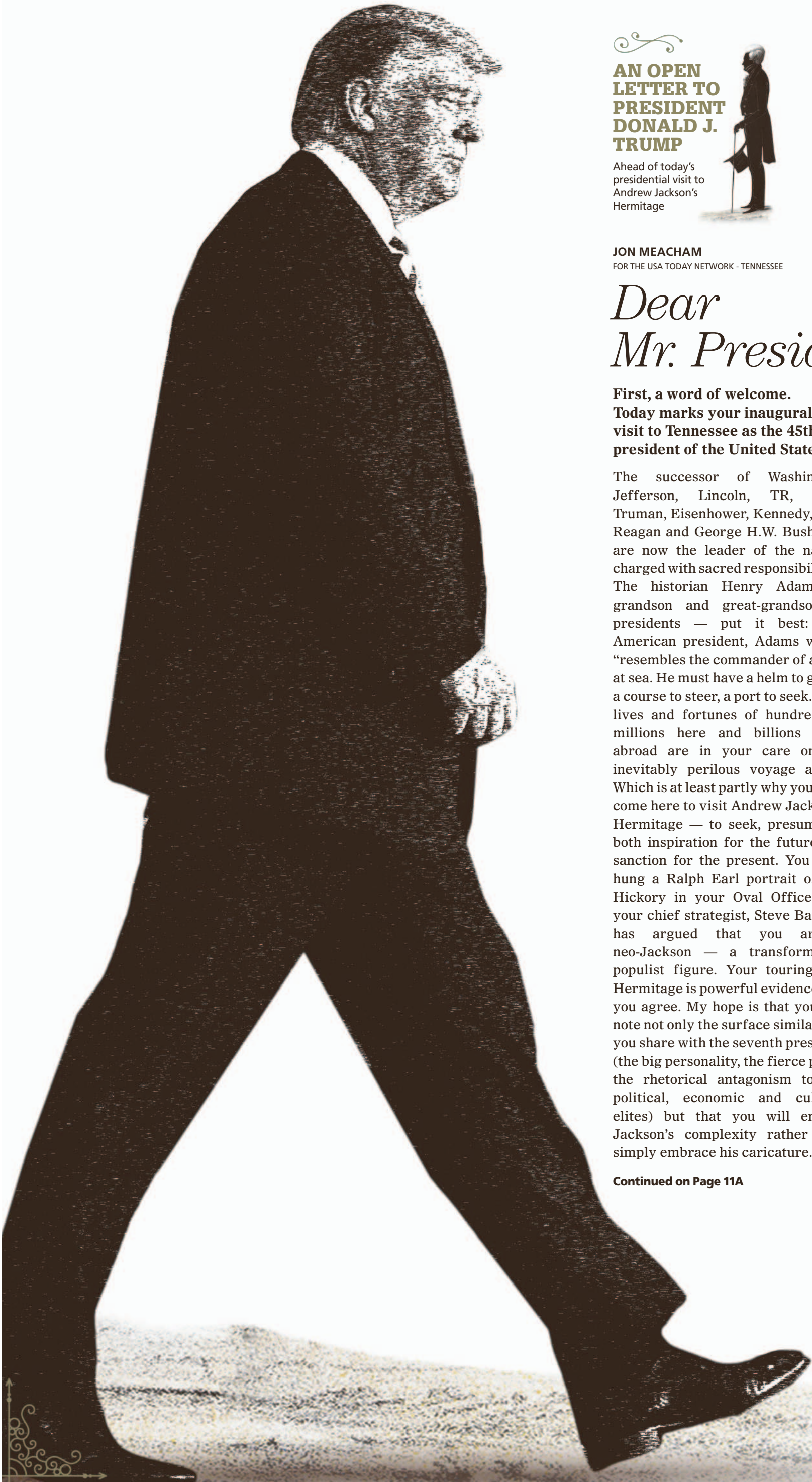


DONALD TRUMP

ANDREW JACKSON



AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP

Ahead of today's presidential visit to Andrew Jackson's Hermitage



JON MEACHAM
FOR THE USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Dear Mr. President,

First, a word of welcome. Today marks your inaugural visit to Tennessee as the 45th president of the United States.



Editor's note: Jon Meacham, who lives in Nashville, is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning "American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House." He is a trustee of the Andrew Jackson Foundation.

The successor of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, TR, FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, LBJ, Reagan and George H.W. Bush, you are now the leader of the nation, charged with sacred responsibilities. The historian Henry Adams — grandson and great-grandson of presidents — put it best: The American president, Adams wrote, "resembles the commander of a ship at sea. He must have a helm to grasp, a course to steer, a port to seek." The lives and fortunes of hundreds of millions here and billions more abroad are in your care on the inevitably perilous voyage ahead. Which is at least partly why you have come here to visit Andrew Jackson's Hermitage — to seek, presumably, both inspiration for the future and sanction for the present. You have hung a Ralph Earl portrait of Old Hickory in your Oval Office, and your chief strategist, Steve Bannon, has argued that you are a neo-Jackson — a transformative populist figure. Your touring The Hermitage is powerful evidence that you agree. My hope is that you will note not only the surface similarities you share with the seventh president (the big personality, the fierce pride, the rhetorical antagonism toward political, economic and cultural elites) but that you will engage Jackson's complexity rather than simply embrace his caricature.

