

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

The most important election

Today's presidential election is the most important in 80 years. Just as in November 1940, it's no exaggeration to say today's candidates hold the destiny of the world in their hands.

The Republican candidate in 1940 was Indiana lawyer Wendell Willkie. Like President Trump, Willkie was a former Democrat and prominent businessman who never held public office. Like Trump, he won the nomination by defying the GOP establishment.

But Willkie's core believe in decency and core American values could not have been more different from Trump.

In the spring of 1940, Adolph Hitler's German Army had invaded France, defeated it, and occupied much of the country in a few weeks.

German bombers then began pulverizing English cities in an attempt to bring Great Britain to its knees.

German U-boats sank thousands of tons of shipping bound for England each week, bringing its people to the brink of starvation.

England desperately needed American help, but the overwhelming American public sentiment was to keep out of foreign wars. (This was more than a year before Pearl Harbor).

Meanwhile, President Franklin Roosevelt outraged many by running for an unprecedented third term.

Although both candidates solemnly pledged to keep American boys out of foreign wars, historians agree both candidates believed the English would need massive American aid to stave off defeat.

After Willkie lost the election (although winning Montgomery County) he pledged bipartisanship and carried it out.

In January 1941, Willkie helped persuade the Senate to approve Roosevelt's proposed Lend-Lease act, which provided billions of dollars in aid to Great Britain and later other allies fighting Germany.

The following year, with the cooperation of President Roosevelt, Willkie flew in a converted bomber for a nearly two-month tour of the world, including the Mideast, where the Allies were battling the Germans, and China, where the Allies were fighting the Japanese.

At the end of the trip, Willkie gave a widely heard radio broadcast and wrote a million-seller book called *One*

World.

"There are no distant points in the world any longer," Willkie wrote. "I learned by this trip that the myriad millions of human beings of the Far East are as close to us as Los Angeles is to New York by the fastest trains.

"I cannot escape the conviction that in the future what concerns them must concern us, almost as much as the problems of the people of California concern the people of New York.

"Our thinking in the future must be worldwide."

The subsequent development of nuclear weapons and intercontinental missiles meant America could no longer be protected by its oceans.

International air travel has brought a Chinese virus to America, and hundreds of thousands of Americans have died because President Trump simply tried to wish it away. New viruses may follow.

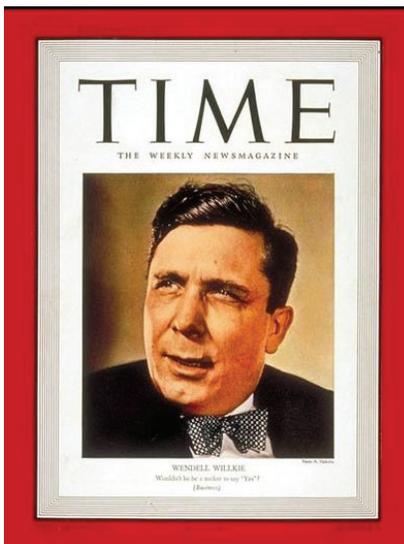
And as the world warms, President Trump scoffs at climate change, which threatens to destroy civilization as we know it.

Last year, Trump notified the United Nations the U.S. would withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change, under which nearly 200 countries pledged to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

We will never recover from another four years of Trump.



Commentary by
Thomas Hylton



WENDELL WILLKIE — 1940 Republican candidate for president, a stark contrast to today.