mr. Trump used a reprehensible litany of treacherously tactics to gain a victory on November 8th. An objective evaluation of how he pulled off this stunning triumph makes it clear that his ruses should absolutely disqualify him. The Electors of the Electoral College should therefore save the United States of America from a disastrous future under the rule of Trump and his loyalists, which is portended by the unfolding of such a dishonest, disreputable, extremely divisive, myopically misguided, socially maladaptive, environmentally catastrophic and likely harsh authoritarian rule.

"These are the times that try men's souls," Thomas Paine wrote back in the revolutionary year of 1776. Back then, tyranny stalked the land, and the colonists were outraged at unfair representation of their best interests. There were about 2.5 million people living in the 13 American colonies at that time. Today, sensationally, Hillary Clinton received in excess of 2.7 million more votes than Donald Trump in the recent national elections -- more than the entire population of the colonies in the year our Founding Fathers declared independence from the harsh hegemony of despotic British rule.

Yet Mr. Trump was anointed the presumptive president-elect, due to the way the Electoral College is set up. The U.S. Constitution established the Electoral College to empower electors to choose the president rather than having a candidate chosen directly by popular vote. This was done for a variety of reasons, but it can be regarded in a sense as a "fail-safe mechanism" for our democratic system of governance. Alexander Hamilton, the eminent statesman and one of our honorable Founding Fathers, evocatively explained these reasons in his Federalist Paper No. 68. The bottom line was that the Founders felt electors would be "Men most capable of analyzing the qualities" needed for a candidate for "the distinguished office of President of the United States", and that these electors would be best capable of making sure that the person to be chosen should be a character "pre-eminent for ability and virtue."

"Pre-eminent for ability and virtue!" Now, it seems overwhelmingly clear that almost any objective and dispassionate assessment of all the facts and evidence would conclude that Mr. Trump is not a man of fair-minded governing experience or respect-worthy virtues, and his preeminent abilities are more impulsive, bombastic, demagogic, manipulative, deceitful, bankrupt and authoritarian than honorable qualifications that make him fit for the role of honestly promoting "the general Welfare of the United States". Or of safeguarding our personal liberties.

The legitimacy of authority in our democracy is derived from the informed consent of the governed, so Trump's shallow, treacherously deceptive and ultra-divisive election campaign has seriously undermined the foundations of our democracy. And since the election, Trump's actions have clearly confirmed that he intends to violate the public trust with his bizarre Cabinet appointments, and it is becoming ever clearer that he poses an extremely dangerous threat to the economic well-being and overall security of the vast majority of the American people, and to our personal freedoms and Constitutionally assured liberties.

There are 538 Electors in the Electoral College, and they will make the final choice of who is to be president on December 19th. Of them, almost half are not legally bound to vote for their state's choice, and can cast their electoral ballot for whomever they choose. More than 125 of these free electors will be provisionally poised to vote for Mr. Trump, and it would take just 37 of these electors to conscientiously change their vote and give it to Hillary Clinton (or some other qualified person) to avoid the disaster of a Trump presidency.

The reasons the Electors should do this are straightforward. Mr. Trump did not win "fair and square". He won by engaging in a long litany of devious tactics that were unethically illegitimate. He blatantly used demagogic emotional hijacking, con man deceptions, hard-times swindles, dishonest hiding of his tax return information, and a barrage of misinformation and outright lies in electioneering rallies and on Twitter. **"And Trump scurrilously set**

fire, like a scheming firefighter who has secretly become a flagrant arsonist, to the dry tinder of white identity insecurities and resentments in his brazen bid to get attention and grab power." Additionally, the election was thrown to a Trump advantage by the unprecedented intervention by the Director of the FBI in the last 11 days before the election, and by treacherous Russian cyber-hacking meddling that sabotaged our American political process by unleashing a drumbeat of WikiLeaks leaks that helped give Trump unwarranted support. This Machiavellian intrigue of demagoguery and deceit was made even worse by Mr. Trump gaining unfair advantages from gerrymandering of congressional districts and by voter intimidation and many voter suppression laws that were put in place by Republican legislatures in many states in the wake of the Supreme Court's narrow 5 to 4 majority of ideological conservatives eviscerating the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

It is making matters critically worse now for Mr. Trump to finally be showing his true colors after the election by filling his Cabinet with billionaires and establishment conservatives and generals whose top priorities are to give vastly increased power and unethically irresponsible profiteering privileges to giant corporations, to empower Wall Street at the expense of *We the People* on Main Street, and to deprive millions of white working class voters and tens of millions of other Americans of their healthcare insurance under the Affordable Care Act. Worse yet, in the long run, these prospective Cabinet officials want to eliminate many protections of the environment and side with polluters and the fossil fuel industry over the health and best interests of the people. This is unquestionably a betrayal of all Americans now and in the future.

A poignant op-ed that opposes the selection of Mr. Trump was published in the New York Times by a Republican elector name Christopher Suprun, who vows not to vote for Trump on December 19. Titled *Why I Will Not Cast My Electoral Vote for Donald Trump*, "it's a pretty serious statement concerning what our electoral college is supposed to do." He concludes, "Electors of conscience can still do the right thing for the good of the country. Presidential electors have the legal right and a constitutional duty to vote their conscience."

In my lengthy essay, *Demagoguery and the Definite Dangers of the Demise of Democracy: Is the Pen Mightier than Illegitimate Authority?*, I delve into the many persuasive reasons that the Electors should fulfill their moral responsibility to vote for a more honest person who has the best interests of the American people at heart, and a better qualified candidate -- and to reject Mr. Trump. Incisive insights into the numerous eminently valid reasons that Donald Trump is a dangerous candidate to lead us are adduced in this common sense essay.

I urge the Electors to read this long essay in its entirety (it is online on the Earth Manifesto website), and engage in critical thinking, and gauge these passionately dispassionate arguments, and do what you feel in your heart is in the best interests of your country and the American people -- and humanity in general. I call on all of these patriots to stand up in support of our democratic republic and the greater fairness for which it stands, including the overarching values of expansive personal freedoms, Golden Rule inclusiveness, greater security, a fairer criminal justice system, improved prospects for national unity, and common sense by courageously acting to make our country truly greater.

Our courageous Founding Fathers declared in the Declaration of Independence in 1776 that it is the right of the people, indeed their duty, to throw off the hegemony of any leader that poses a threat of absolute despotism through abuses and usurpations of power, and to provide new safeguards for their future security. So I urge each and every one of the Electors who is provisionally designated to vote for Donald Trump to be honorably patriotic and courageously vote for Hillary Clinton or another safer and more reputable candidate for president.

As Thomas Paine would have said to the Electoral College electors, "You have it in your power to begin the world over again."