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DEAR PRESIDENT TRUMP

The people of Middle Tennessee send their good wishes, criticisms, concerns and questions

Dear President Trump:
We welcome you to Nashville, Tennessee. I will be attending your rally, along with my husband and two sons. In your mission to “Make America Great Again,” we would love to see you embrace the American motto “E pluribus unum,” which translates into “Out of many, one (nation).”
Embrace the passion and energy that your election brought out in the American people for participating in government, along with the desire of a growing many for civil discourse. While not easy, aim to be tolerant and respectful of those who have differing views, for that free flow of ideas will strengthen our democracy.
Beth Ann Mallow, Brentwood 37027

Dear President Trump:
Tennesseans are praying for your success as the president for all. Please stop tweeting and embarrassing yourself and us. We want your time to be spent on becoming the “Mr. President” for all people.
Carol Mosley, Gallatin 37066

Dear President Trump:
Let me tell you why I voted for you. I was from a blue-collar family, my dad worked at a factory, which, of course, has long shut down called Trail Mobile (in Cincinnati).
He was working for them for many years, and when he became ill, from being a diabetic, he couldn't find work. Trail Mobile at that time had laid off workers and he no longer had a job. Back in those days, people would not hire you if you had pre-existing conditions. That has been over 50-plus years now, but having the factory that my father worked for shut down changed our lives.
Bringing back our factories means a lot to me, as for a lot of the many other families that count on those jobs.
May God bless you.
Judy Munoz, Brentwood 37027

Dear President Trump:
President Trump's Nashville rally for the GOP health care bill will be met with justifiable outrage.
Gone is the requirement that people buy insurance, which keeps premiums down by balancing the risk pool with healthy and sick people. In addition, larger employers will no longer be required to offer health benefits. Some 24 million people will be dropped, and I imagine healthy people will take their chances without insurance, which will further increase premiums.
If the uninsured get sick they will be hit with the full retail liability — astronomical and indefensible — that those with insurance never pay. For adults past 50, tax credits are reduced while premiums are acceptable at five times those for younger adults. Worse, many children from low-income families will lose Medicaid eligibility.
The American Health Care Act leaves fewer people with insurance as premiums and costs continue to skyrocket. GOP, “it's a disaster.” Please try again.
Amy Eskind Schulman, Nashville 37205

Dear President Trump:
We need common-sense, humane solutions to fix our broken immigration system. Without a permanent fix, we will lose young and promising people like Ivan Ruiz. Ivan was brought to Nashville at the age of 8 by his mother, who was fleeing violence and poverty in Mexico.
After graduating from high school here in Nashville, he attended Trevecca Nazarene University while working full time to pay his tuition. Now a teacher in Denver and former Teach for America corps member, Ivan has applied and been accepted to several graduate schools — all with full scholarship offers.
As Ivan capitalized on the opportunities afforded by our country, so did his mother, who is a taxpaying business owner employing eight other Nashvillians.
Ivan's family's future as hardworking members of our community, however, remains uncertain. Ivan is just one of thousands of talented young, aspiring Americans our country stands to lose if you fail to fix the broken immigration system.
Renata Soto, Nashville 37209

Dear President Trump:
Ignore those creating havoc in the streets. It is the silent millions of people who voted for you who are your impetus to move our country forward to greatness and civility. Those of us who grew up in the '50s know that Americans want to prosper on their own and don't need the government to provide free everything for us.
Alfred J. Dittmar, Franklin 37067

Dear President Trump:
Your visit to Nashville is being billed as another campaign rally. Why do you still feel the need to tell the American people how you won the election? It's over. You won. You are the president. Move on.
If this is a campaign rally, you are wasting our money. You should be coming to Nashville to talk about our failing, clogged highways, our damaged bridges, our water resources being strained by huge population growth. You should be coming to Nashville to meet with our thriving business leaders in health care and other industries. You should be coming to Nashville to learn about how we have embraced our immigrants.
Most of all we want you to prove to us that all of America is going to be part of making America great again. Otherwise, your visit will just add to our horrendous traffic jams, and I'd prefer you just stay back in Washington, D.C., and tweet.
Kathryn Squires, Franklin 37067

Dear President Trump:
Please keep your campaign promise and allow states to determine recreational marijuana policy.

