

Inquiring Minds topic – 21 December 2018

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EFFECTIVE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

This week, I ask the members of Inquiring Minds to tackle the question of what constitutes effective political leadership? For assistance in understanding the concept of effective political leadership, I have turned to Doris Kearns Goodwin and her recent book, Leadership in Turbulent Times. In her book, Goodwin provides the following four examples of presidents whom she maintains have led effectively: Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson.

Doris Kearns Goodwin ponders important questions in her book regarding leadership in relationship to the presidents of her focus. After reading her queries, how would you respond to her thoughts on leadership? How would you relate her thoughts to our current leadership? Could you add any relevant thoughts that would provide light on the topic of effective political leadership?

Goodwin's thoughts and questions regarding leadership:

- Are leaders born or made?
- Is the ability to be self reflective one of the most important qualities of leadership?
- Does the leader have the ability to acknowledge mistakes, to grow moving forward, have humility, and accept their limitations?
- Does adversity in one's life play a role in building leadership?
- Are leaders born or made?
- Do times make the leader or does the leadership shape the times?
- How can a leader infuse a sense of purpose and meaning in peoples' lives, and who were the presidents who were able to do this?
- What is the difference between power, title, and leadership?
- Is effective political leadership possible without a purpose other than ambition and self-service?

After contemplating Goodwin's questions, it will be illuminating to add the voices of Inquiring Minds to establish a definition of "effective political leadership." Members of Inquiring Minds will, of course, proceed in a respectful and civil manner.