The proverbial pitchforks are inevitably going to come out for the plutocrats and the ruling elites if the Electoral College electors choose Mr. Trump, due to his rashly regressive tax-cut plans that would make income and wealth inequality much more extreme than it is already. A Big Picture understanding of this persuasive line of thought is provided by the insightful billionaire Nick Hanauer in his article *The Pitchforks Are Coming ... For Us Plutocrats*. Revolutionary unrest would result from Trump's plans to double down on trickle-down tax policy, and this social

turmoil would almost certainly be violently suppressed by Trump because of his thin-skinned narcissistic character and his exaggerated authoritarian tendencies. Nick Hanauer made this sensational observation:

"Wake up, people. ... If we don't do something to fix the glaring inequities in this economy, the pitchforks are going to come for us. No society can sustain this kind of rising inequality. In fact, there is no example in human history where wealth accumulated like this and the pitchforks didn't eventually come out. You show me a highly unequal society, and I will show you a police state. Or an uprising. There are no counterexamples. None. It's not if, it's when."

While Trump gave his supporters plausible reasons to believe that he would stand up for them during his campaign, it is now becoming overwhelmingly clear that he intends to rule in favor of the richest Americans. For context, realize that statistics show that less than 20,000 people in the U.S. already own more wealth than the 250 million Americans at the bottom of our dangerously inegalitarian society. It is an outrageously serious abrogation of the public trust to make such inequality radically worse, and it must be seen for what it really is -- absolutely unconscionable. It is anti-democratic and morally wrong to favor the one person in a thousand whose wealth already exceeds that of 900 fellow Americans whose interests are being so inimically ignored.

Trump presents wide-ranging risks to democratic fair-mindedness and national security, as explained in extensive detail in *Demagoguery and the Definite Dangers of the Demise of Democracy*. These risks broadly involve nine primary Constellations of Reasons that are adduced and examined in well-reasoned and deliberative detail in this essay. These constellations of understandings fall into the general categories of Fomented National Insecurity, The Biggest Financial Scam in World History, Risks Related to "the Disastrous Rise of Misplaced Power", Ideologically Twisted Perspectives on the Supreme Court, Overarching Ecological Perspectives, The Harms Associated with Diversionary Tactics and Public Graft, Subsidiary Themes, *It Can't Happen Here*, A Brief History of Truth and Lies, and True American Values.

"Alas for the Trump voters, the disasters he will bring on this country will fall more heavily on them than anyone else. The uneducated white males who elected him are the vulnerable ones, and they will not like what happens next."

--- Garrison Keillor

All of the nine categories of compelling reasons to dump Trump are important, but one of them merits heightened scrutiny because it is probably the least urgent but the most crucially consequential for all of humanity in the long run. Mr. Trump's stands on environmental matters and climate action are of top importance for all people in future generations. Curiously, Trump and his three adult children signed an open letter to President Obama and the U.S. Congress in December 2009 just before negotiators were headed to Copenhagen to try to forge a global climate pact. The open letter's signatories declared: "If we fail to act now, it is scientifically irrefutable that there will be catastrophic and irreversible consequences for humanity and our planet."

"Catastrophic and irreversible consequences!" This open letter was published in an impressive full-page ad in the *New York Times*, and was signed by a good number of concerned U.S. business leaders and luminaries, including Donald Trump. The ad called for aggressive climate action and investments in clean energy, and for our leaders to inspire the rest of the world to join the fight against climate change. The signatories of the open letter advocated that the U.S. "lead the world by example", asserting: "We recognize the key role that American innovation and leadership play in stimulating the worldwide economy. Investing in a Clean Energy Economy will drive state-of-the-art technologies that will spur economic growth, create new energy jobs, and increase our energy security, all while reducing the harmful emissions that are putting our planet at risk."

In light of these ideas, it is astonishing that the Trump family has found it expedient since then to deny climate change and pander to fossil fuel mega-corporations for political support. Candidate Trump made this bald-faced turnabout, and now the president-elect is naming people to his Cabinet who are extreme anti-environmentalists, decidedly hostile to climate action. A somewhat objective assessment of this bizarre "change of heart" would characterize it as coldly calculated and profoundly perfidious, and it seems to be a form of nefarious treachery that stands in harsh violation of the common good, apparently in the service of greed and the hunger for

domineering power.

We should honor precautionary principles and keep in mind the words that H.G. Wells declared back in 1920: "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." The overarching concerns expressed in the Earth Manifesto relate to the environment and the prospects of propitiously creating better ways for humanity to live sustainability on our home planet. Surely Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. was right when he poignantly pointed out that there is ultimately a false dichotomy "between economic prosperity on the one hand and environmental protection on the other." He noted ruefully that it is foolish for us to treat the Earth as if it were "a business in liquidation" by striving to convert natural resources to cash as quickly as possible. And when the cash is given to the wealthiest among us, and they jealously hoard it for themselves, the moral wrong of the strategy is made even more egregious.

A central problem underlying all of our national challenges is the set of provisions that could be called "the Biggest Financial Scam in World History." Understand this clearly. After Ronald Reagan was first elected, he succeeded in getting the top tax rates on the highest levels of income rashly reduced from 70% to 28%, and the national debt has increased from less than \$1 trillion in 1980 to \$20 trillion today. It is unconscionably irresponsible for our elected representatives to allow wealthy people to continue to abuse the power of their moneyed influence to perpetuate this state of affairs, and indeed to exacerbate it by slashing taxes further on wealthy people and the corporate entities that facilitate the dangerously increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. Yet it is the top priority of Republican politicians to ram this goal of regressive changes in taxation on the divided and deluded public.

The Electoral College is our last best hope for avoiding the many dangers of our democracy being subverted into a more pathetic form of plutocracy, and even likely into an autocratic dictatorship by Donald Trump and the hard-line loyalists he has been provisionally naming to be in charge of his prospective administration. I urge the electors of the Electoral College to make the right choice to lead our great country to a safer, fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable future.

'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected, even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed time of continental union, faith and honor.

--- Thomas Paine

Truly,

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain is the founder of the Earth Manifesto -- <http://earthmanifesto.com/> -- and has been inspired by imagining herself as "the valiant though illegitimate great-granddaughter of the highly esteemed and irreverent writer, lecturer, humorist and philosopher Mark Twain."