Editor's note

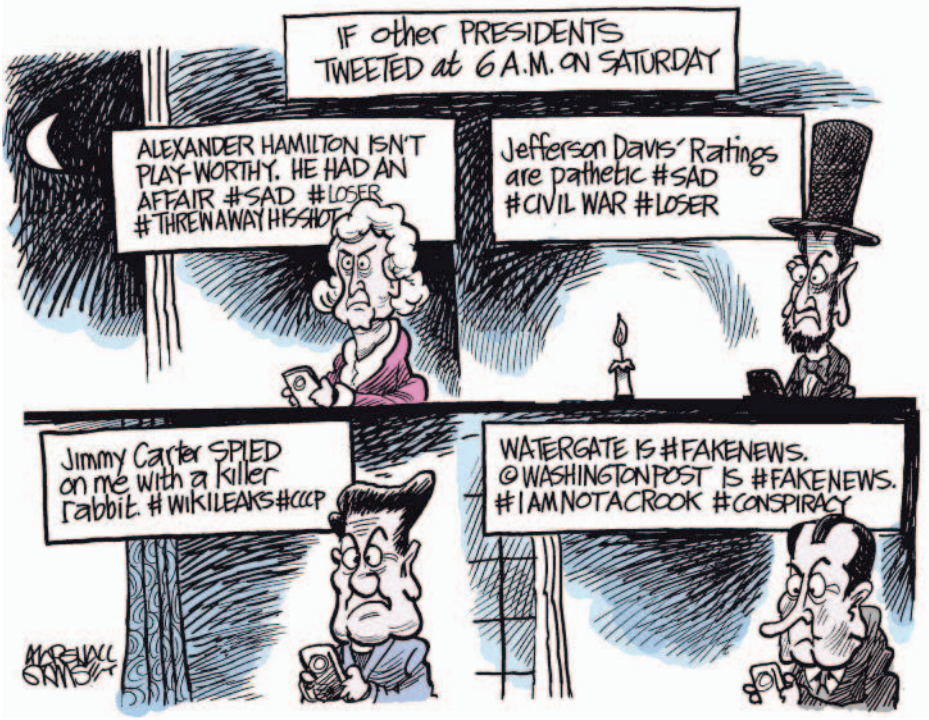
The Tennessean received 160 letters from its call to action to readers on Thursday evening to the noon deadline Monday to write messages to President Donald Trump. Trump visits Nashville on Wednesday for his first time as commander-in-chief and is scheduled to stop at The Hermitage, President Andrew Jackson's historic home, and hold a rally at the Municipal Auditorium in downtown.

Of the letters, 65 (41 percent) directly criticized the president and 38 (24 percent) praised and welcomed him. Supporters wrote that they are praying for him and hoping for his success. Critics generally said they want him to stop tweeting and to release his tax returns. The remainder consisted of requests, questions and suggestions on a variety of policy matters.

We have published as many as we can in print and are posting all on Tennessean.com/opinion.

Thank you for sharing your voices and adding to the community conversation.

— David Plazas, opinion engagement editor. (Reach me at 615-259-8063, email me at dplazas@tennessean.com or tweet to me at [@davidplazas](https://twitter.com/davidplazas).)



With all due respect, stop wasting our taxpayer dollars on the failed war on drugs. Keep our country safe by putting more resources toward investigating, prosecuting and incarcerating violent offenders. I worry about protecting my family from violent people, not nonviolent marijuana users.
My wife and I recently visited beautiful and wonderful Colorado, where marijuana prohibition ended a few years ago. They have the best of everything and one of the strongest economies in the U.S. The marijuana industry has created thousands of jobs and generated millions in new tax base revenue in those states where the people voted to legalize.
Lastly, you could boost our economy, help patients and earn the respect of millions overnight by working to change the federal laws to allow medical marijuana and industrial hemp throughout our country.
Frederick H. Agee, Milan 38358

Dear President Trump:
As a career educator and Tennessean, I urge you and the U.S. Department of Education to continue to ensure that all students — including those who have been historically underserved — receive an education that equips them for the world beyond their school doors. This requires strong accountability systems that create the conditions, supports and pressure to improve opportunities and outcomes for all students.
Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, Tennessee now has the flexibility to define how it will improve outcomes and reduce systemic achievement gaps. To do so, our public schools across the state must continue to receive federal Title dollars so that they can provide essential resources, supports and programs for students who need them most. Finally, we hope to see the continuation of data collection and enforcement at the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Education. Its role remains vital in ensuring access and opportunity for every student across the country.
Gini Pupo-Walker, Nashville 37212

Dear President Trump:
The historic Nashville Cordell Hull Chapter of the United Nations Association, USA, sends its greetings and welcome on your visit.
However, we respectfully remind you of the founding principles and values of the United Nations more than 70 years ago. We continue to stand for human rights globally, for the safety of immigrants and refugees from political violence and persecution, and for America's honorable role in supporting human development worldwide. We also stand for the timely, full payment of our financial commitments to the United Nations and other world organizations.
Thank you for your attention to our concerns as fellow American citizens.
The Rev. Dan Rosemergy, president, Nashville Cordell Hull Chapter, United Nations Association, USA, McMinnville 37110

Dear President Trump:
Remember that there are millions of us who are with you and believe that you will go down in history as one of the best and greatest U.S. presidents.
Melanie Dittmar, Franklin 37067

41 percent
Of the letters directly criticized the president.

24 percent
Praised and welcomed him.

Top five issues in the letters

1. Affordable Care Act and the proposal to replace it
2. The president's behavior and his fitness to serve in office
3. The environment and climate change
4. Immigration reform
5. Holding Trump accountable to fulfilling his campaign promises

act. Thus, it seems that registering online to volunteer at one of the many fine agencies suggested through Hands on Nashville, at www.hon.org, may possibly be a better use of one's time, in assisting to bring about some of those same changes in our city, many of which both presidents, and our mayor now, have spoken about.
Prayers and support for you, Mr. President, from most of the citizens of Nashville! We hear you! We join with you to bring about change, now, just as we did when we elected you!
Sandra K. Sanders, Madison 37115

