

The world's greatest leaders

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Throughout history, there have been numerous nations that risen and fallen apart in the blink of the eye. There's one aspect that separates all the nations that have existed through the course of human history: the person that leading the nation at its peak and its worst. Queen Elizabeth1, Abraham Lincoln, and Mao Zedong are all leaders who have cemented their names in history for their contributions to their countries.

Queen Elizabeth 1 become the queen of England (UK) in 1558 and would go on to rule England for 45 until her death in 1603. Her rule is often referred to as the golden age of English history. Despite this, Queen Elizabeth greatly struggled with maintaining peace in England and pursuing their country that she was a great leader. Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States (US) from 1861 to 1865.

He also lead the north in thecivil warandreconstructionthe south after the war was over, but sadly was assassinated before he was able to follow through his plans. Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-Tung) was the founder of the People's Republic of China and ruled China for 27 years. He lead China through a civil war to unite the whole country together and create a new government. Even with being blinded by their own perspectives, all three successful governments had leaders who had the ability to unite different people and were cautious when picking their advisors.

The Weakness of Each Reign

Despite the powerful governments that Queen Elizabeth, President Lincoln, and Chairman Mao built, they all had a weakness that hurt their time in power. When Elizabeth began her reign, she made Protestantism of England

but allowed Catholic to practice their religion in private. Some protestant weren't happy with her decision because of the harsh persecution they had faced during Queen Mary's reign; They felt that they had to get their revenge and Elizabeth wasn't going to give to them.

So, they turned against her and become to be known as Puritans: protestants but with more extreme views. Puritans would actively try to change the structure of the religion. On April 4 1566, William Strickland went up to parliament with the proposal to reform the prayer book and to change the practices of the clergy. Elizabeth was not pleased because she wanted to be the only one to make all the religious decision and as a way to punish Strickland for his actions, Elizabeth suspended him from parliament.

This decision was bad on Elizabeth part because she was silencing Strickland and others puritans who had the same view because they didn't agree. Even though Strickland would get restrained, he inspired many Puritans to start rebelling against Elizabeth that would lead to death and a mini- war. People like John Greenwood and Henry Barrow and others would be executed for not conforming to Protestant religion which sparked more hatred from the Puritans to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth had a hard time looking at another perspective which created conflict because when anyone wanted to make changes to her ideas, she thought that they were already perfect and the changes weren't needed. Another thing was that she took the recommendation for changespersonalitywhen it wasn't. Queen Elizabeth inability to view made weakened her ability to rule without bias in her decisions.

Abraham Lincoln was an intelligent man but a war wasn't his area of expertise. So when the civil war started, President Lincoln relied heavily on his army generals to lead the war but his decision of army general almost cost him the war. George B. McClellan was a great general when it came to "drilling troops and inspiring them with loyalty and trust", but he was "low, overcautious, duped by his spies' fantastic exaggerations of enemy strength" and would rather "to win the war by strategy, not butchery".

McClellan's overcautious caused his popularity to drop because he appeared to be doing nothing with the men and when he did fight, he lost the battles but wouldn't take responsibility for the loss. All the people wanted him gone even Lincoln who was very indecisive when it to General McClellan. Lincoln allowed him to lead the army despite the damage he was causing for the north;

The president reasoning for not replacing him was the general's popularity with the military men and that if McClellan was gone then many men would abandon their cause for fighting too. This time period created a negative image for Lincoln as the people realized that he wasn't the strong leader that they needed in the time of war and caused many people's support for the war to decrease.

In 1958, Mao Zedong started the Great Leap Forward program which was meant to start allowing China to progress and catch up to the same progress as developed nations. The idea for the program was that people would be group together and share everything from food, clothing, farming supplies,

and homes. In theory, Mao's ideas should have worked perfectly because everyone would be sharing their resources, but humans are greedy.

Many officers who were in charge of the communities started to take extra food from the communities combined with terrible weather lead to negative consequences. 36 million people were reported to die during the Great Leap program due to starvation and direct killing. The famine would lead to cannibalism, people abandoning their families, and civil unrest in the country. Officers were often violent to citizens who were caught trying to take food by torturing and beating citizens.

Instead of taking responsibility for his actions and policies and the effect it had on the Chinese people, Mao Zedong just attempted to cover up by blaming his party members. " As for talking of responsibility, [other CCP leaders] have some responsibility - but the one with the most responsibility is me... The chaos caused was on a grand scale and I take responsibility.