#### AUTHOR NOTE:

It is noteworthy that the power of tweets, which contain a maximum of 140 characters, have had powerful effects on the outcome of the November 8th elections. This means that more complex and nuanced and comprehensive understandings have taken a back seat to emotionally manipulative and truth-deficient content in tweets. However we do still live in a world where facts and evidence must be given sensible attention to ensure our security and survival, and it is my conviction that the Earth Manifesto, which contains many millions of characters, will prove to be more powerful than Trump's emotion-exploiting megaphone. Emotion has only temporarily trumped the truth. This *Assault on Reason* will turn out to be a Pyrrhic victory for Americans and humankind. Also note that this Book Twelve of the Earth Manifesto is complemented by wide-ranging ideas and profound understandings contained in this manifesto online, and in the other eleven of the Twelve Books of the Earth Manifesto that are available right now from the online publisher Lulu Publishing. History may eventually judge these ideas to be providentially game changing as well as interesting and entertaining -- and thus confirm that the pen is mightier than the sword of illegitimate authority.



# Earth Manifesto

## An Open Letter to Vice-President Joe Biden

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain  
December 21, 2016

I appeal to you in the strongest possible terms to take advantage of the moment on January 3rd during the transition from last year's Senate to next year's Senate to appoint Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court seat left vacant after Justice Antonin Scalia died more than 10 month ago on February 12, 2016.

I also appeal to ALL Americans to give close consideration to the words and ideas set forth below, because they are exceptionally well-reasoned and provide an eminently persuasive case for the overarching rightness of this action for the American people. Please think about these convincing common sense understandings.

*We the People* have just violated the most important principle that our Founding Fathers were concerned with when they hammered out the provisions in our great American Constitution. That consideration was the creation of a new and fairly representative form of government that had strong enough checks and balances that no despot at home or abroad would be able to overthrow it and impose repressive authoritarian control over the populace.

Every gun owner knows very well that it is crucial to have a safety catch on a loaded weapon. American voters have just handed unchecked power to a dangerous demagogue and a stunningly ideological and extremely "conservative" and partisan Congress that clearly cares much more about rich people than the 99% of Americans. Maintaining an independent judiciary is the only good fail-safe hope for protecting the people from the many threats that the president-elect and a rubber stamp Congress pose to the liberties and greater well-being of the populace.

The American colonists had first-hand experience with tyranny, and frankly, they hated it. So after courageously declaring Independence from British despotic rule on July 4, 1776, our Founding Fathers were highly motivated devise a real fool-proof system to prevent ANY group from seizing domineering power, and they did such a good job of creating an enduring system to protect *We the People* from any future episodes tyranny or despotic rule that our democratic republic has survived for more than 200 years. But make no mistake about it, a threat has now arisen that could lead to authoritarian and even dictatorial abuses of power.

The political establishment in the USA has become far too corrupt in the last few decades, violating the inestimable validity in Alexander Hamilton's observation, "Real liberty is neither found in despotism or the extremes of democracy, but in moderate governments."

Abraham Lincoln gave us a sensational idea of our responsibilities to honor the covenant of public trust that the Founding Fathers imbued into the Constitution when he said, "The task of our forefathers was to uprear upon the hills and valleys of our land a political edifice of liberty and equal rights, and it is our duty to transmit these undecayed by the lapse of time and untorn by usurpation to the next generation. This task is imperatively required of us faithfully to perform in gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, duty to posterity, and love for our species in general." (paraphrased for context)

Most of the ardent ideological champions of conservative Supreme Court Justices don't really give a damn about hot button issues like abortion, gay rights, harsh prohibitions flag-burning and such. These are mere subterfuges

that they use to exploit people's emotions in order to divide them, so that they can achieve their real narrow self-interested goals.

Their true objective is to have Supreme Court Justices who will side with giant corporations and rich people over the greater good of working people and the dispossessed. This is their overriding agenda, just as it has been ever since corporations were invented. This conflict between capitalists and working people is the same issue that sparked the creation of the Communist Manifesto in the 1840s. "Workers of the world, unite!"

Facts and evidence have been broadly ignored by the president-elect and Congress in what pundits describe as our "post-truth" world. But we still live in a reality where denial of facts and evidence and the best understandings of our human foresight can be very dangerous, and deceptive spin and propaganda can violate the public trust in profound ways.

The judiciary system is respectful of facts and evidence, in crucial contrast to the incoming executive and legislative branches of the federal government, which seem to be less concerned with truth or facts in their eagerness to impose their anti-egalitarian agenda on the people. So our court system is our last bulwark against dogmatic unreason and consequentially dangerous absolutism.

Many conservatives may howl at first blush with this proposal, and will declare that this would be an outrageous legislative action. This hypocrisy would be pretty darn ironic in light of the 12 unbelievably unscrupulous ways that Republicans have managed to illegitimately win the November national elections. The long litany of these unscrupulous tactics is examined in detail in my online essay *Demagoguery and the Definite Dangers of the Demise of Democracy*. I strongly encourage to read this visionary diatribe.

My father used to tell the oddly funny story about the old codger who would say to him, "Cheer up, things could be worse." And I never tired of hearing his pragmatic and ruefully cheerful observation, "So I cheered up, and sure enough, things got worse." The national elections on November 8th gave domineering power to a rash demagogue and a group of extreme "conservative" politicians, and this is all but certain to make things much worse for the American people and humankind in general.

I have adduced and examined nine primary Constellations of Reasons that underlie this assessment that conditions are going to get worse in *Demagoguery and the Definite Dangers of the Demise of Democracy*. These constellations of understandings fall into the general categories of Fomented National Insecurity, The Biggest Financial Scam in World History, Risks Related to "the Disastrous Rise of Misplaced Power", Ideologically Twisted Perspectives on the Supreme Court, Overarching Ecological Perspectives, The Harms Associated with Diversionary Tactics and Public Graft, Subsidiary Themes, *It Can't Happen Here*, A Brief History of Truth and Lies, and True American Values.

A good understanding of these well-reasoned ideas support this broadly propitious proposal to protect We the People by having you, Mr. Vice President, appoint President Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court on January 3, 2017.

The bottom line is that when socioeconomic circumstances become too desperate for a majority of a nation's people at the same time that Gilded Age riches are gushing up into the coffers of the wealthy few, a peaceful political revolution is needed to change things for the better. Unfortunately, using an extraordinarily unethical litany of morally corrupt and treacherous tactics, a dangerous demagogue and a bunch of his henchmen and associates have seized power, with the apparent intention of rashly abusing it, and now we are in for an interlude during which inequalities and injustices are going to be made much worse. What this means is that instead of a broadly inclusive and peaceful political revolution, deceitful hard-right reactionaries have grabbed power and the revolution we will experience is much more likely to be one that is violently repressive.