Dear President Trump:
Welcome to Nashville, Tennessee! We are honored to have our president visit us here, and we hope you will appreciate our hospitality.
Our hospitality also extends to the 12 percent of our population who are trying, with our support and assistance, to integrate to their new homes.
It is difficult to learn a new language and adapt to a new culture, but we realize that these new residents are searching for a safe environment and a hopeful future for their children.
Your recent travel bans have left many Americans feeling that we are turning into a selfish, mean-spirited, xenophobic country, and it is deeply troubling.
Per news sources, gaining refugee status in the U.S. takes an average of 18 to 24 months — most of it conducted abroad.
It involves screening by the United Nations and eight different federal government agencies, as well as three face-to-face interviews, biometric securities checks, background checks and security database checks. This seems largely sufficient. No “extreme vetting” is necessary, as it is already in place.
Please reconsider your stance on what appears to be a religious metric and a denial of compassion.
Camille Monohan, Fairview 37062

Dear President Trump:
You have promised to ensure that all Americans have health coverage that is better and less expensive than Obamacare.
The Obamacare repeal that Congress is rushing to pass isn't any of the things you promised. The official Congressional Budget Office now confirms what experts in both parties have said for weeks. Millions of Americans will pay more but get far less. Fourteen million Americans will lose insurance next year, and millions more after that. Insurance companies can charge older patients five times as much as younger people. Medicaid funding for children and the frail elderly in nursing homes will be cut by \$880 billion over the next decade.
Tennessee will lose many of its rural hospitals as a result.
I am worried for my patients, Mr. President. Will you stand up to Congress on behalf of the American people? Please get us the better deal that you promised.
Robert F. Miller, M.D., Nashville 37232

Dear President Trump:
Please be presidential. Don't get caught up in trivial matters such as TV shows. Not everyone is going to like or support you — you know that from the business world — but as president you have a different responsibility.
If you feel you must use a Twitter account, please confine it to things the government and you are doing to make things better for the American people. Please do not use social media to air personal feelings about individuals. I think it would be a great idea to think “What would President Lincoln, Roosevelt or Jefferson do?”
We need you to be a leader and to command our respect in these troubled times. Please do what you pledged you would do: Make America great again.
Terry Hudson, Murfreesboro 37128

Dear President Trump:
As a retired senior citizen, I have respected the office of the presidency over many trials and tribulations.
I recognize that you were elected by our Electoral College system and feel an obligation to your voting base to fulfill the promises you made to them.
Of course, the Congress, the courts and the citizens must agree with your pledges to build a wall, target immigrants, expand the military, reduce environmental regulations, change health care and isolate our nation from global economies and responsibilities.
However, you made another clear and significant promise to all the nation. You stated that after the election you would release your tax returns.
Completing this promise is something you can do personally without Congress, courts or citizen involvement. This single, simple promise must be kept to maintain a respect for the office of the presidency!
Michael Bolduc, Nashville 37211

Dear President Trump:
\$54 billion cuts on domestic spending for U.S. quality of life to bolster the defense budget for war?
Cut Housing and Urban Development money for homeless veterans and potentially kill lives in the U.S. and using the money for killing more American soldiers living overseas to make profit through war for corporations through government contracts? Whose country are you leading? You don't care about American people either.
Eric Brown, Nashville 37208

Dear President Trump:
The Tennessean is demanding that you leave the rally in Nashville to explain your policies. Here is their answer: We won, you lost.
Gary Hamilton, Mt. Juliet 37122

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Letters

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Dear President Trump:
Thank you for visiting Tennessee, and welcome to our state! And thanks to The Tennessean for allowing its readers to offer letters to you. Although I voted for you, I would be writing this same letter to Mrs. Clinton had she been elected and visited our state as president now.
I honestly hope that our country can get over the extremely polarized atmosphere that currently exists and move on in two ways:
1) support you as our duly elected president, whether we voted for you or not, in your efforts to do what you promised you'd do if elected; and
2) shift any of our collective energy currently going into protests and demonstrations into planning and executing a strategy to elect somebody else in 2020 if that's what we want.
That's the way this country is supposed to operate.
Charles M. Jones, Franklin 37067

