

Trump Will Outlast Farce of GOP, Democratic Opposition

by Conrad Black



Senators Adam Schiff and Tim Kaine

Catching up on American affairs after nearly three weeks overseas has been a challenging cultural experience. In Europe, including the United Kingdom, coverage of American political affairs lurches between belligerent ignorance and Late Communist International malice. Fox News is displaced by the vastly less insightful Sky News, as they are geographic divisions of the same company.

Europeans generally make a distinction between the great and powerful nation of America and the caricature of somewhat unworldly people that they stereotype as Americans, from generations of rather wide-eyed American tourists and GIs through more tailored and sonorous, but uncontinentally purposeful, American business people and academics of more recent times.

Because the president of the United States is the chief of state and head of government –in Franklin D. Roosevelt’s phrase, “the head of the American people” – there is a natural tendency, accentuated by timeless Euro-pretension, to impute to the country the shortcomings of the leader, but not to credit the American public with the qualities of its most sophisticated leaders.

Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy were admired as the suave and sophisticated and cultured men they were, and in Roosevelt’s time Europe, having laid the leaden eggs of Communism and Nazism on the world, was so desperate that it was prepared to embrace a corn-cobbing American private as a liberating Adonis.

Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Ford, Reagan, and Bush Sr. were seen more or less fairly for their good qualities as well as their limitations.

Richard Nixon’s intelligence and Bill Clinton’s facile adeptness were admitted, though their shortcomings were somewhat exaggerated. Jimmy Carter and Lyndon Johnson never really registered. George W. Bush was not respected, and Barack Obama, abroad as at home, was greeted with excitement that soured over the years into disappointment.

None of it has prepared anyone in Europe or Britain to understand the current president and I return to find the U.S. public discourse reduced to the most unfathomable absurdity in my 60 years as a diligent auditor of it. (Fortunately, of course, it doesn’t matter what the Europeans think of the U.S.; it’s just the context from which I have emerged in the past few days.)

As the vagaries of intercontinental travel with connecting flights unfolded with rather more than their usual inconvenience, I was struck sharply by the screaming televised horror of the terrible tandem of Virginia’s U.S. senators.

Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., struck first, distracting the viewer from his stumbling inarticulation with a dazzling display of large white Chiclet teeth. He declared that the Steele Dossier – lest we forget, the document about the president in a Moscow hotel bed once occupied by the Obamas; the beginning of “fake news”; this splendid founding mission statement of the never Trumpers – had come from a “source the British, an ally, took seriously.”

As I was recovering my mental equilibrium and faith in checks and balances (as a political concept and not a banking expression), a haymaker came in from the other and equally obtuse senator, Tim Kaine, D-Va., the most forgettable candidate for national office in recent years. Donald Trump Jr., by meeting a Russian lawyer represented to him as having information that emanated from the Russian government and was damaging to the Clinton-Kaine campaign, may have committed “treason.” Dare we imagine this man as vice president?

I sat down in the airport-lounge chair, grateful to have been spared the secret weapon, the *pièce de résistance*, of the Democratic-loser/jackal-media alliance, the puffy-faced allegory of the otherwise inexpressible stupidity of his Hollywood constituents, Congressman Adam Schiff, D-Calif. My brief sigh of thanksgiving was premature; the swinging stroke of the scythe of official idiocy was inexorable. We are all as we are and not really responsible for our physical features, and the problem with Adam Schiff is what he says, not how he looks.

But as he swung from side to side to address the unusually wide range of the battery of cameras, and torqued up to maximum righteous claptrap (an exhilaratingly swift levitation), it put me in mind of Kafka’s description (in his novel *America*, after all) of “words rolling furiously over [a] bulging lower lip, a loose heavy piece of flesh which was easily agitated.”

Terrible, unspeakable, and indeed, to stick with Kafka, “nameless” crimes had probably occurred, though Congressman Schiff could not detail them because of the confidentiality requirements of the House Intelligence Committee (as if there were the slightest chance that that, or any, committee had produced an illegality as serious as a \$20 parking ticket).

