

Thank the Lord Donald Trump Is Not an 'Intellectual'

by David Solway



I recently participated in an email chain with conservative writers and thinkers on the inexhaustible subject of Donald Trump. Some of my correspondents, while supporting Trump as a political champion, regretted his “coarseness.” He is, they alleged, rather too crude and rough hewn to comport with their ideal of proper presidential stature.

Now I can understand that if Trump behaved like Hillary, prone to [hysterics](#), outrageous and mendacious attacks on opponents, and perpetual grievance-mongering, one might regard him as unmannerly, unstable, and preposterous, as a truly “coarse” human being with a crippling behavior problem. If he had bevvies of mistresses shuttling to and from the White House while his wife was away, as did JFK, I could credit similar levels of revulsion. If he used the N-word as did LBJ or enjoyed sexually cavorting with a young intern in the Oval

Office, as did Bill Clinton, disgust would be in order. When it comes to The Donald, some proportionality would seem appropriate.

Admittedly, he is no paragon of genteel bearing, but he is a man who gets things done and is true to his electoral word, a [Talebian black swan](#) among presidents.

Trump-bashing is a national pastime, which is certainly the case in my country, where few people can find anything positive to say about him. Canada's most popular newspaper, [the Toronto Star](#), ludicrously asserts on its main page that Trump utters one false word in every 19.4 words. The entire apparatus of the paper's "statistical correlations" is nothing less than a system of ideological banality, probably the most embarrassing statistical adventure I have ever come across. One might apply the same ridiculous fact-checking calculation to Canada's sock puppet prime minister, whose ratio of false to true words would then clock in at approximately one in two, or to the Star itself, for whom a true word would send its editors into paroxysms of incontinent horror.

For the most part, Trump is regarded by his detractors not only as a serial liar, but, as noted, an unreconstructed vulgarian. To cite the [Ottawa Citizen](#), Trump is a "vulgar parrot," an "offensive" boor with "the vocabulary of an eighth grader" who is a "threat to decorum" as well as to democracy. He has "crossed into a new frontier of vulgarity and coarseness," we are told. Apart from the fact that one does not cross *into* a frontier, a phrase betokening a condition of agrammaticality, such criticasters – intellectuals, editors, journalists, talking heads – would have voted for Hillary and ushered in the very disaster they lay at Trump's door – namely, "the erosion of institutions through greed, malfeasance, apathy, ignorance and ineptitude" – every word false with respect to Trump.

These ineffable experts constitute our educated elite, but what we are observing, by and large, is a species of pouf erudition. After all, when canvassing the modern punditocracy, what can one expect of a clutch of lettered imbeciles insulated from reality? But they have spoken. “Trump’s looseness of language illustrates his failure as president.” He is “America’s Cusser-in-Chief.”

It is immaterial to get one’s knickers in a knot and criticize Trump for being coarse. This is as irrelevant as praising Obama for being suave – and we know the harm a silver tongue and a golden teleprompter have wrought. As the Jewish sage [Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Kotzk](#) never tired of repeating, what counts are not words and postures, but deeds. What counts is whether or not you “arise and do!” And Trump arose and did.

The economy is booming. Trade imbalances are being addressed. The mullahs are shaking in their boots. N.K. is on notice. The Democrats are disgracing themselves. The swamp is gurgling. Illegals are being rounded up. The longstanding promise by a succession of presidents to move the American embassy to Jerusalem has been fulfilled. The autocratic and duplicitous E.U. has met its match. Who are we, his ostensible betters, to deplore him as a “coarse fellow,” to cite the condescending remark of one of my correspondents?

No modern president has been without debilitating faults – Carter, who gave us the Islamic Republic of Iran; Clinton, who profited from [the sale of uranium](#) to the Russians; and Obama, who regaled us with scandal after endless scandal. As for the Bushes, they were wash-ups. Trump is several cuts above this dismal lot and represents what America needed as it steered toward the precipice. Whether one likes him or not, he is the kind of man who builds towers rather than digs craters. He is an 11th-hour president, and we should all be grateful for that.

Indeed, he is the only recent POTUS who, to quote Nicholas

Taleb again, actually had [skin in the game](#), a prerequisite for prudence and effectiveness. An American president who is not a career politician beholden to lobbyists, donors, and financial cronies and who does not live in the Beltway bubble divorced from the needs of working people, but someone who comes from the real world of business and industry, knows what hard work is, and parleyed an inheritance into a fortune through savvy and application, is precisely the person the country needs to reverse its destructive trajectory.

One recalls Calvin Coolidge, who famously said: "The business of America is business." The business of America is arguably far more than that; it is also strong borders, military strength, constitutional legitimacy, and enlightened social and fiscal policies benefiting the majority of its citizens. None of these goods is remotely possible under a failing economy, and Trump is a president who recognizes that. Making America Great Again requires making America prosperous again. As America prospers, rational legislation and sensible policy-making may then become increasingly likely.

This is how Trump understands his mandate. He is not an ideologue aiming to radically transform America into a constitutional mockery of its founding or to milk its resources for his own – and his associates' – private ends. He is a man who did not need to be president and who has no revolutionary or personal agenda to flog. He is, on the contrary, a builder and a patriot.

Were Trump arguably more decorous and polished as a speaker, more refined in his comportment, he might conceivably appeal to a larger proportion of Americans. Nevertheless, he is what he is: a no-nonsense character, no model of urbanity and complaisant speech, and not – thank the Lord – an "intellectual," a politico or a law professor. In this respect, his lack of elegant cultivation and courtly etiquette may be his strength. He does not suffer fools. He may be "coarse," but he is "The Donald," held in affection by the

people who matter.