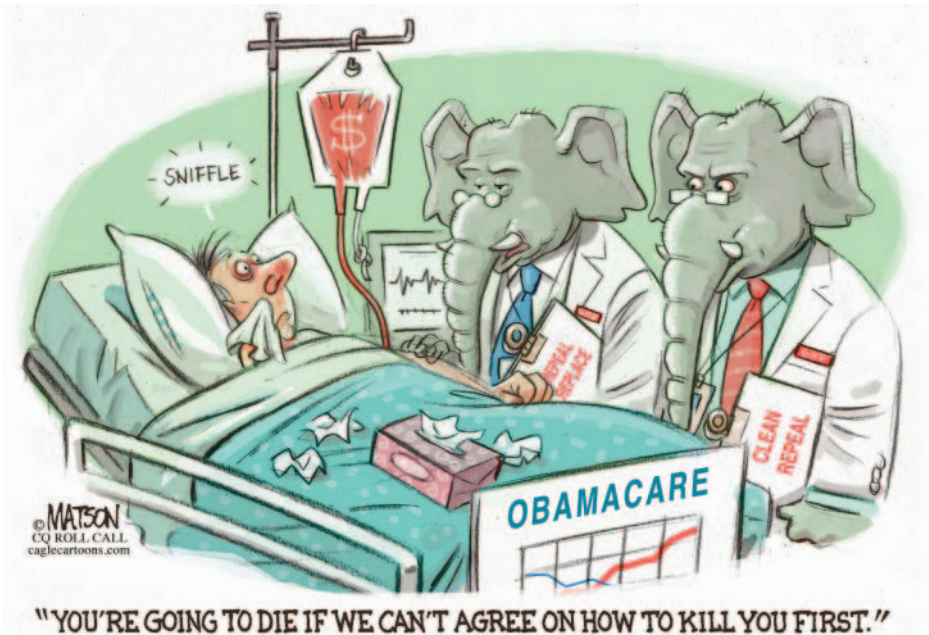
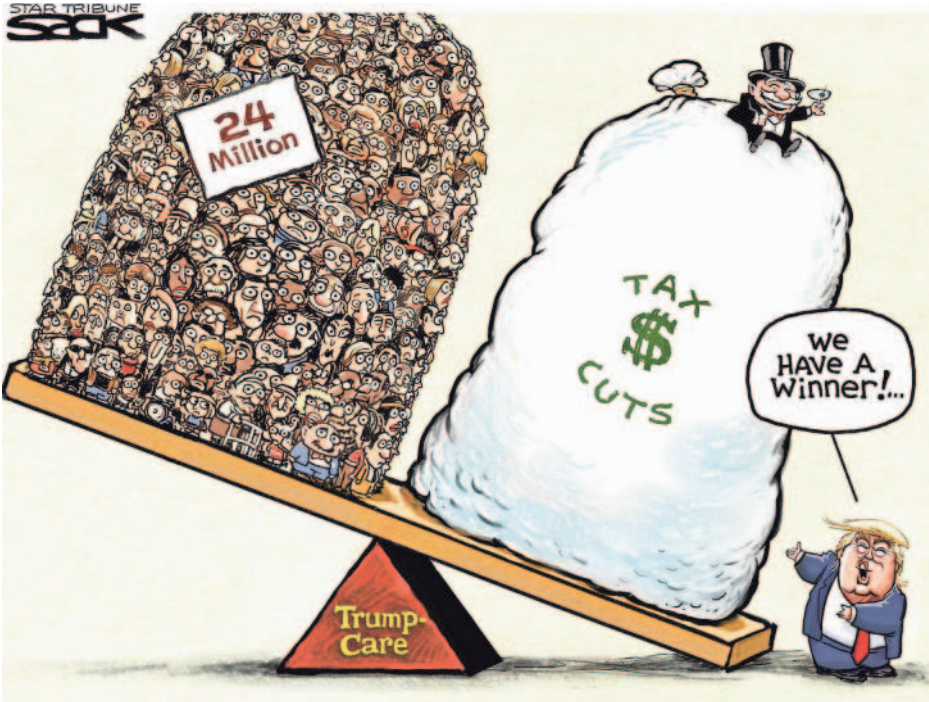
Dear President Trump:
I am closely observing how this administration interfaces with the press. Our Founding Fathers enshrined freedom of the press into the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, ratified in the Bill of Rights of 1791.
Every time this administration blocks credentialed journalists from White House press briefings, muzzles others, refuses to take questions at all or attacks the press through tweets, I and millions of Americans are watching and wondering.
The press, like its coverage or not, plays a vital role in our democracy. An informed electorate requires public access to information. Open access for the media is "what makes a democracy a democracy versus a dictatorship," stated White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer at a recent panel discussion.
Exactly. That is why I and millions will continue to watch closely and then decide how we will vote in the midterm elections.
Martha Stinson, Nashville 37212

Dear President Trump:
As you diligently work to return U.S. corporations' workforces and manufacturing facilities to America, I ask that you also focus on such corporations to relocate their customer services segment to our native land.
It is so frustrating to speak with a party in India, Indonesia or some other foreign country and not be able to understand what they are saying or wading through their lack of product/policy knowledge.
Let us talk to an American citizen who speaks our language fluently and with the ability to answer our questions or pass us through to someone who has that ability. We get clarity and more jobs for our people.
Don W Park, Springfield 37172

Dear President Trump:
The needs of many people are being ignored in the name of political cronyism as the Republicans have introduced their plan to repeal and replace Obamacare. The Affordable Care Act is not perfect, but has been in effect long enough that some areas in need of improvement have become apparent.
The sensible, caring thing to do would be to work to correct those deficits and implement improvements to this program, which has been a lifeline to many people.
This bull-in-the-china-shop approach, which has been taken because Donald Trump made a rash, impulsive, irresponsible campaign promise, has resulted in a travesty! Will Tennessee Sens. Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander have the moral compass to oppose this and insist that the interests of Americans needing health care be served, and not the wealthy elites who are in line to profit from huge tax cuts while basic health services for the poor are being taken away?
Donna Davis, Alexandria 37012

Dear President Trump:
I am an Indian immigrant physician and a registered Democrat practicing in Nashville, and welcome you to our beloved city of Nashville. I was excited to hear a lot of great ideas promoted by you during the campaign, including better law and order, secure borders, fiscal discipline in the government, getting America out of foreign wars, and better health care.
I support the merit-based immigration system that is fair to all countries, that is enforced appropriately.
As a physician, I am concerned about the prohibitive cost of health care and prescription drugs in our country, which requires urgent attention.
I am excited to see your efforts at draining the swamp and bringing efficiency to federal government. I am excited to see the initiative to promote infrastructure projects in partnership with private partnership.
I would like you to give sufficient importance to "soft power" in promoting international peace and harmony.
Veda Biliyar, Brentwood 37027

