

## Ignorance Is Dangerous –Duh

Ken Olson

In the 1950s, Adlai Stevenson was running for President when a student shouted to him, “You’ll get the vote of every thinking person in America!” He shot back: “That’s not enough. I need a majority!”

The last election saw entire campaigns based on the premise that voters are too ignorant to tell the difference between a fact and a lie. And now, Trump’s appointees (“the best people”) are notable for their lack of qualifications and some, even, for their desire to destroy the very agencies they supervise. Mainly, they are ignorant and corrupt enough to support Trump’s Big Lie of a stolen election. Such a high-office roster of the utterly unqualified should leave us “gob-smacked,” as the English say.

But to supporters, none of this seems to matter. It’s as if they were asked about the twin problems of ignorance and apathy, and answered, “I don’t know, and I don’t care.” To that mentality, Martin Luther King spoke the unvarnished truth: “Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.”

As usual, Trump is Exhibit A. He visited fire-ravaged parts of Los Angeles and wrote: “The United States Military just entered the Great State of California and under Emergency Powers turned on the water flowing abundantly from the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. ...Enjoy the water, California!”

This showboating message is deranged. The Pacific Northwest is “up” only on a map pinned to the wall. There is not a drop of water that flows from Washington and Oregon “down” to southern California. All their rivers run directly west from the Cascade Mountains into the ocean. Duh. Most of the time, our “leader” doesn’t mean what he says and can’t say what he means. Ignorance and its resultant confusion are constant with Trump.

His DOGE hatchet-man Musk, smart in technology but ignorant of humanity, brags about putting institutions “into the wood-chipper.” Often based on lies, he seems to enjoy destroying effective and caring organizations that, in some cases, have taken decades and even generations to build. How is this America?

Project 2025 has also been rushed into action. (Just before the election Trump lied, “I know nothing about it.” Vance wrote the Foreword.) The main author of the 900-page document is a self-described “Christian” nationalist, so the plan reeks of white male dominance and authoritarianism (read Wikipedia description). It is profoundly un-American. Heartless bigots and those who want less guardrails and more freedom to plunder the nation are applauding. Normal people will suffer greatly.

To be clear: the fact that Trump is in so many ways a dullard does not preclude his being cunning in what matters most to him: glorifying himself, dominating and humiliating others, and evading the consequences for his many wrongs. (No one ever accused gangsters Al Capone and “Teflon Don” Gotti of being literate intellectuals who loved Shakespeare. Instead, they were lowbrow sociopathic criminals; even so, those killers contrived ways to escape justice for decades.) History will record Trump as an ignoramus highly accomplished in The Art of the

Con, who, aided by complicit voters and enablers, lied and bullied his way into the White House, severely damaged democracy, and was an extreme danger to the entire world.

Yale historian Timothy Snyder writes that those now controlling the Executive branch are "...quite deliberately acting to destroy the nation. Think of the federal government as a car. You might have thought that the election was like getting the car serviced. Instead, when you come into the shop, the mechanics, who somehow don't look like mechanics, tell you that they have taken the parts of your car that work, sold them, and kept the money. And that this was the most efficient thing to do. And that you should thank them for it."

"Nobody's ever seen anything like it." The magnitude of the threat to our beloved America is shown by The National Bar Association issuing an "all hands on deck" appeal for every attorney in the country to stand against this administration's all-out assault on the rule of law.

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