Trump and his hubris-filled Cabinet of gilded hyper-privileged billionaires and tarnished hard-right ideologues and powerful military brass are pretending they got a landslide mandate to ram extremely inegalitarian and rashly anti-environmental and absolutely unsustainable policies down the throats of all Americans. Trump and this coalescing cabal of apologists for the rich are going to demand that the American people genuflect before their authority and

meekly acquiesce to their extremist plans.

They have triumphed by dividing the people to conquer them, and they fervently believe that "to the victors go the spoils", no matter how downright evil the impacts of their greedily grabbing the lion's share of the spoils will be on the lives of those disenfranchised by their corrupt and morally illegitimate actions. Dante, I imagine, would consign all these deceivers and fraud perpetrators to the lowest levels of Hell for their treacherous breach of the public trust. These words made sound like hyperbole, but I challenge all readers to evaluate the Biggest Financial Scam in World History to understand the far-reaching treachery of this epic conflict between the rich and the rest of us that they exploit with this ruse.

Conservatives have spent the last eight years doing everything they could to make President Obama fail, at a terrible cost to the American people. The deep immorality of this treachery in the pursuit of power is stunning. Now many partisans say we should all come together to help Donald Trump succeed. We should all do this, BUT ONLY if having him succeed is strongly correlated to creating a fairer society, greater social justice, more broadly-shared opportunities, improved prospects for upward social mobility, and propitiously better hopes for social cohesion and Golden Rule-guided peaceable coexistence.

But it seems apparent that the top priorities of Mr. Trump and Republican leaders in the House and the Senate will be to reduce taxes on the highest levels of income, and to finance this unaffordable generosity by imposing further austerity measures on the masses -- the lazy bums -- and to further shred the social safety net so as to perpetuate and generously augment this regressive and unethical scheme.

We should echo the famous words of Joseph Welch, who spoke in Congress in the 1950s to the demagogue Joseph McCarthy during a witch-hunt for communists among liberals, artists, intellectuals and Hollywood scriptwriters, "Have you no sense of decency, sir?"

The inevitable outcome of this ideological tax-cut perfidy would be to cause a spike in already dangerously extreme levels of inequality among Americans, and it will serve to concentrate wealth ever more lopsidedly in the hands of the few. This is a terrible plan in light of the daunting implications of a provocative observation made by Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis: "We must make our choice. We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can't have both." Garrison Keillor echoed this truth, declaring, "The concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few is the death knell of democracy."

Freedom-loving Americans, don't lose sight of the fact that fair-minded democratic governance is the only protection we have against those who would chip away at our cherished liberties. The estimable Mark Twain and his Connecticut Yankee expressed this feeling well when he said, "You see my kind of loyalty was loyalty to one's country, not to its institutions, or its office holders. The country is the real thing, the substantial thing, the eternal thing; it is the thing to watch over, and care for, and be loyal to ...".

Our concerns for our great country stem from a clear-eyed and time-honored recognition that a house divided cannot stand. The Republican pollster Frank Luntz pointed out that the American people are so divided that "we're hanging by a thread." Inequalities and injustices are reaching dangerous extremes. There are only two real likely outcomes: (1) either revolutionarily bold measures are taken to soon make our country fairer to rural folks and urban folks, white folks and colored folks, female folks and male folks, religious folks and other religious or agnostic folks, educated folks and less well-educated folks, poor folks and working people and those in the middle classes -- or else (2) the cresting tsunami of social unrest will be harshly repressed by those in power who will intimidate those who object to their fraudulent scams and far-reaching abuses of power as they attempt to control the people and are eagerly willing to use any means necessary, including riot police, martial law, curfews, brutal treatment of protestors and dissenters, militarized security forces and mass incarcerations -- and Americans may become refugees from their own government.

Thank you for giving consideration to these idea! They are evolving rapidly, and will be revised on my Earth Manifesto website, but I want to get this in the mail right now so as to have an impact by the fateful date of January 3, 2017!

Truly,  
Dr. Tiffany B. Twain  
December 21, 2016

*Tiffany Twain imagines herself as the philosophic soul mate of Mark Twain and "the illegitimate great-granddaughter of the highly esteemed and irreverent writer, lecturer, humorist and philosopher." She has published the first ten of Twelve Books of the Earth Manifesto, a save-the-world treatise that contains wide-ranging and far-sighted observations dealing with all the biggest issues facing humanity here in the second decade of the 21st century. Check it out!*

Frankly, Dr. Tiffany B. Twain is a *nom de plume*, just like Mark Twain was a sly pen name used by Samuel Langhorne Clemens. How this whole project came about is a long and evolving story, and one that is better left a mystery than being disclosed in the full scope of more prosaic actual circumstance. See the autobiographical assertions made in *Happy Harbingers in Good Ideas for a Better Future* for some interesting images.

"Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the important thing is the IDEAS THEMSELVES, and not the author. Yet it is necessary to say that she is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of influence, public or private, other than the influence of reason and principle."

-- Thomas Paine (gender revised)



# Earth Manifesto

## An Open Letter to President Barack Obama

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain  
December 30, 2016

Dear President Obama,

Thank you greatly for your commendable service to the American people! You have performed remarkably well under the most challenging circumstances, especially in light of the economic mess in which George W. Bush left the country and then all the roadblocks Republican politicians erected in their concerted efforts to make you fail for their own outrageously selfish political gain.

I am very concerned that the Trump administration and Republican-dominated Congress threaten our democracy. I have articulated these concerns at length with an evaluation of the unbelievably long list of ways that Republicans threaten our democracy in my online essay *Demagoguery and the Dangers of the Demise of Democracy*, and in my *Open Letter to Vice President Joe Biden*.

I feel strongly that an independent judiciary is the last bulwark against the threats posed by despotic domination, so I appeal to you in the strongest possible terms to make a recess appointment during the "inter-session" recess between outgoing and incoming Congresses to appoint your eminently qualified nominee Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. Please read this Open Letter into the Congressional Record in support of this far-sighted and eminently fair-minded action.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell declared soon after Antonin Scalia died that the American people should be allowed to decide whom the next Supreme Court Justice should be. Let's all agree with this, and let's be scrupulously honest for a change. Republicans have only pretended to listen to the voices of the people for many years now, because they have been so busily preoccupied with doing the bidding of their rich masters. Making matters much worse, this is only one in a long, long list of double-crossing dirty tricks that Republicans have treacherously used to gain power. Not least of these tricks are the bad trade deals that have shipped so many millions of jobs overseas. The 1994 NAFTA trade deal that Mr. Trump so vilified, for instance, was supported by 75% of Republicans in Congress, while 60% of Democrats opposed it due to its inadequate worker protections.

Abraham Lincoln once stated, early in his life, that his greatest ambition was to be truly esteemed of his fellow men, and to be deserving of that high regard by rendering himself worthy of their esteem. I call on Republicans to demonstrate a shred of worthiness of esteem by supporting this action.