Dear President Trump:
All the major physician groups in the country and nonprofit hospital groups (representing 85 percent of the hospitals in the country) have expressed their opposition to the American Health Care Act. You and the rest of the GOP are desperate for an endorsement of the plan from any group of doctors or hospitals because those are the people and organizations who provide the health care patients need.
Your visit to Nashville is a natural fit for a presidential visit since the city is home to three of the largest and most powerful investor-owned or for-profit hospital companies in the country. Most of the for-profit (they like to be called investor-owned) hospitals that make up 15 percent of U.S. hospitals are represented by the Federation of American Hospitals, headquartered in Washington, D.C.
My theory is that Trump is coming here to



put pressure on the most powerful investor-owned hospital companies to influence the Federation to endorse his plan.
Robert Benson, Lebanon 37090

Dear President Trump:
I urge you to reflect, seek counsel and resign to demonstrate you have love for your family and our country. Your words and actions are dividing our nation and endangering our republic.
All our children and grandchildren will live in a more dangerous and dark world due to your views and actions. Your continuing lies are creating a constitutional crisis, and history will be brutal in its analysis of your presidency. Save yourself! Resign!
La Jeanna Cook, Murfreesboro 37130

Dear President Trump:
Stop your perpetual lying to the American people. Be a leader who wants to solve problems for the country, not someone who only represents your own ego and interests. Please get off Twitter as well. Your constant one-upmanship is unbecoming for the president of the United States.
Bryan Smith, Nashville 37204

Dear President Trump:
You created hate against Muslims. You should stop it to be our president as American Muslims.
Ibrahim Caynaan, Nashville 37217

Dear President Trump:
You are a joke, a misogynist and a bully. Your team does not know the ethical laws or rules, and you allow yourself to be a puppet president. You know you're not going to build a wall, and all the poor (monetary) suckers who voted for you are too foolish to know they have been conned.
Cathy Morgan, Nashville 37208

Dear President Trump:
Why do you insist on sharing so many unverified statements? For the first time in my 65 years, we have a president whom we are unable to trust his statements. This is not a reality show, this is America!
Dennis Golob, Kingsport 37660

Dear President Trump:
Thank you for working so hard on turning this once great country around. You have a huge job ahead of you and you have shown that you are making a lot of changes in such a short time. Believe me when I tell you that there are many people behind you and supporting you. I love the fact that you and your family are Christians. God will be giving you the strength you will be needing.
This country needs to become united. I was shocked to see such a split in Congress. I watched your speech and totally believe in everything you said. The Democrats need to wake up!
If I lived in D.C., I would love to work with you.
Kathleen Stokes, Old Hickory 37138

Dear President Trump:
America needs a professional, not a rich kid who wants to "play" president. Get a job suited for your qualifications.
Bobby F. McKinney, Fairview 37062

Dear President Trump:
Welcome to Nashville. I want to tell you how happy I am that you were elected our president. I worked very hard in your grass-roots movement because I knew that you would be a great president. You have already done so much to move America forward. I have never seen anyone who works as hard as you do and I see how much you love America and the people. I stand behind you 100 percent.
Elizabeth Roberts, Old Hickory 37138

Dear President Trump:
Mr. President, you say you want to make

America great again. Well, I've been listening to you since you've been in office, and not once have you spoken on homelessness.
How will America be great when we have an epidemic of people without housing? Homelessness doesn't discriminate. I've lived in New York and visited Washington, D.C., so I know you see homelessness every day. Now you are in the Music City, and we have it here.
Why don't you come and visit some of the shelters in Nashville? One good one is the Room in the Inn. Meet some human beings who are down but not out, because they haven't given up.
We know the system better than anyone. You talk about a wall on the border of Mexico, but we homeless face a wall here in the U.S. This wall needs to be torn down, and a bridge needs to be built.
Howard Allen Jr., Nashville Homeless Underground, Nashville 37203

Dear President Trump:
Every day God has me praying against evil and hidden confederations, bringing exposure and confusion to them as they are pulled down, and putting a "red (blood of Jesus) line" around you, your people and this country.
I reaffirm the anointing that is upon you, with wisdom to purge and prosecute all traitors. For over a year God has spoken to me, "I am raising you up over the heads of your enemies," and he is victoriously doing this. Do not get discouraged! Do not think you are standing alone!
Greater is he who is in his true believers than all those operating in the dark world! God's purposes and plans will be victorious! Still praying.
Nancy Corcoran, Hermitage 37076

Dear President Trump:
I cannot support or respect the current policies of Donald Trump.
1. Stop the travel bans. Limiting travel of immigrants will not keep terrorists out of the United States.
2. Do not dismantle the Affordable Care Act. Congress can fix the ACA by negotiating with insurance and drug companies. Insurance companies should participate, with reasonable rates, if affiliated with other government-based health care plans. Health care should not be used by political parties to score over opposition — the focus should be improving the health care of American citizens.
3. Support women's rights, especially pro-choice and equal pay.
4. Balance the budget for everyone — not just the rich.
5. Forget the foolish and expensive wall. Spend the money on repairs to American infrastructure.
6. As a non-taxpayer, stop stiffing Americans for weekends in Florida.
7. Stop the negative tweets. You demean yourself and our country.
Patricia Sheaffer, Mt. Juliet 37122

