

THE TRUMP TIME: A LESSON FROM THE PAST

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Abstract: *January 20, 2017, the United States of America has entered a new period of its history. Later, the results of the presidency of Donald Trump will be analyzed and divided into achievements and failures. However, it is obvious that his radical and unpredictable policy can lead to the prosperity of America... as well as to its fall. But history repeats itself and people with an ambiguous reputation have come to power in the White House before. One of them was Grover Cleveland - the 22nd and 24th president of the US who had carried out a series of reform, but his merits were not duly appreciated. So what lesson can we learn from the experience of Mr. Cleveland?*

Keywords: *Grover Cleveland, Donald Trump, Trump administration, the USA*

ВРЕМЯ ТРАМПА: УРОК ИЗ ПРОШЛОГО

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Аннотация: *20 января 2017 года Соединённые Штаты Америки вступили в новый период своей истории. Позже результаты президентства Дональда Трампа будут проанализированы и разделены на достижения и неудачи. Однако очевидно, что его радикальная и непредсказуемая политика может привести к процветанию Америки... так же как и к её падению. Но история повторяется, и люди с неоднозначной репутацией приходили к власти в Белом доме и ранее. Одним из них был Гровер Кливленд - 22-й и 24-й президент США, который осуществил серию реформ, но его заслуги не были оценены должным образом. Итак, какой урок мы можем извлечь из опыта господина Кливленда?*

Ключевые слова: *Гровер Кливленд, Дональд Трамп, администрация Трампа, США.*

The first week of the Donald Trump's presidency was no less shocking to the rest of the world than his election victory on November 8, 2016. On Monday, January 23 - his first full workday as a president of the US, Mr. Trump signed an executive order withdrawing the US from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement between 12 nations that was ranked as the largest free trade deal in the world [1]. Furthermore, Donald Trump has announced an ambitious tax reform which should support the national business via decreasing the corporate tax rate from 35%-38% to 15-20% and the introduction of import tariffs [2]. Fulfilling his election promises to build a wall on the Mexican border, to deny entry to citizens of seven Muslim countries in the Middle East and North Africa, agreeing to the use of torture for terrorists [3], Donald Trump also began an open conflict with the leading American media, accusing them of lying. Actually, not so bad for a start.

Nonetheless, let us try to remember has the United States ever had a president like Donald Trump? The answer is yes, but we have to go back to the second half of the 19th century.

Stephen Grover Cleveland was born in Caldwell, New Jersey, on March 18, 1837. Sixteen years later his father died and Grover started working in New York City as a clerk, while attending law courses in Buffalo. He

never went to college but was able to pass the bar exams in 1858 [4].

As a matter of fact, Donald Trump and Grover Cleveland are united by one thing - both of them were able to forge a stronger career due to their personal merits. Donald was twenty-five when he took control of his father's real estate company in 1971. Since then the medium-sized company Elizabeth Trump & Son has turned into The Trump Organization - an international conglomerate that worth about \$3.7 billion [5]. However, Grover Cleveland made his way in civil service no less successful than Donald Trump in business. He went from being an assistant district attorney of Erie County to the governor of the state of New York.

As mayor of Buffalo, Mr. Cleveland was known as the man who fought against corruption in the city's public service, vetoed the numerous of populist expenditures, reduced the number of officials and improved the efficiency of municipal institutions [6]. After winning the elections of the governor of New York in 1882 as the candidate of the Democratic Party, Mr. Cleveland began fighting against Tammany Hall, a powerful political organization that had control over the city and the state by means of bribery politicians and officials [6]. As the governor of New York, Grover Cleveland was far from politics, but the fame of him spread throughout the country.

American society in 1884 found itself in a situation similar to 2016: neither the Republicans nor the Democrats have failed to select a candidate for the presidential election who would satisfy the needs of the people. Moreover, the Democratic candidate had not occupy the Oval Office since 1861. The Democrats needed in a new face, whose identity could attract voters. So, Grover Cleveland had an undeniable advantage - he was not a politician. And he won.

Mr. Cleveland had got the support of middle-class voters from both parties because of his reputation as an honest and pragmatic manager who challenged Tammany Hall [6]. He always stood his ground and people liked it.

Grover Cleveland was an advocate of the theory of "a night-watchman state", opposing the increase in pensions for former officials and all forms of public assistance. He said: "it is a plain dictate of honesty and good government that public expenditures should be limited by public necessity, and that this should be measured by the rules of strict economy..." [6]. As president of the US in 1885-1889 and 1893-1897, Mr. Cleveland was able to reduce government expenditure and to reject of special interest legislation (although he was forced to use the veto 584 times) [4]. Besides, he cut the number of officials in the federal government, seeking to increase its efficiency through the introduction of meritocracy.

On the one hand Mr. Cleveland was against tax increases or any restrictions of freedom of the market, but on the other hand, he attempted to break down the oligopoly on the railroads through the establishment of the Interstate Commerce Commission to regulate railroads [4]. So, why we don't call him as one of the greatest US presidents? Paradoxically, because he was not a politician whereas a president, it is primarily, a political figure.

Mr. Cleveland was an excellent mayor of Buffalo and a remarkable governor of the state of New York, but he did not have a sense of political perspective. Having no political flexibility, Cleveland has ruled the country as if it was a small town. He believed that government officials were only his personal advisers. Adhering to conservative views, Mr. Cleveland had supported the regime of racial segregation in the southern states, was not able to handle the growing influence of the trade unions and declined to provide the industry subsidies [6]. As a result, he lost the support of both parties in Congress and industrial elite in the north-eastern states. Grover Cleveland failed even in the state of New York in the presidential election of 1888 [4].

Even though he won the election again in 1892, his second term was marked by one of the deepest economic depression in the US history [4]. This time Mr. Cleveland managed to avoid default by means of four emissions of new government bonds in 1894-1896, but his belief in the theory of "a small government" could not prevent the bankruptcy of more than 500 banks across the country [6].

Donald Trump came in power due to the crisis of political theory that dominated in the West since the 1960s.

He is not afraid to speak frankly on topics that other politicians diligently avoided. Mr. Trump earned a reputation as a successful and charismatic businessman, but whether it is enough for the president of the United States? Obviously not, if we go back to the experience of Grover Cleveland or Richard Nixon.

The decision of the federal district court in Brooklyn against the executive order to halt travel from seven Muslim-majority countries [7] showed us that Mr. Trump will have to face not only with the resistance of the Democrats in both houses of Congress, media and human rights organizations but also, perhaps, the judiciary. Now, in order to win this battle, Donald Trump is trying to discredit the prevailing socio-political system and the leading media. However, will he be able to change the opinion of millions of people across the US?

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