

**POLITICS AND PRESIDENCY**

*The whole art of politics consists in directing rationally the irrationalities in men.* —Reinhold Niebuhr

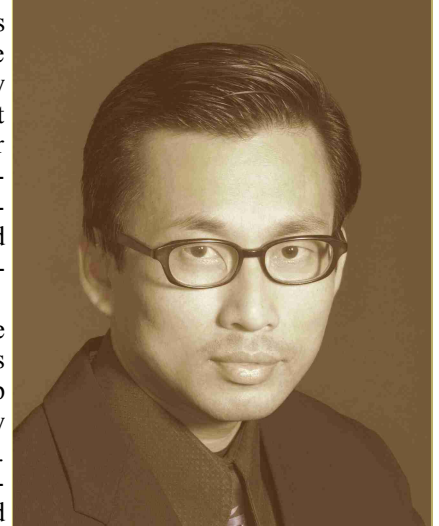
**IMPERFECT UNION**—For every imperfect union, a leader is needed who understands its imperfections. America is no exception. It has not been that long ago since we stripped the Native Americans of their sacred land, a land admired by many, explored by many more, and marred by conquests, acquisitions and intolerance. In 1497, John Cabot sailed under the English flag to explore the coast of North America in search of a water route to Asia. He ended up claiming the land for England. In 1524, Giovanni da Verazano went on a different journey for France. In 1540, Francisco Coronado led an expedition in search of the legendary “Seven Cities of Gold” and he stumbled into the Grand Canyon. It was not until 1619 that the first blacks arrived in America as indentured servants. Within a few years the slave trade began.

This nation has changed, adapted, and evolved since its early days. From the Colonial period to the time of the Civil War, from the boom and bust of the early 1900s to modern America, this country’s rich but imperfect history has been shaped by a group of men who we call presidents. Among them were George Washington, a revolutionary military leader, John Adams, a Massachusetts-born lawyer, and Ronald Reagan, an actor. These men have chiseled, shaped and molded our nation into the country it is today. Despite the differences in their professions prior to their White House days, they all shared one common root — they were all Anglo-Saxon males.

Two hundred years have passed since George Washington took office and a new dawn has arrived. With population on the rise, global competition for limited foods and natural resources high, and political hegemony and interdependency inevitable, a new phase of evolution is taking place. Evolution of a nation like ours requires diversification of technological know-how, social agendas, economic and political policies, and leadership compositions. A field of corn with an identical genetic blueprint will risk eradication should danger strike. The same applies to a nation. That is why America needs a major facelift to meet today’s challenges and to take on tomorrow’s dangers. We have come a long way since the day the Pilgrims set foot at Plymouth Rock. The foot-worn path they took paved a road for us but there are still much works to be done. We, as a nation, are defined not by our size, our intellect, or our technologies but by our complexity. As a whole, we are smart people, intelligent enough to know that the seat of the U.S. presidency holds great power and tremendous responsibilities. That is why it is time to put aside our bias, bigotry, fanaticism, and religious zeal, and vote with a clear state of mind.

America is still a young nation but we are crawling at light speed. Given our current state, a new breed of president is needed to guide us safely through our next evolutionary phase, a leader who not only knows the heartbeat of America and the pulse of the world, but also possesses the compassion, intellect, experience, diversity and vision to make this country greater than it is. Whether Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or Mormon, as long as he or she has the qualifications to serve with the highest level of competency, he or she should be provided a fair opportunity to be seated in the highest office of the land. Let’s be honest with ourselves for a moment. No black man can truly believe that he knows what it is like to be white, and no white man can honestly claim that he knows what it is truly like to be black. Nor does an Asian know what it is like to be Hispanic and vice versa. However different we are from each other, we are also alike. We share the same piece of land called America. We reap our crops from it, bury our loved ones in it, and give birth to our children on it. We walk, run, and breathe from the air that covers the same piece of land that our forefathers once occupied. We are a nation of Taco Bells, Kentucky Fried Chickens, and Mr. Chow’s Lucky Restaurants. How we view our complexity, treat our neighbors, or pick our presidents, whether they are white, black, brown, yellow, male or female, can make or break us as a nation. Will we still be a vibrant nation two or three hundred years from now, a place that is tolerant of different political, social, cultural, and religious views? Or will we be another storybook tale about a land of many nations that was splintered by the very threads that hold us together today?

The fate of America does not begin with an act from a president but with the action of the people who put him or her in office. No one but us can tell us how to think or for whom to vote. That is why we need to thrust aside our anger, fear, and partiality, and pick the right man or woman for the job. We need to look deep within ourselves and ask the most basic question of all, “Am I electing this person because he or she is black or white, or am I electing him or her because this nation needs his or her experience, compassion, judgment, and vision?” As an imperfect union that strives for perfection, we have a duty to elect not just anyone who is willing to serve but only the one who can truly serve.



**RICHARD QUAN**  
**Managing Editor**