Dear President Trump:
Welcome to Nashville, President Trump! The word "welcome" is one that people in our city use often and in a glad, polite and friendly way.
We are a city of givers, as evidenced by over 2,000 nonprofit organizations that are in the business of helping people become healthier, better educated and more productive as they contribute to making Nashville the great city it is today!
We continue to strive for improvement in our city, and we hope and trust that as president, you will help Nashville and all of America's cities and towns to maintain an American giving spirit. We desire to work with and welcome all people regardless of race, religion, age, gender, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.
We believe in an America with opportunity and justice for all! Please join us and help keep the American dream alive!
Michael Bradley, Nashville 37215

Dear President Trump:
You should resign immediately, due to your questionable dealings with Vladimir Putin and Alfa Bank.
The great Roman orator and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero once said: "A nation can survive its fools, and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within. An enemy at the gates is less formidable, for he is known and carries his banner openly. But the traitor moves amongst those within the gate freely, his sly whispers rustling through all the alleys, heard in the very halls of government itself. For the traitor appears not a traitor; he speaks in accents familiar to his victims, and he wears their face and their arguments, he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation, he works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of the city, he infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to fear."
Mark Henderson, Mt. Pleasant 38474

Dear President Trump:
Gone are the days of the failed Obama administration filled with big government boondoggles like the "stimulus bill" that created absolutely zero so-called shovel-ready jobs. Gone are the Obama "apology tours" around the world where he apologized for U.S. wrongdoings while giving billions in taxpayer dollars to terrorist regimes like Iran.
Gone is Obamacare, the high unemployment, gone is the stalled economy, gone is the weakened military, gone is the disrespect for our police officers and veterans, gone is the whole secular humanist, relative morality, antiquated, stale, socialist philosophy of Barack Obama.
Welcome President Trump and your most lovely first lady, Melania!
A new day of American economic growth, exceptionalism and pride has begun with your inauguration. And thank you very much for the big jump in my 401(k) since your election. We hope you visit the beautiful state of Tennessee many times over the next eight years as POTUS! See you at the rally!
Wesson Smith, Red Boiling Springs 37150

Dear President Trump:
Women from a Nashville early morning Bible study are praying for and with you. We hope you'll join our daily ascent exploring how to honor our creator.
Nashville understands health needs perhaps more than many other cities in part due to the many health care CEOs here and in part due to the many immigrants and Gen Xers who live here without insurance coverage.
Our Baptismal vows call us to love our neighbors, strive for peace and justice, and respect the dignity of every human being. Providing health care coverage to all is a first step. You could begin right here in Nashville. Many experts are here to help.
Ask and you will get answers. Seek and you will find. Knock and many doors will open. Better acquaint yourself with our Kurdish, Sudanese, Syrian, Burmese and Hispanic-American neighbors who want only to share the American dream of independence, community and goodwill. Help make our dreams come true in Nashville to improve the entire nation.
The Rev. Jane Boram, Nashville 37204

Dear President Trump:
The 15,000 women who (protested) walked after your inauguration do not represent most Tennessee women.
You carried our county (Putnam) and our state in the November election, and we are very proud of that fact. We pray that you will bring our great country together, make the U.S. a safer place for all Americans, create jobs and provide a health care plan that will enable all children to be covered.
May God bless you, your family and the United States of America.
Donna Garrett, Cookeville 38506

Dear President Trump:
Please listen to the overwhelming majority of scientists who know that human-caused climate change is real and dangerous. Please support and fund NASA and NOAA research.
Do not let Scott Pruitt dismantle the EPA. We need regulatory protections against industrial polluters.
Jessica K. Zammit, Sewanee 37375

Dear President Trump:
I watched your inauguration from a dining room in Havana, where I spent a month of cultural exchange on a brilliant visa called "People to People." I am back in our country now, but at any border, we carry unsearchable baggage — whatever we carry in our hearts.
I welcome you here, but I also welcome you to the border of your own imagination. Go alone, with whatever you can carry. Go where you do not dream the language, where a human's worth is not measured by what they produce or consume, but by the depth of their humanity. It may be transformative. But tonight, I welcome you to Nashville.
When you are finished speaking, I welcome you to my home, to my table, for a dinner party. Let's invite the neighbors and talk about our future together.
Maya de Vitry, Nashville 37216

Dear President Trump:
Your past work experience hasn't prepared you to have bosses, but with the oath of office comes the duty to answer to the people for all your actions. Please remember that mundane measures like TV ratings or crowd size carry no true value vis a vis the difficult work that you promised to do. Know that the praise of sycophants does not equate to real world accomplishments. All that you say and do should lift the common welfare of all Americans.
Your focus should now be outward and unselfish. You will find that much of the anxiety and distrust that seem to foment so far in your administration will fade when your goal is to help others. If you go on a positive offense fueled by the true desire to serve, there won't be room for defensiveness to thrive. Do good work and no one will be able to make any viable negative criticism.
Matthew Carlton, Nashville 37216

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

Continued from Page 1A

It’s easy to see why Jackson appeals to you. He was a celebrity, albeit one whose fame was based not on “The Apprentice” but on his Agincourt-like victory over the British at New Orleans in 1815.

He expanded the powers of the presidency and insisted that he was the only official elected by all the people. It was a distinction he believed made the White House, not Capitol Hill, what John F. Kennedy would later call the “vital center of action.”

Before Jackson, power tended toward the few, whether political or financial. After Jackson, government, for better and for worse, was more attuned to the popular will. A leader who could inspire the masses could change the world — as you, Mr. President, have shown us since that June day in 2015 when you rode the escalator from the lobby floor of Trump Tower down to your announcement, and into history.

