



From Jim's Desk

Our “differences”

Some of my friends are Democrats. Some of my friends are Republicans. Some of my friends are “fill in the blank.”

With social media heavily involved in many persons’ daily routines, with instant texts, emails, tweets, and other forms of media streaming into our lives, it’s no wonder we talk, text, email, Facebook and tweet about our differences. Many (if not most) of our citizens believe the country is more divided than ever. I don’t.

In fact, I believe that we just are more expressive, more verbal and more apt to openly “out” our opinions so that others know where we stand. Our beliefs are making us feel more divided because of our openness and instant forms of communication in my opinion.

When Thomas Jefferson was serving as our third president, his opponents were ruthless. Cartoons of his personal life took center stage in some written or printed media. Many Americans hated Jefferson and newspapers that held that opinion were quick to print that hatred. When

Franklin D. Roosevelt was president, my grandmother had a picture of former President Herbert Hoover with black draping over it on one of her walls. Roosevelt had defeated Hoover in the 1932 presidential election, and my grandmother lost two of her six sons in World War II and blamed Roosevelt for their deaths. Roosevelt himself stated on the radio that his opponents were not happy criticizing just him and his family and were even attacking his little dog, Fala.

After former President Richard Nixon’s loss to former Governor Pat Brown in the 1962 California governor’s race, he famously stated in a press conference that the press would not have him to kick around anymore because he was through with politics. Of course, six years later in 1968, he was elected president of the United States.

My take on the “divisions” within our nation is to put it into perspective with our lives today. Cell phones, television, email, Twitter, satellite instant news, computers, transportation, and on and on, has made us

more aware of our differences than at any time in our country’s history.

But think about Jefferson’s time: newspapers were for those that could get one and for those that could read. Roosevelt’s time brought radio into American lives. Nixon’s time brought television into our citizen’s lives. And today, President Donald Trump communicates with over 80 million followers via Twitter.

Sure, there are extremists on both the left and the right that would like to see open warfare among us. But the vast majority of the red, white and blue are happy to remain partial to the red or partial to the blue, or partial to purple. My take on today’s life in the USA is that we may be more open about our differences, but we still all love our nation and will be there when we all need to be together.

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