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Trump's trolling and other adventures

Steve Bakke  January 20, 2024



As I write this, Donald Trump just took the presidential Oath of Office. Approaching the inauguration, there was a level of trepidation by many and grateful anticipation by others. Most of the anti-Trump forces seem to display an attitude of inevitability about it for several reasons. First, they've known for a long time that, most likely, neither Biden nor Harris would be President. They've had time to think about it.

For example, many of the “converted” democrats, and those “temporarily acquiescent,” had been uncomfortable with many ultra-progressive democrat policies. The many aspects of gender-bending foolishness, with its destructive effect on women's sports, and their open-border gaslighting that became such a bad habit, are examples. Some democrats had “second thoughts.”

The merits of two impeachments during Trump's first term, and recent creative legal tactics, unusual charges, ambiguous verdicts, and harsh potential punishments, is a debate for another day. But agree or disagree, Trump gained public support and votes from the process. From these legal battles a new term was born – “lawfare.”

As the facts about the democrats' presidential ticket became clear, a winning number of democrat and undecided conservative voters decided that while they may not “like” Trump, there was no significant reason to be frightened of him. The pre-Covid experience of relative prosperity during Trump's prior presidency reinforced that conclusion.

Democrats accused the Heritage Foundation's “Project 25” of being Trump's “formula for tyranny.” Project 2025 was falsely imagined in order to demonize republicans and Trump and bring fear into voters' minds.

Project 25 is an enumeration of ideas for a solidly conservative government, adhering closely to our Constitution. It provides a sense of a conservative design for community and societal standards. It prioritizes strong national defense, emphasizes family-friendly policies, and seeks to streamline government.

One may disagree with the document's priorities, but a modest level of research would establish that this is not a Christian nationalist playbook. It's no roadmap for tyranny, and voters came to understand it's nothing to be afraid of.

In the final analysis, voters weren't as gullible as democrat leadership had assumed. Trump wasn't a modern-day Hitler, and they knew it. The “storytellers” in the smear Trump campaign found themselves quite lonely.

Finally, It occurred to me that Trump's negotiating techniques demonstrated a form of “trolling.” Trump never negotiates by first asking for what he wants. He asks for much

more. In his book "The Art of the Deal" Trump describes his style, which historian Victor Davis Hanson has characterized as, when negotiating, "get excessive, and seem unstable..." That will gain the greatest value. Hanson's nickname for it is "art of the troll."

You may have noticed that Trump has been trolling several members of the international community in recent weeks. I'm referring to his comments about acquiring control of Greenland and the Panama Canal, making Canada the 51st state, tariffs on Mexico and Canada, and creating a "Gulf of America."

Shallow analyses of Trump's comments produced the accusation that our new President will go on a binge of colonialism, perhaps even employing the military to accomplish his "acquisition" goals. That's nonsense. While trolling, Trump has simply been telegraphing his predictably outrageous opening negotiation positions.

Our new President's minimum goal in presenting the ideas presented in those comments is to substantially improve where the U.S. now stands relative to selected important issues: trade agreements with Canada; assistance from Canada and Mexico in securing our northern and southern borders; increased control over the Panama Canal, so important to our national defense and commerce; and at least assume essential defense responsibility for Greenland because of its strategic location and rich natural resources such as infinitely important rare earth minerals.

It's important to note that China now exercises significant control over the Panama Canal and controls a large majority of worldwide sources of rare earth minerals. These minerals are essential to the development and manufacture of technology and batteries used in electric vehicles. It's important to note the Arctic region has already become a popular target for exploitation by China and Russia.

We should all hope the strategies employed by the Trump administration result in a stronger, more respected, even more successful America, both militarily and economically for all Americans.