



## What if you're Trump's friend...?

It is somewhat painful watching Donald Trump try to come to terms with defeat. That recent Tweet, "I WON THE ELECTION!" would imply that it isn't going well.

Now for sure Donald Trump has a problem in that he is happy to dispense with facts that don't fit the story he likes. But people like Trump are actually rare. I am more interested in the people who would never actually tweet that, and deep down know that the election was fair, but because they are Republicans, don't want to say anything about it. They aren't Trump and they aren't Democrats; they are what I would like to focus on in this article; the in-betweeners.

So in this case, the in-betweeners are, for want of a better word, moderate Republicans, but as a situation in life, you will have your own examples.

There can be a healthy reluctance to avoid getting involved; outside interference doesn't always help a situation. However, in the case of the American election, there is surely a greater good at stake, namely the acceptance of the result of a democratic election.

I see this morning that a gentleman called Chris Crebs, the director of cyber security in the government, has lost his job simply for stating that the election didn't suffer from online interference. And yet Crebs was isolated just because he was one of the few people who said anything. Someone like Vice President Mike Pence is both conservative and

rightwing, which either attracts you or repels you depending on your underlying politics, but until now I did not see him as dishonest. Surely people like him should be speaking out, for until a groundswell of sane opinion actually puts their heads above the barricades, Trump will continue to pick off people one by one.

It has made me reflect on a public meeting I attended seven years ago in relation to the citing of a drug rehabilitation unit next to the newly built Lime Tree Primary school. A wave of opinion suddenly swelled up among the parents that this presented a huge risk to their children; at the public meeting, some guy from the NHS showed up and was on the receiving end of a lot of abuse; while he said that patients were risk-assessed individually, this wasn't enough. Looking back, I am not quite sure what the other parents were really worried about: drug addicts vaulting the school fence and attacking the children? I guess something like this, but it didn't seem likely to me, and nothing like that has happened in the seven years since. It was never going to, really.

At the public meeting, I was the in-betweener. I didn't contribute to the abuse, but I didn't stand alongside the guy from the NHS either - I didn't want to get myself alienated from the parental community; on reflection that was a cowardly attitude to have taken. I could have shared a view that accepted the drug centre location; I should have spoken out, but I hid.