Comrades, you must all analyse your own responsibility. If you have to shit, then shit. If you have to fart, then fart. You will feel better for it." Mao isn't willing to allow himself to take responsibility for his faults but trying to share it on the other members so that his reputation isn't tainted.

None of the three leaders are perfect and all have faults that negatively impacted the citizens of their countries. All three were blinded by the perspectives because they thought that their methods were the best which created problems. Elizabeth wasn't able to see things from the puritans perspective, Mao wouldn't take responsibility for the famine that killed

million due to his policies, and Lincoln was afraid to dismiss McClellan even when he was hurting the North's war effort. At the end of the day, all 3 leaders were just humans who have faults but still managed to unite the different people during times of trial.

Ability to Unite People

Having to unite room of people and having them agree on one decision is something most people would dread to do. Yet, the three leaders were able to unite nations when the countries were at their lowest points. When Queen Elizabeth started her reign, she had to solve the issue of what to do with religion in England. When her half-brother had been king England was protestant but when her half-sister took over, Catholicism became the religion of the country creating a civil war between the two religious groups.

Elizabeth had the difficult task of unifying the two fighting groups with a settlement that would please everyone so that England wouldn't fall into a civil war; Also, she had to be aware of Spain and France who were Catholic countries and didn't want the two countries to attack England. As a solution, Queen Elizabeth created the Elizabethan Settlement which tried to be the middle ground between the two religion by incorporating two aspects of both religions.

The Act of Supremacy made Elizabeth the "supreme governor of this realm" which made her in charge of the Catholic people instead of the pope; Another aspect was that clergy had to "make, take, and receive a corporal oath upon the evangelist" pleading their allegiance to the Queen. This ensured that Elizabeth was able to make religious decisions over the whole

country and everyone would obey her orders. Catholic would be executed if they were found conspiring with the pope because they had pledged their alliance to Elizabeth.

The Act of Uniformity was the most important because it put all the prayer books into a common one where everyone could use and wrote it in vague language so that both Protestant and Catholics would be pleased. It also required that everyone attend church or they would pay 12 dollars for each time they missed. This act would unite all of England even if forced while other parts of Europe were engaged in religious war. In spite of the many challenges that she had to overcome, Elizabeth was able to unite the Protestants and Catholics and evade a war.

President Lincoln entered the presidency when the united states was in a tense state with the US beginning divided between the slave south and the free north. Lincoln tried his hardest to preserve the union but when South Carolina seceded from the union, other states followed the pattern. When the war began, the north struggled with military strategies and not all the states in the north were in support of Lincoln actions.

Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation which had many benefits for the north. " Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States ... order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free" . The emancipation proclamation made slavery illegal in the states that had seceded from the union which made the north happy because they had started the war for this reason.

Something important to recognize is that Lincoln only made slavery illegal in states that had seceded so that states that were in the union and had slaves wouldn't get angry and feel offended. The northern states now had a common goal that united them together of deafening the south and freeing any slaves being held. The slaves begin free was an advantage because the north had more men to unite the war and slaves in the south would start fighting the south giving Lincoln more time.

Mao Zedong came into power with communist party of China when China was fighting the war against Japan who was dominating all of west Asia and had it's sight set on China. Mao Zedong realized how important it was that China is united or get conquered. " The Chinese people now find themselves in the following situation: the Japanese aggressors have not yet been defeated; the Chinese people urgently need to work together for a democratic change in order to achieve national unity, rapidly mobilize and unite all anti-Japanese forces, and defeat the Japanese aggressors in co-operation with the allies" stated Mao in political report.

Mao along with his party was able to unite a scattered Chinese population to fight against Japan and won. Mao known that united China would be a threat to the world and would only make China stronger, so he counted to advocate for unity from the Chinese people. After the war with Japan, then communist and nationalists started a civil war over who would control China. Under Mao's leadership, the communist party was able to defeat the nationalist party.

10 years later, Mao stated " It was only after the Communist Party led the people in waging a long and arduous struggle that they were able to change to being united from being like loose sand, a condition which favoured the reactionaries' exploitation and oppression, and that the people achieved this great unity among themselves within a few years after victory in the revolution". Due to Mao's persistent fighting for a unified China was the country able to defeat Japan and became a strong nation.