At least Warner had said the Senate Intelligence Committee, where he is the ranking Democrat, had been too distracted arranging the appearances of former FBI director James B. Comey and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, which required almost two days, to adduce any additional evidence beyond other allegations.

I sank resignedly into my airport chair, trying to grasp the implications that the Democratic party and the U.S. Congress had been reduced to such an oceanic depth of political and media imbecility. These, after all, are the facts: The Democrats are still trying to pretend that they did not lose the election. They started with Trump-Kremlin collusion and are clinging to the threads of the corpse of this false concept that come from stupid but irrelevant events such as Trump’s son, son-in-law, and then-campaign manager responding to a suggestion that they meet with a Russian official source of damaging information about Hillary Clinton.

Their brains must have temporarily turned to mush to have gone to such a meeting without being accompanied by counsel and without putting a legal caution in young Trump’s e-mail to the convener, and in failing subsequently to volunteer that the meeting had occurred. They should have seen that it was more likely a set-up by a successor of the old Russian “crown prosecutor” (an office that has not existed in that country for almost exactly a century), but it is nonsense – nothing was said and nothing happened – so it’s the biggest, least flavorful nothing-burger yet.

Donald Trump has the strength and weakness of a successful

revolutionary. He took the Republican nomination by popular vote from the outside and took over the leadership of a party and headship of a government that are largely hostile to him. The administration is still infested with Democrats, though the diluvian leakage seems to have been partially stanchd by repeated threats of prosecution.

The Republican leaders in the Congress don't like Trump and he is fairly contemptuous of them, as part of the rotten system he assaulted, and they are losers to boot. But now they know they have to do something, hold their noses and deliver, or they go, at least as majorities, and the ineffable commander in chief drives on, like a New York developer dealing with new city councilors.

When the Comey uproar occurred, U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., would "not prejudge" whether the president was guilty of something. He couldn't get his healthcare bill out of the House without the president, and this was the best he could do. When the Russian meeting came to light, even Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., a fairly impressive partisan at times, left "matters of criminality to Bob Mueller." Truly, such a feckless lot of sheep deserves to be rescued from the wrath of the voters only when one considers the possible primacy at the Capitol of Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Schiff, Warner, and Kaine, at which point all sensibilities and grievances are soothed by a balm of Gilead, in this case a cold terror of what the Democrats could do if they had more than the little power to obstruct and defame that they are now wielding.

The Democratic party and the U.S. Congress have been reduced to an oceanic depth of imbecility.

Unless they have taken complete leave of their senses, the congressional Republicans will finally repeal Obamacare, resign themselves to working with the president, and build steadily through the spring on the heavy waiting agenda.

Economic growth has begun in anticipation of the tax changes that are promised. And the country supports the repulse of the eco-extremists who were going to save the planet at Paris by graciously imposing poverty on America for the benefit of foreign workers.

Illegal immigration, unsustainably high foreign-energy imports, enthroned political correctness, the tyranny of the teachers' and other public-service unions, the 25-year failure of policy toward North Korea, and the appeasement of the nation's enemies are all ending.

The jackal media, who after the departure from Washington, D.C. of the Bushes, Clintons, and Obamas are the most visible breakers on "the [great American swamp] white with foam," will not be able to restrain the flow of public support to the administration after the congressional Republicans puzzle out that pouting in silence while holding their noses and smiling is better than continued gridlock and death at the polls.

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., who was going to "drop [candidate Trump] like a hot rock" 18 months ago, and who is not only the husband of a cabinet secretary but probably the shrewdest Senate leader (except perhaps for Bob Dole) since Lyndon Johnson, will lead his fellow Republican legislators forward by the light of the grace of conversion (to the virtues of incumbency).

Mueller and his selected Democratic inquisitors can do as they will; collusion and obstruction are dead pigeons, and this ludicrous farce will only be a memory when the legislators return after Labor Day.

This article first appeared in [*The National Review*](#).