

Trump: Winning More Than Ever

The travel ban is a win-win proposition

by Conrad Black



Appearances are deceiving, and President Trump, although the launch of the 90-day travel ban was botched, cannot lose on the issue. His opponents, in the U.S. and the world, have absurdly overreacted; an arriving onlooker would imagine that the president had caused great loss of life in some frightful act of malice or negligence. He will almost certainly be upheld legally eventually, given the immigration legislation from 1952 and the constitutional powers of the president, which his six immediate predecessors have used. His abiding by the legal processes, if it does lead to judicial legitimization, will severely undercut his opponents. Even if he is ultimately unsuccessful, he has made the gesture, which the apparent majority of Americans support as a national-security measure. His opponents will bear the responsibility if there are any incidents that could arguably have been avoided if his measure had not been challenged. Senator Charles Schumer (D., N.Y.) and others will regret their

fatuous histrionics (“The statue of Liberty is weeping,” as Schumer himself pretended to do).

The whole escapade reeks of the sleazy Left, which, in the Congress, the media, academia, and the entertainment world, is almost all that is left of the fierce opposition to Trump. Jay Inslee, the smug, verbose, banal governor of Washington state, who was filibustering interviewers last week, went judge-shopping to get this silly stay order on Trump’s 90-day partial-entry ban. He found the inane, posturing rogue judge James Robart – a George W. Bush appointee, which the local Democrats trumpet as proof of his impartiality – who could be relied upon to produce a provokingly hostile judgment. Robart decreed that his ruling covered the entire country – quite a reach for a federal district judge.

The president should not have referred to Robart as a “so-called judge,” but the whole business is a frame-up. The Democrats must have had in the back of their minds the hope that Trump would impetuously ignore Robart’s order, as Andrew Jackson famously invited Chief Justice Marshall to try to enforce a decision of his Supreme Court. This would have enabled them to start already on the line they are bursting with impatience to raise – that this was grounds for impeachment. This too would be nonsense, but it would help them to ratchet up the righteous obstruction and start agitating for the complete immobilization of this unconstitutional billionaire megalomaniac who was assaulting constitutional propriety.

Instead, Trump has been more compliant than necessary, and gone through the charade of appealing to the notoriously flaky and leftist Ninth Circuit in San Francisco, and will probably have to go on to the Supreme Court, which could entangle this issue with the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to fill the vacancy on that court. Trump will get the political credit for trying to safeguard the country whether he is sustained or not, but can be almost a bystander between the raving

Democrats and a serious Court when the issue arrives at one.

The Democrats have flogged to death the fact that Robart was a George W. Bush appointee. Once in a life sinecure, judges often evolve unpredictably. Gerald Ford named John Paul Stevens to the Supreme Court as a conservative, and he eventually became one of the most left-wing judges in the Court's history, making William O. Douglas seem like "Hanging Judge" Jeffreys in comparison. Richard Nixon had a similar experience with Harry Blackmun, and John F. Kennedy named Byron White to the high court as a liberal and he proved quite conservative. Robart has metamorphosed into another northwestern liberal, seizing most opportunities to utter rabble-rousing left-wing battle cries.

Trump's enemies are reduced to screaming like banshees at everything the president does. The effort to represent the firing of former deputy attorney general Sally Yates for rank insubordination as a frightful injustice fizzled. The country yawned and these events are piling up as Trump charges through the opening days of his presidency. They have taken the bait again on the comment that the U.S. is not always innocent. Almost no story lasts more than a day or two, as Trump overwhelms the country with publicity that is given with animus by most of the media but that elevates him in stature even farther above his opponents than the natural preeminence presidents normally enjoy. Those who wish Trump well should be reassured that he has played this astutely, after an over-hasty launch. He calculatedly incited the idiocies of Schumer and many others and has virtuously been a pillar of legal process since. His losses of temper and lapses of civility are sometimes signs of his large ego, sometimes of business method exercised for the first time from the presidency, but they are also sometimes cunning tactics to exploit the weakness and stupidity of the Democratic leadership and their brain-dead clique in Hollywood and most of the media. The Democrats are becoming identified with the extreme left, like the 30 or so

ninja-like vandals who trashed part of the Berkeley campus and prevented a conservative gay speaker from appearing (as he had been engaged to do by the campus Republican association), and like the obnoxious women shouting obscenities at the police at the Greenwich Village campus of New York University.

