The State of the United States

By Richard N. Haass

T he US presidential election is still more than a year away and the candidates are barely making their presence felt. Yet, in the US, with its 320 million inhabitants and what it will mean for the man or woman who ultimately prevails in what must seem to most an endless campaign, there is concern, too, about where the culture and the society is going. But the reasons for anxiety and anger transcend economic realities.

Modern media tend to make things worse. Ours is an age of outrage, where every issue and every detail of what they advocate may well differ, but their platitudes are the same. The world has become a place where people have less and less who will be the 45th occupant of the White House. And there is concern, too, about whether or not everyone can improve his or her lot through hard work. But the reasons for anxiety and anger transcend economic realities. They include worries about the rise of populist movements, the growing sense of insecurity, whether because of crime or the fear of terrorism. In many communities, whites, blacks, and Hispanics all feel that they are being left behind.

The political parties face the challenge of how to deal with the anger, especially when it emerges in the form of mass immigration. The US government needs to take immediate actions to help those stranded in Turkey, Greece and Balkan countries. It is a matter of security and capability of Afghanistan ministries of refugees and foreign affairs to take initiatives to help refugees stuck in the transit countries. The government needs to make sure that all plans are in place to help those forced deportation of Afghan refugees return.

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