If the voices of the people are to be respected, then the fact that Hillary Clinton got in excess of 2,850,000 more votes than Donald Trump would hold sway. Also, Mr. Trump and other Republican politicians concealed many facts and intentions from the people, and the emotions of the people were crassly manipulated during the heat of the campaign. A vote right now would almost certainly find that a significant majority of Americans would want a modicum of "checks and balances" against the potential for malfeasance and repression by the incoming administration. I would wager that if ten million people were given a non-partisan evaluation of Merrick Garland's qualifications and the ominous developments in Trump's choices to rule at the nexus of power, and if they read the

two documents referred to above, more than 90% of people would support this recess appointment.

Your legacy, President Obama, will suffer greatly at the hands of these power abusers, and the only way to now protect it is to ensure that the Supreme Court remains undominated by ideological conservatives for a while until Republicans have their chance to appoint a hard-line right-wing judge to the Supreme Court. The coming years will be eventful, and the people will see clearly how great the value is in having retained this last check against despotic abuses of power.

Much fanfare and fury has been made about the Supreme Court replacement for Antonin Scalia on account of hot button issues and partisan politics like abortion rights and voting rights, but make no mistake about it, the most important issue to conservatives is about judicial stances that favor corporations over the vast majority of the American people. What Republicans want is an ideological judge, not an impartial one. They want someone in the mold of Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas or Scalia himself, for they can't stand the thought of having a more progressive Court. After all, they have exceedingly wealthy patrons who have big alternative expectations in return for their political contributions.

Provocatively, Sandra Day O'Connor expressed a crucially important understanding after retiring from her position on the Supreme Court, emphasizing that our courts must remain independent from politics, stating: "... some political attacks on the independence of the courts pose a direct threat to the constitutional freedoms of Americans." She has also pointed out that judicial independence is under serious attack at the state level as well as the national level, and she astutely added, "it takes a lot of degeneration before a country falls into dictatorship, but we should avoid these ends by avoiding these beginnings."

We have taken a big step toward unlimited power in the hands of potentially ruthless abusers of power and betrayers of the public trust, and now we need to have the Supreme Court positioned to ethically oppose the most outrageous actions that will be taken in coming months.

Conservatives sanctimoniously preach sermons of personal responsibility and self-sufficiency to the masses, along with a whole righteous constellation of Strict Father strictures, but under the cover of this catechism of indoctrinating mass persuasion, they abuse the power of their domineering position to facilitate extremely irresponsible policies at both the state and national level. These private and public policies are socially irresponsible and fiscally irresponsible and environmentally irresponsible.

This may seem like a preposterous allegation, but it is true. Understand the dimensions of this deceitful scheme and the hypocritical despotism that undergirds it. First and foremost, "conservatives" have been the primary driving force behind the enabling of the worst financial scam in world history, which has allowed rich people to gain an estimated \$30 trillion in wealth while the U.S. national debt has been run up from less than \$1 trillion to almost \$20 trillion since 1981. While engaged in this exceedingly fiscally irresponsible indulgence, the wealth that the richest 1% of Americans have managed to concentrate in their own greedy hands has been artificially inflated by a fraudulent scheme of allowing corporate tools of wealth-creation to externalize many costs associated with producing products onto society. Once again, the principal unprincipled proponents of facilitating this scam have been Republicans who sell this financial folly under a cloak of anti-regulatory righteousness.

Republicans are promising to chip away with renewed resolve at the New Deal social safety net, correctly pointing out that we cannot afford the costs while giving rich people a new round of huge tax breaks. Now that we have driven the national debt to intolerably risky highs, we can only afford one set of national plans: bigger tax breaks for the wealthiest 1%, or preserving benefits for the 99%.

Our economic and political system has been accurately described by Noam Chomsky as "socialism for the rich and capitalism for the poor." The delightfully named Chomsky is an insightful American linguist, philosopher, historian, social critic and political activist whose ideas are examined in the thought-provoking documentary film *Requiem for the American Dream: Noam Chomsky and the Principles of Concentration of Wealth & Power*.

Chomsky explains how concentrated wealth creates concentrated power, which legislates further concentration of wealth, which then concentrates more power in a vicious cycle. This cycle is about to get much more vicious with

the hubris-filled and empathy-deficient Trump in power. Chomsky lists ten ways in which wealth and power are concentrated, and elaborates on them. These "principles" have been used by wealthy conservatives in the United States with focused and intense intent for more than 40 years. These ten unprincipled strategies include:

1. Undermine Democracy to prevent the will of the people from being expressed and fair representation of the people from being enacted.
2. Shape Ideology to primarily benefit the wealthy.
3. Redesign the Economy. This involves "promoting job insecurity" for working people to benefit crony capitalists.
4. Shift the Burden of taxes and externalized costs from corporate entities to the people.
5. Attack Solidarity by using demagoguery to undermine the normal emotion of caring about others.
6. Run the Regulators so that the interest groups being regulated are the ones that control the regulators.
7. Engineer Elections by creating the idea of corporate personhood and equating money with free speech, and eliminating all limits on election spending with Supreme Court rulings like the *Citizens United* ruling and the *McCutcheon* ruling.
8. Keep the Rabble in Line by attacking collective bargaining rights of workers and organized labor, and by intimidating anyone who objects to any of these strategies.
9. Manufacture Consent through persuasive promotion both of consumerism and of politicians who advocate these schemes.
10. Marginalize the Population by finding clever new ways to suppress the voices of the people and keep the best interests of the people subordinated to the narrow interests of plutocrats and the ruling elite in our oligarchy.

Noam Chomsky says that, unless these trends are reversed, things are going to get very ugly. This seems to be a choice between reducing inequality or reducing democracy. "The burst of activism and democracy in the United States in the 1960s scared the protectors of wealth and privilege, and Chomsky admits that he did not anticipate the strength of the backlash through which we have been suffering since."

David Swanson in *Let's Try Democracy* points out an omission in this Chomsky list:

11. Dump Massive Funding into Militarism. Why should this be included? Well, militarism is the biggest public program in the United States. It's over half of federal discretionary spending. If you're going to claim that lobbyists are concentrating wealth through their influence on the government, why *not* notice the single budget item that eats up over half the budget? It does indeed concentrate wealth and also power. It's a vast pot of unaccountable funding for cronies. And it generates public interest in fighting foreign enemies rather than enemies hanging out on Wall Street. It does militarize the police for free, however, just in case Wall Street generates any disgruntled customers."

