

FT writers grapple with Joe Biden and America's real - and fast shifting – mood. DH replies:

I think you are all beginning to pick up the shifting mood inside America (and of course elsewhere, including in the UK) , as the generations move on and as digital age technology changes attitudes fundamentally about the old ideologies and the polarization which makes them so distorted and unappealing.

This is something which a few of us have been trying to point up for more than a decade – with not all that much success!

What a younger, more empowered and hyper-connected generation want is not the stale 'isms' and histrionics of past political grandstanding, but governance which really delivers top quality services and administration, respects identities *and* faces up to the new great global issues of the age .

On the American stage this seems to be playing out as a dawning realization – along with some anger - that all the harping on about 'values', American leadership, civilizations in collision and so on, which goes right across the established political spectrum, just does not sync any more either with the way the world now works for most people, or with old left or old right political battle lines, or with the transformed international network order.

Whether all this has quite got to Biden (or to large sections of British politics and opinion either) is a moot point. The more Biden seems to be taking America 'back' to a past order, and the more he looks on the wider world in Manichean East-West rivalry terms, the less he will carry the changing mood (and the more he will get stuck in political quagmires) .

Forgive the analogy – especially if you are not bridge players – but America's mistake would be to still try playing the international game in a trump suit when in the web age there are no trumps any more, and playing a no trump hand requires an entirely different mindset!

David Howell
