

The Trump Movement, Despite Eight Years of Efforts To Stop It, Is Gaining Steam as 2024 Election Nears



by Conrad Black

The period of 15 months between now and the next presidential election is a vast chasm of what is now commonly called denial. For eight years, since the Trump phenomenon became a political force, a sequence of options has been implemented for removing it. It was initially a subject of hilarity and challenges from late-night television wits to see who could be more acidulous in dismissing the absurdity of a Trump presidential candidacy.

As the Trump electoral threat became less of a laughing matter, it was the subject of an unprecedented corruption of the intelligence agencies and the FBI and other parts of the

justice system in assisting the Clinton campaign to represent defamatory fabrications of collusion with a foreign power tantamount to treason in the 2016 election to prevent the Trump phenomenon from reaching the White House, and then from functioning effectively within it.

The former Bush (Senior) attorney general, William Barr, accepted reappointment as he was appalled at the illegal espionage conducted against the Trump campaign and transition team. He defanged that crisis but appointed a special counsel to investigate it under terms that assured that the political establishment was not significantly inconvenienced and that no political benefit accrued to the president whom he was then serving.

This fiasco had scarcely expired when a completely spurious impeachment was voted because the president of the United States had asked the president of Ukraine in a telephone call with dozens of other people on the call, whether the former U.S. vice president, Joseph Biden, and his family had committed financial improprieties in Ukraine. Mr. Trump was requesting the facts, not a conviction of Mr. Biden, who had boasted of firing Ukraine's top prosecutor.

And that prosecutor has claimed that he was fired because of that intervention, which occurred just as he was about to get to the unseemly (to say the least) relationship between the Biden family and the notoriously corrupt Burisma Energy company. In the circumstances the best way for the American political establishment to address the Trump phenomenon at that point was an impeachment that can now be seen to be completely fraudulent.

That frivolous and vexatious distraction was just over when the national and international public health bureaucracies announced that the Covid pandemic required the complete shutdown of practically all advanced countries. There was approximately a week when the public psychology that the whole

population of America was in the quarantine and lockdown together in a nonpartisan public health crisis, before the next stratagem for disposing of the Trump phenomenon surfaced: accuse the president of being "anti-science," because of a comparative lack of enthusiasm for a shutdown, and then, having voluntarily created tens of millions of unemployed, to blame unemployment on the president.

When Mr. Trump produced a vaccine years ahead of what had been thought possible and the country started to reopen, recourse was had to the amendment of voting and vote counting rules in the most closely contested large swing states, on the authority of Democratic governors or Democrat-dominated state courts and not the state legislatures as the Constitution requires. This led to tens of millions of unsolicited mail-in ballots being sent to voters, raising concerns about possible ballot harvesting and whether the ballots received were properly verified by voting officials.

In an election with 160 million votes where 50,000 flipped ballots in three swing states would have changed the outcome, and the courts declined to judge on their merits the 19 lawsuits brought contesting the legality of the voting and vote counting changes, Mr. Trump's enemies appeared finally to have disposed of the Trump phenomenon. An air-tight press consensus has been imposed dismissing Mr. Trump's concerns about the elections, but at least half the country has its doubts.

The confidence of Mr. Trump's enemies was braced by the breach of the Capitol on January 6, 2021. He was impeached unsuccessfully again, even though he had left office. There is no evidence that he deliberately incited violence or trespass. His offense, it emerges, was to dispute the validity of the election result and on the advice of counsel, to urge consideration of alternatives to confirming the apparent Electoral College victory of his opponent.

There is, though, evidence that Speaker Pelosi, Washington's mayor, Muriel Bowser, and others ignored warnings that there could be hooligans sheltering among Trump's supporters. Again, those in charge of disposing of the Trump phenomenon were complacent. About 40 percent of the country supports him still, and his enemies have apparently pulled the last switch: a series of utterly ludicrous criminal charges brought by heavily politicized prosecutors in kangaroo courts. It has not moved the needle with the public.

In the 30 months since Mr. Trump departed the White House, American cities have been in free fall towards becoming crime-ridden infestations of drug addicts and violent criminals. Uncountable millions of illegal aliens have flooded across the southern border and been distributed around the country at unsustainable cost to America's education system, social service network, and law enforcement organizations. The country has been commercially strangled by a green terror which implausibly purports to be saving the planet but is contributing to the reduction of the disposable income of the great majority of Americans.

Public education standards are crumbling; the academy and press are largely in the hands of anti-American elements. The status of the United States as the leader of the world's democracies is evaporating as an inevitable consequence of the deterioration of the fabric and prosperity of the country and of the ineffectuality of its leadership in the Middle East and the Far East, and its inability to move the Ukraine war towards a satisfactory conclusion.

The Trump phenomenon is so tenaciously persistent because the country is being misgoverned, and no Republican rival shows any signs of displacing him. The disposition of the Trump phenomenon seems likely, finally, and appropriately, to belong to the voters. The next election is likely to be a choice between the strength of the aversion to Mr. Trump, and horror at the corruption and abuse of the justice system and the

shocking decline of the prosperity and the quality and conditions of life of most Americans. Mr. Trump's enemies claim that questions about the legality of the conduct of the Bidens is "whataboutism," as if it were an illness. It also disqualifies President Biden from remaining in the White House for another term.

Mr. Trump's enemies claim he is unfit for public office and have broken many laws trying, but failing, to prove it; and they can't govern themselves. If the only way to get back competent government and clean up the rot, the answer of how to deal with the Trump phenomenon is finally clear: reelect him; then say goodbye to him at the rightful end of his term and find more unambiguously worthy candidates in the future. Recourse to illegality to try to deny office to candidates who govern better than their tormenters, who are themselves dishonest, has seriously damaged democracy, justice, and good government.

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