I add another Trumpian demagogic tactic to this list of ways that power abusers increase the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few:

12. Sow division and confusion. By disregarding science, denying facts about the negative impacts of their preferred policies, and promoting lies, fake news and twittered oversimplifications, they deceive the people into believing preposterous things and supporting their scam.

The American people must stand up and say "I'm sick of this doggerel!" -- we've got to get mad as hell and tell our damned leaders we're not going to take it anymore! *Requiem for the American Dream* concludes with a call to build mass movements for change. "The United States still has a very free society, Chomsky advises. A lot can be done, he tells us, if people will only choose to do it." NOW is the time! Let's REALLY try democracy, with its attendant fairer representation of the true best interests of the 99% of the people.

The Emperor Party has no clothes, and stands naked before us in all its embarrassing indignity and lack of moral integrity. Let the light of illumination contained in this Open Letter diminish its illegitimately gained authority!

## A Big Picture Perspective

The American people have just narrowly handed almost unchecked power to greedily eager power abusers who promise to make the rich richer and everyone else poorer. At this juncture in history, with inequality already at levels not seen since the Gilded Age and just before the Depression of the 1930s, this extremely anti-egalitarian plan will stimulate anger and social unrest and revolutionary discord -- and almost certainly, violent repression in reaction.

Look what's happening here, as it becomes increasingly clear. A political party with the most socially retrograde and reactionary national platform in memory has just lied and cheated and deceived its way into dominating power after eight years of extremely coldly-calculated obstruction of common good goals and plans, and "conservatives" have taken power away from a political party that offered the most progressive national platform ever formulated in U.S. history. This is a real sad thing for the prospects of all Americans, and indeed it spells deep trouble for all of humankind and all life on Earth.

The implications for the future of this greedy power grab, achieved through a truly underhanded litany of demagogic and disreputable means, are ominously anti-social and anti-environmental. Freedom-loving people have just chosen to give power to shysters and con men who effectively promise to destroy America by radically enriching the rich and impoverishing the poor and undermining the social safety net and imposing more harshly discriminatory policies against women and children and working people and African Americans and Latinos and gay people and others in minority groups.

This is a triumph of cynical calculation over fair-mindedness, and it will prove to be a tragically Pyrrhic victory even for Republicans, for they are going to be forcing an agenda onto the American people that is so contrary to honorable values of fairly-shared prosperity and respectably-defended personal liberties and inclusive national planning as to invite revolutionary conflict. Manipulative demagogues have gained power, and they are firing up their propaganda machine to really begin forcing their agenda on the people, and the coming strife is going to be ugly and destructive.

Mr. Trump's chief strategist has predicted that the Republican Party is going to do such a bang up good job that Republicans will rule for 50 years. It would be downright dumb to bet on this outcome. This prediction has been made by Steve Bannon, the alt-right propagandist and fiction peddler and conspiracy theory propagator. Curiously, this hyperbole is reminiscent of Jack London's expectation that his beautiful 26-room "Wolf House" mansion with its nine stone fireplaces would stand for a thousand years, and of Adolf Hitler's vaunted boast that his Third Reich would last a thousand years. As it turned out, the Wolf House burned down just before Jack and his second wife Charmian were to move in, and Hitler's Third Reich fell less than 13 years after he gained power in January 1933 and then overthrew democracy in Germany overnight after a suspicious fire in the German Reichstag building one month later, at the end of February 1933. How long will Trump cling to power? And would he give up power if he is impeached -- or if our democracy survives long enough for him to be voted out of office?

Personally, I wouldn't bet on the probability that Republicans are going to do such a bang-up good job that people will commemorate the fine day that they cheated Hillary Clinton out of the presidency and deprived Democrats of a majority in the Senate -- and destroyed the chance for the most progressive national platform ever set forth by a political party in the land of the free to be instituted. No, it's not likely this will turn out well, and it much more likely will be a far-reaching disaster. The odds are that this episode will live in infamy, and that the only way Republicans will be able to cling to power will be with harshly repressive force or the distractions of a Wag the Dog war.

Imagine being in London in February of 1848, when the Communist Manifesto was published with its provocative opening line, "A specter is haunting Europe ...". That famous treatise, written by Karl Marx with the assistance of a group of German-born revolutionary socialists, was a philosophic declaration that championed the rights of working people to unite against the exploitation of wage laborers by ruthless capitalists and the ruling class.

With every great blessing comes a curse. Dr. Leonard Shlain provocatively explored one formative instance of this phenomenon in his thought-provoking *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The Conflict Between Word and Image*

about the advent of alphabets and the proliferation of literacy in ancient civilizations and the correlated revolutionary changes that these developments had on the human brain and worldviews and civilizations.

Conversely, with every great curse, there is often some kernel of blessing. Tens of million of Americans and billions of people worldwide regard the rashly unreasoned triumph of Donald Trump as the beginning of a terrifying curse, and there are a many valid reasons for this far-reaching concern. It is exceedingly sad and pathetic that progressive-minded people will now be forced to take defensive stands against ruthlessly retrograde Republican policies, instead of being positioned to create a fairer, safer and more sustainable world. But there is also an inkling of a blessing already manifesting itself in communities throughout the United States, a blessing of heightened awareness of the deep-seated wrongs in American society today.

Pamela Karlan, a Stanford law professor who served as supervisor of voting rights cases in the Justice Department of your administration, Mr. President, has noted: "Nearly every president has probably done something that a court has later held unconstitutional or contrary to law. But I can't think of one who had such an across-the-board combination of ignorance, indifference and defiance" as Donald Trump. This is why more than 40 constitutional law professors have signed an open letter to Trump urging him to reconsider his views on several legal issues, including flag-burning and freedom of the press.

When Trump supporters realize that the notorious con man has lied to them about caring about them more than his own fortune and the advantages of rich people, they are going to be furious. When they see that Trump is championing policies that undermine opportunity and give rich people extraordinary perks at their expense, the pitchforks will come out. He and his generals will be ready for this fury with a repressive police state to intimidate those who object. It is almost inevitable that instead of becoming a real champion of the people, Trump will defensively and vindictively treat them in a cold-blooded way that will be shocking in the extent that it will be "harsh, repugnant, shocking and repulsive."

Those four adjectives were actually uttered by a federal judge who was referring to coldblooded techniques used by Steve Mnuchin, Trump's nominee for treasury secretary, who is a former Goldman Sachs executive who got rich at the expense of working Americans by running a bank called a "foreclosure machine" that kicked people out of their houses.

In any case, the writing is on the wall. Trump has blatantly lied to his supporters about what he is going to do to them, and he is insidiously undermining the foundations of the common good. After having deceived his supporters, he is now double-crossing them even worse than Republicans have done for the last 36 years with their insidious trickle down Big Lies.

