

A liar comes home

Yesterday was Michael Cohen Day or should I say 'Liars Day' on Capitol Hill. Long time Trump lawyer and self-avowed 'fixer' of Donald Trump's peccadilloes and real estate transactions appeared before the House Oversight Committee. That committee is chaired by Rep. Elijah Cummings and, like all House committees is Democrat-run.

The hours-long grill fest of Cohen about all things Trump was right out of any episode of 'The Sopranos,' in which Cohen played the part of Trump's consigliere. It also had all the earmarks of a bad French film or any one of Italian director Federico Fellini's movies. It was a true comic tragedy that had its moments of high drama and sleazy salaciousness. Cohen was the embodiment of the 'Three Faces of Eve' - he looked sheepish, confused, embarrassed and downtrodden as he led his interrogators through the swamp of the Trump *familia*, stopping along the way to stick another sharp knife into Caesar's tunic.

Well-coached by his attorney, Democrat operative and long-time Clinton family friend and confidant, Lanny Davis, Cohen played the part of the alternatively contrite and totally innocent victim, perfectly. His 'deer in the headlights' vapid facial expression belied his true role as the 'enforcer' in Trump's army of capos and foot soldiers. The only thing that outdid his performance was the hearing itself, a manufactured and scripted event that had but one goal...to whack the President of the United States and label him as a mob boss that repeatedly thumbed his nose at the law and used any and all tactics to get what he wanted.

Hollywood couldn't have done it better. It had everything: sex, lies, fraud, conspiracy, crime and unbridled ambition. Its principal, the President, was cast as the ruthless thug that seduced, coerced or mesmerized all around him (like poor unsuspecting Cohen) to do his 'wet work' for him and engage in a multitude of illegal acts. By Cohen's own admissions, he threatened hundreds of people to protect Trump during his ten-year position as fixer in the Trump inner circle.

Cohen's problem was two-fold. He wasn't up to the job and he was a lousy lawyer. There was a third problem, too, and it is a condition common to all the Congressional Representatives that were grilling him: delusions of grandeur and an exaggerated sense of entitlement. When you combine all these things you're bound to make some pretty big mistakes...and Cohen did. He allowed his ambition and his loyalty to the man who fed his pocketbook and his ego to cloud his judgment. What happened was bound to happen...a three-year prison sentence to start in May, the loss of his law license and an indelible stain on his reputation.

A seat behind a wooden table in the Capitol was the next logical step for a man whose need for attention was only surpassed by his desire to help reduce his prison sentence. And so, the circus came to town once again, but this time it was cleverly timed to coincide with the President's visit to Vietnam and a summit meeting with North Korean dictator, Kim Jong Un. Why then? To embarrass Mr. Trump on the world stage. The Democrats succeeded in their quest to get Cohen to 'come clean,' play Judas and offer up the 'Don' to the wolves. The Congressional Record now contains more dirt on Donald Trump than all of his previous building sites combined. There is no question that he has been wounded by Cohen and company, and when he comes back to the U.S. in a few days, he will be bearing some scars.

We know what Tony Soprano would do if one of his capos betrayed him; he would make the traitor disappear permanently. Donald T. will spin Cohen's appearance before the Committee to his advantage. I can hear the President now..."The witch hunters have finally turned into a lynch mob, one that's feverously hunting down the truth and trying to silence it forever. I won't let that happen." What should those of us who have supported Trump in the past do with all this new information? Should we abandon him now that we've heard from his fixer or should we just chalk this up to another disgruntled, second-rate lawyer who flew too close to the sun and got his wings fried?

I expect that yesterday's hearing didn't change too many minds about Trump or Cohen, but I believe that it did knock Congress' approval rating down a notch or two...if it's possible to go any lower. The bottom line for many of us is that we knew when we elected Donald Trump that he wasn't on the fast track towards sainthood just as we knew that the air is thinner the higher up you go in business AND that in that atmosphere only the toughest can survive.

If Donald Trump has broken the law he should be punished. If not, he should be left alone to do the nation's business. God knows we've wasted enough time already.

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