Obstructing the confirmation of his Cabinet nominees is churlish and will not succeed. The facts are that Trump is almost certain to produce a superior health-care system than the shambles of Obamacare, and he has slowed down the process to avoid the chaos of repealing one system before the next is in place. He is almost certain to produce tax cuts for the middle and working classes. It is too early to say how his efforts to repatriate capital accumulations and jobs will go, but, because they are based on incentive economics, they are unlikely to be fruitless.

And the president is picking his opponents astutely. He will eat some of Wall Street's free fiscal lunch, but give with the other hand as he dismantles the moronic regulatory excess of Sarbanes-Oxley. A group of bankers was in to see him last week, including former ostentatious Democrat Jamie Dimon of JPMorgan Chase, who was rewarded for his fervent support of Obama with a \$13 billion fine over his handling of the (government-created) mortgage bubble. Dimon is now a Trump supporter, although Trump publicly criticized him for caving to the Justice Department without a fight.

The surest financial barometer of all of what very big, very smart money thinks is the revelation that that other great Democrat, Warren Buffett, has invested \$12 billion in the U.S. economy since Election Day. After only two working weeks as president, Trump is already chipping away at blocs of Democratic support, in the limousine-liberal business community and with selected labor unions, including some he knew from his career working with the rough building-trade unions across the country. He has gone a long way to rallying the conservatives, including many intellectual conservatives,

by nominating Judge Gorsuch to the Supreme Court in an elegant ceremony. As noted above, his confirmation (he was unanimously confirmed by the Senate to his current position as a federal appeals-court judge) might be necessary to get final approval of Trump's travel ban, but the Democratic appointees on the Supreme Court are a great deal more substantial as jurists than the poltroon who gained his 15 minutes of world fame by starting this controversy.

It need hardly be emphasized that the Obama policy of appeasement of Iran, and of consistent diplomatic defeat at the hands of puny Russia (which has displaced the U.S. in the Middle East with 50 warplanes and only a few battalions of troops), is receiving the ultimate reset. At this point, it appears likely that the Iranian theocracy, intoxicated with the smashing victory it won with the nuclear deal, will continue to provoke Trump with missile test-firings and promotion of the Houthis in Yemen and Hamas and Hezbollah in Gaza and Lebanon. This president will not hesitate to use overwhelming American domination of the skies to teach the ayatollahs a painful lesson, and everyone from Israel to Russia to Saudi Arabia will applaud him, as will his countrymen.

Two weeks are a very brief incumbency, but so far, Trump is building his base and assisting the Democrats into a cul de sac with the loonies of the far left, by presenting them with phantom targets – the appearance of vulnerability because of the calculated and flippant bombast with which he proposes intelligent and vote-winning policies and the installation of high-quality people in senior positions. It is difficult now to remember when he was routinely referred to as an exploiter and disparager of women, a racist, and a television egomaniac who could not run a two-car funeral. Also almost inaudible is the paranoid foolishness about “alt-right” extremism. It has been a grating performance at times, but a clever one, and it is impossible to feel any warmth for Schumer. It would be

impossible for the Democrats to find a Senate leader more nauseating than Harry Reid, but Schumer is no Lyndon Johnson or Alben Barkley, or even Robert Byrd or George Mitchell.

Donald Trump is well embarked on his revolution, and likely to be the most important president since Reagan. The intervening regimes (the OBushtons) all seem, as the last of those families, Hillary Clinton, used to say, "so yesterday." In urgent times in American history, the presidential office seeks the man. It has now sought a septuagenarian billionaire with an uncommonly assertive manner and no direct political or armed-forces experience, one who appalls many, was scorned by almost all commentators, and continues to skate rings around his doubters and to lead in the right direction at an exhilarating velocity. For such a deliverance from the disasters of the last 20 years, America and the world can live with the loss of a few style points.

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