Abraham Lincoln once stated, early in his life, that his greatest ambition was to be truly esteemed of his fellow men, and to be deserving of that high regard by rendering himself worthy of their esteem. That is a noble and worthy sentiment of a good leader. I feel strongly that history will regard you, Mr. President, rather highly in this regard, and that in stark contrast, it appears that the greatest ambition of most of our political representatives is of a much meaner and more myopic motivation, and an immoderate obsession with unlimited power.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

--- The Bible, Mark 8:36

We cannot wait for huge tax breaks for the rich to trickle down to the restive masses like crumbs of manna from the plates of mindlessly feasting and mentally obese giants in some Homeric odyssey of wandering heroes trying to find their way home. We should recognize that it is human nature for people to accept being used to a certain extent, but to hate being disregarded, disrespected or discarded. A new and more severe betrayal of *We the People* during the tenure of the next presidency will likely prove to be the last straw with people whose best interests have been ignored for too long.

The practical and insightful billionaire entrepreneur Nick Hanauer provides thinking people with powerful reasons to support fairer national policies. I encourage everyone to read his sensational article *The Pitchforks Are Coming ... For Us Plutocrats*. In it, he makes clear that the proverbial pitchforks will inevitably come out for the plutocrats

and the ruling elites if they don't do something to fix the glaring inequities in this economy and instead impose new rashly regressive tax-cut plans that make income and wealth inequality much more extreme than they are already. Nick Hanauer made this sensational observation:

"... I have a message for my fellow filthy rich, for all of us who live in our gated bubble worlds: It won't last. If we don't do something to fix the glaring inequities in this economy, the pitchforks are going to come for us. No society can sustain this kind of rising inequality. In fact, there is no example in human history where wealth accumulated like this and the pitchforks didn't eventually come out. You show me a highly unequal society, and I will show you a police state. Or an uprising. There are no counterexamples. None. It's not if, it's when."

A grand illusion hides behind the apparent bitter divisiveness in our politics today. There is a deeper bipartisan consensus in which Big Money donors have bought our democracy and staunchly oppose any real changes to the planks that underpin this fraud. This is why glaringly needed reforms have not been enacted. Charles Ferguson writes about this *Inside Job* situation with incisive understanding and persuasive insight in *Predator Nation: Corporate Criminals, Political Corruption, and the Hijacking of America*. He points out that we have a political duopoly system in the U.S. that is dominantly controlled by moneyed interests, so the government almost always acts in matters of tax and spending policy to primarily benefit the wealthy few. They do this in part through the influence of a cunning manipulation of public opinion by people in "conservative" think tanks and the media so that public opinion can be used to support and even defend these corrupt aspects of the status quo. The Twittering Trumpster is very likely to make this state of affairs much worse by rigging the system even more unfairly than it already is. The fix we need is NOT the fix that he plans on putting into effect.

Revolutionary unrest would result from Trump's plans to double down on trickle-down tax policy, and this social turmoil would almost certainly be violently suppressed by Trump because of his thin-skinned narcissistic character and his exaggerated authoritarian tendencies and his reactive and vindictive personality. Understand this clearly. The Big Lie trickle-down theory has created disastrous social and environmental outcomes due to the wrongheaded national priorities it forces on our country, and the resulting severe inadequacy of funding that this deceitful ideology allows for greater good goals. It is high time that we stop assessing foolishly low tax rates on people's highest levels of income, and make our national tax system honestly fairer and more progressive by making it more steeply graduated. Bigger investments in social well-being are called for -- and they should be paid for, NOT just added to an already exorbitantly high and risky level of our \$20 trillion national debt.

For 36 years, it has been our highest national priority to facilitate this consequential scam regressive taxation benefitting the rich and austerity for the masses. The policies that facilitate this scheme must now rightly lose their top priority in our national politics, and be rejected. "We've been had", my fellow Americans! Not only have we been taken for a ride in the past 36 years by charlatan preachers of the trickle down Big Lie, but now we've been tricked by demagogues seizing power who are madly intent on ratcheting up inequalities and economic injustices by acting to concentrate wealth even more radically in the hands of the few. This will dangerously turn up the heat under the pressure cooker of widespread social discontent. As jealous people in power prepare to harshly defend the extreme unfairness of this state of affairs, it is clear that they will quash dissent and further militarize authority against all who stand in their way. Tens of millions of Americans are mad, and we should be rising up in solidarity and declaring that "we're not going to take it anymore". But instead, we are marching like hapless lemmings or mindless zombies to the indoctrinating propaganda of trumpeting media minarets of mass emotional persuasion, obediently following sly manufacturers of consent who seek support for the legitimizing of their misbegotten authority so that they can despotically abuse power.

Our Founding Fathers are rolling over in their graves, and the ghost of their defining values looms up and issues a stern warning: Make this a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, or else invite revolutionary unrest.

An apparition of the Goddess of Supreme Irony hovers in the heavens above us, for SURPRISE! -- at the end of the day, national policies that are fairer for the 99% prove to be much better for the 1% themselves in the bigger picture. The cost of social insurance policies that will make our societies fairer and healthier, as wise Solon foresaw more than 2,500 years ago, is well worth the common good compromises required.

Studies have found that people who make more than \$75,000 in income per year are no happier than those who make that amount. So here we are, structuring our entire national political purpose to give low tax rates to rich people, and it turns out that they are no happier for it, AND that we're creating growing risks to the well-being of everyone by allowing our political system to be rigged so idiotically to benefit these unappreciative entitled few. Our "conservative" leaders are acting rashly to sacrifice social justice, fair-minded democratic governance, sustainable existence, and the natural environment just to perpetuate this über-scam of giving wealthy people low tax rates.

Let's wake up! Developments since the election reveal more clearly how Trump intends to govern, and the signs are frightening. Instead of "acting presidential", Trump is acting like a ruthless despot. He is merging Tea Party establishment politicians with ultra-right extremists, and he is amplifying his propaganda messaging to further exploit people's fears and gullibility and sheepishly dutiful acquiescence to anti-egalitarian and authoritarian leadership.

It is bizarre that the downtrodden in the USA have been fooled into thinking that Trump cares more about them than about wealthy people. He is, after all, the epitome of elitism with all his wealth and arrogance and business involvements in gambling casinos and luxury hotels and elite golf courses in the U.S. and many countries abroad. The Trump brand is designed to exemplify luxury and exclusivity, not inclusivity, and the Trump family has trampled countless people and communities in the course of its development mania, and Mr. Trump has done extensive harm to natural ecosystems that have been in his way. He has also excessively exploited our legal system to advance his greedy self-interests and done highly irregular self-dealing with his charitable foundation. And his tax plans and anti-regulatory ideologies are focused on giving a big boost to financial elites at the expense of everyone else.

