

What kind of ending will we see to this political movie?

In the wake of the recent release of this year's Academy Award nominations, let's step back in time to 2002 when the movie "Catch Me If You Can" garnered more than its share of critical acclaim.

The movie, for those with a memory for Hollywood hits, starred Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks, and told – in somewhat embellished terms – the real-life tale of a New York con artist who masqueraded at various points in his life as an airline pilot, a Secret Service agent, a doctor, and a prosecuting attorney.

In other words, he was George Santos before there was George Santos, the bungling New York Congressman who wiggled his way into the House of Representatives by bamboozling virtually everyone under the Republican sun.

Shame on him – and shame on them – for their collective roles in taking lying and cheating to a new political level, one certain to cast a pall over Congress until the dirty work of Santos is done.

It figures to take a while, principally because politicians on both sides of the aisle have turned a blind eye to the word "integrity" in their professional lives.

Integrity, as British author and theologian C.S. Lewis once said, "is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching."

Unfortunately, much of what we've witnessed over the past six years has bordered on a horror show that has transformed the character of the Republican Party and degraded the politics of the United States overall, sinking to an unimaginable low with an attempted coup on January 6, 2021 with the storming of the Capitol by thousands of right-wing fanatics.

That day, which epitomized

lawlessness and destructiveness at an alarming level, was symptomatic of an even deeper problem in our nation, which somehow has succumbed to the twin forces of political depravity and dishonesty that continues to stir distrust and chaos in our system of government.

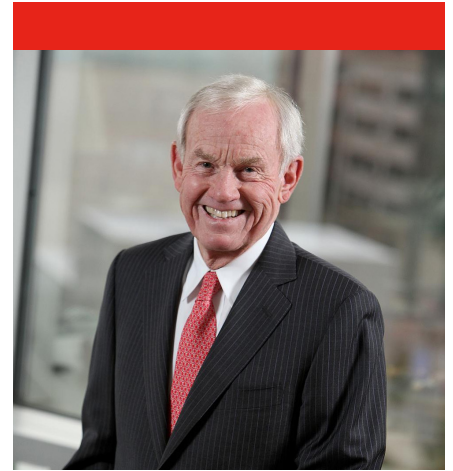
In a world filled with reason, what happened on January 6 more than two years ago should have been a rallying cry for constructive change to ensure that our democratic institutions are safeguarded and that individual liberties, basic freedoms, common decency, and the rule of law are upheld.

Instead, the events of January 6 have become a flashpoint as some hardline conservatives and right-wing media outlets have chosen to view the insurrection as something entirely different, framing it as a "legitimate political protest" by those with a "love for their country." They've even gone so far as to promise pardons (perhaps even parades) for those already convicted and imprisoned for their roles in the deadly assault on the Capitol.

With that as a backdrop, our country stands at a political crossroads, a juncture demanding that we make a sizeable degree of investment and commitment for the public good where honesty and integrity are held in the highest regard.

The two words, of course, are joined at the hip, and constitute the essence of the Primerus™ organization, which was formed in 1992 to help elevate the legal profession, both in terms of public perception and by the standards that lawyers take an oath to uphold.

Now, as we embark on a fourth decade of service, our mission has



broadened with the recent creation of the Primerus™ Foundation, a bipartisan endeavor to heighten the standards of the political profession where the qualities of character, competence, and trustworthiness should never be called into question.

The Primerus™ Foundation is designed to appeal to all political persuasions, intending to make certain that public servants come equipped with a deep and abiding belief in the concept of integrity, which should serve as a cornerstone principle in every profession. It is one of life's non-negotiable qualities that works universally as a catalyst for good, defining our willingness to take a stand for the truth even when it can be difficult and can lead to uncertainty.

Our goal is to reshape the political narrative, forging ahead in a positive direction to bring a sense of clarity and commitment to the task of problem-solving. Only then do we stand a chance at restoring the luster to a political profession that has lost its way amid all the noise and confusion of the current governmental dysfunction.

Best regards,
Jack Buchanan, President