He was the most contradictory of men — but then, America was, and is, among the most contradictory of nations. He had massacred Indians in combat, executed enemy soldiers, fought duels and imposed martial law on New Orleans. A champion of even the poorest of whites, Jackson was an unrepentant slaveholder. A sentimental man who rescued an Indian orphan and brought him to live at The Hermitage, Jackson was the chief architect of the removal of Native American tribes. An enemy of the Second Bank of the United States, Jackson would have given his life to preserve the central government.

His opponents thought him a possible “American Bonaparte,” a putative dictator, yet he could be a figure of sophistication and of reassurance. In December 1814, with the Battle of New Orleans at hand, a leading hostess was disturbed to learn that her husband had invited Jackson to dinner. After warning her other guests about this “wild man of the woods,” the lady was stunned to find Jackson both elegant and charming. “Is this your backwoodsman?” her friends asked after Jackson left. “He is a prince!”

As you learn more about Old Hickory, please remember this: His populism was not borrowed or affected but real and deeply felt. Jackson spoke passionately of the needs of “the humble members of society — the farmers, mechanics and



President Donald Trump, at work in the White House, has a Ralph Earl portrait of Andrew Jackson behind him in the Oval Office.

laborers” — and made the case for popular politics, fundamentally shifting us from republicanism to democracy. He did so in part because he had begun his life as one of that “humble” class. A self-made man who had risen to the highest levels of a slaveholding society, he genuinely wanted to widen the doors of opportunity to men like him. Today we rightly find his views morally shortsighted, but in his time he was a figure of democratic aspiration whose administration marked an important step in the perennial push for a more perfect union.

He was also a man who valued experience in governmental and military affairs. You have offered yourself to America as a president unburdened by conventional credentials. But the Jackson example teaches us that expertise matters. An uneducated boy from the Carolina backwoods, the son of Scots-Irish immigrants, Jackson became a practicing lawyer, a public prosecutor, a U.S. attorney, a delegate to the founding Tennessee Constitutional Convention, a U.S. congressman, a U.S. senator, a judge of the state Superior Court and a major general, first of the state militia and then of the U.S. Army. It’s too late, obviously, for you to undertake such preparation. Listening to those with such experience — something Jackson also did — is, however, a wise course to follow.

Jackson believed, too, in the constitutional order brought into being in Phila-

delphia in the long summer of 1787. “It is no longer a question whether this great country can remain happily united and flourish under our present form of government,” Jackson said in his farewell address in 1837. “Experience, the unerring test of all human undertakings, has shown the wisdom and foresight of those who formed it, and has proved that in the union of these States there is a sure foundation for the brightest hopes of freedom and for the happiness of the people. At every hazard and by every sacrifice this Union must be preserved.”

Compromise was thus an essential, if little-remarked, Jacksonian virtue. No other president fulminated more passionately or threatened his foes more vividly, but Jackson believed in the union with all his heart. His mother and his brothers had died in the American Revolution; to him, the nation was a sacred thing, hallowed by their blood. We were then, and are now, what Jackson called “one great family.”

To Jackson, anger could be a means to an end. He understood himself and how others saw him, and he turned his vices into virtues. In facing down disunionists in South Carolina in 1832-33, Jackson thundered on about leading troops into the state and hanging his opponents “as high as Haman.” Yet in the evenings, alone in the White House, he wrote carefully constructed letters to his allies on the ground about how to bring the crisis

to a peaceful resolution. There is an anxiety, Mr. President, that you are too enamored of your own political base — that your tweets and your energy are directed toward motivating only those who already agree with you. On the wall of Jackson’s study at The Hermitage is a copy of his 1832 Proclamation to the People of South Carolina. It may be difficult to read the old type, so here is a key passage: “Contemplate the condition of that country of which you still form an important part,” Jackson wrote, “consider its government uniting in one bond of common interest and general protection so many different States — giving to all their inhabitants the proud title of AMERICAN CITIZEN — protecting their commerce — securing their literature and arts — facilitating their intercommunication — defending their frontiers — and making their name respected in the remotest parts of the earth! Consider the extent of its territory its increasing and happy population, its advance in arts, which render life agreeable, and the sciences which elevate the mind! See education spreading the lights of religion, morality, and general information into every cottage in this wide extent of our Territories and States! Behold it as the asylum where the wretched and the oppressed find a refuge and support! Look on this picture of happiness and honor, and say, WE TOO, ARE CITIZENS OF AMERICA!”

We’re all Americans still, sir. Lead all of us. Jackson did. You can, too. A final thought. Inside The Hermitage, next to his study, you will see the bedroom where Jackson breathed his last in 1845. “It is from within, among yourselves — from cupidity, from corruption, from disappointed ambition and inordinate thirst for power — that factions will be formed and liberty endangered,” Jackson said in his farewell to the nation. “It is against such designs ... that you have especially to guard yourselves. You have the highest of human trusts committed to your care. ... May He who holds in His hands the destinies of nations make you worthy of the favors He has bestowed and enable you, with pure hearts and pure hands and sleepless vigilance, to guard and defend to the end of time the great charge He has committed to your keeping.” Wise words, Mr. President, from a distant era. Those of us who have inherited those obligations would do well to heed them. Our hope — our prayer — is that you, in particular, will take them to heart.

Respectfully,
Jon Meacham

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