We have a growing need for smart, socially intelligent, emotionally honest and farsighted leaders to deal effectively and fairly with the big challenges faced by humankind -- how to make the worldwide retreat from globalization and international cooperation safer, how to deal with scarcities of natural resources and land and fresh water, how to take steps to mitigate the effects of global warming and disruptions of weather patterns and rising sea levels, what to do about terrorism and blind faith and rising intolerance and increasing numbers of refugees, how to respond to dangerous salvos of trade protectionism, and how to reverse the rise of right-wing authoritarian strong men who promise to make people safe again through militarism, scapegoating, xenophobic isolationism and a poisonous cocktail of unchecked authority, corporatism, "deregulation", trickle down tax policies, violent suppression of dissent, and a phalanx of anti-democratic measures that violate expansive concepts of Right Mindfulness, Right Understanding and Right Action.

Another reason we need a Supreme Court not dominated by ideological conservatives is to protect the American people from "regulatory capture." Regulatory agencies often fail to act in the public interest because of the phenomenon. Regulatory capture refers to the process by which powerful vested interest groups and their lobbyists succeed in getting what they want for themselves at the expense of the greater public interest. When such regulatory capture occurs, dominant businesses and industries use their insider political power and financial resources to "capture" favors from regulatory agencies, instead of allowing the agencies to fulfill their true purposes. Regulatory capture operates in ways similar to the Tragedy of the Commons phenomenon in which individuals or groups with high-stakes interests in regulatory decisions or policy outcomes focus their energies and resources to gain outcomes they prefer, while members of the public, who each have only a small and less focused individual stake in the outcome, are much less influential. When intently focused entities devote their energies to particular policies by successfully capturing agencies whose purpose is to regulate them, it almost always undermines the greater good. One glaring instance of this was the failure of regulatory agencies like the Federal Reserve and the SEC to anticipate and prevent the financial meltdown of 2008-2009.

Today, as your tenure approaches its end, President Obama, crony capitalist corruption is coming to roost in the next administration, and corporations no longer need to achieve regulatory capture because they have succeeded in a hostile takeover of the leadership of the agencies themselves, and they appear to be intent on purging these institutions of anyone who courageously stands up for the missions the agencies were established to fulfill. This

means that giant corporations will encounter fewer obstacles in their drive to get the government to allow them to maximize private profits by externalizing costs onto people and damaging the environmental commons.

Oops! What conservatives have wanted all along is to allow wealthy donors and giant corporations to use the bastard excessive influence of their influence to emasculate regulations altogether. This will help them to monopolize the economy and grab a much bigger slice of the economic pie for themselves. It will also allow them to more easily evade their true responsibilities to employees and communities and *We the People* and humanity as a whole. As Trump chooses Cabinet officials who are ideologically committed to subverting the protective purposes of the missions of regulatory agencies, it is becoming increasingly probable that the American people are going to get really screwed by this treachery.

On another note, it is pathologically sad that one consequential impact of Trump's treachery in using emotion-hijacking demagoguery and deceit to grab power is to have shattered women's hopes for a new era of strong women in positions of public leadership and the new possibilities that a woman president would have meant for economic and political empowerment of women in the United States and around the world.

The creation and maintenance of a strong safety net is the best way to prevent social turmoil. A good safety net contains broadly beneficial social programs that support expanded opportunities and good public education and universal healthcare and such things. Big picture understandings reveal that good governance involves investing in the people and fostering trust that their best interests are fairly represented, and taking courageous steps to prevent a few powerful people from dominating decision-making for their own narrow ends.

The great Mark Twain once declared, "Loyalty to petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul." Substitute tweeted deceptions, lies and propaganda for petrified opinion, and it appears clear that the chains of oppression will not have a chance in hell of making America great again.

The American people are going to be hearing that Donald Trump and the Republican majorities in Congress have been given a mandate. But the mandate they have been given is to improve the lives of forgotten people, not to wage harsh new offensives against working people and the social safety net and protections of the environment. In their bait-and-switch schemes, they are about to give huge benefits to rich people and begin chipping away in earnest at Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, women's rights, and clear air and clean water, and they are planning to allow an acceleration of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere that will have devastating ramifications on people in future generations who will have to deal with the unimaginably costly consequences. They will do this for two principal unprincipled reasons: to maximize private profits by socializing costs, and to gain personal benefits -- money and power -- from the pleased donor class that receives the lion's share of these artificially boosted profits.

The American people did not vote for these things. In the big picture, Republicans have gained power by deftly pretending to care about what is best for our nation and its people while pandering mainly to wealthy people to gain power, and then they have abused their ill-gotten power to rig our economic and political systems ever more radically in favor of wealthy people at the expense of all others. Any leader who really wants to do "what is best for our nation" would now pivot to demonstrating more concern for the 99% than the 1%.

Again the words of the great Founding Father Alexander Hamilton reverberate with important vision: "Real liberty is neither found in despotism or the extremes of democracy, but in moderate governments."

Freedom is the magnetic true north of the American people. Cherishing personal liberties, *We the People* are alarmed at the ascension to domineering power of hard-line autocratic leaders in many nations worldwide in reaction to fanned flames of immigrants from abroad.

In conclusion, the American people deserve to be reassured that Donald Trump will rule in the interests of all the people, and a judiciary not dominated by ideological conservatives is exactly what we need to feel this confidence. Please appoint Merrick Garland on January 3rd!

Thanks!

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain

December 30, 2016

*Tiffany Twain is the philosophic soul mate of Mark Twain and imagines herself to be "the illegitimate great-granddaughter of this highly esteemed and irreverent writer, lecturer, humorist and philosopher." She has published the first ten of Twelve Books of the Earth Manifesto, a save-the-world treatise that contains wide-ranging and far-sighted observations dealing with all the biggest issues facing humanity here in the second decade of the 21st century. Check it out!*

Frankly, Dr. Tiffany B. Twain is a *nom de plume*, just like Mark Twain was a sly pen name that was used by Samuel Langhorne Clemens. How this whole project came about is a long and evolving story, and one that is better left a mystery than being disclosed in the full scope of more prosaic actual circumstances. See the autobiographical assertions made in *Happy Harbingers in Good Ideas for a Better Future* for some interesting images.

"Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the important thing is the IDEAS THEMSELVES, and not the author. Yet it is necessary to say that she is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of influence, public or private, other than the influence of reason and principle."

-- Thomas Paine (gender revised)

I treasure my anonymity, but if you would like to contact me, please do so at [SaveTruffulaTrees@hotmail.com](mailto:SaveTruffulaTrees@hotmail.com)