



Time to cut Trump down to size

Will the ugly American move into the White House?

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Frankfurt, Germany, 25. Feb. 2016 **A**s a political midget on the grand stage of American presidential politics, Donald Trump uses the big-mouth tactics of a tough-talking American businessman to attract the attention of voters. It is a unique phenomenon to experience such behavior from a potential candidate for the White House. Flattering himself, debating among the well-qualified GOP candidates for the country's highest office, is good for the ego of a man who has everything; everything except the credential to be president. Neither as a mayor of an American city, as a U.S. senator or as governor of one of America's fifty states, has Donald Trump prepared himself for public service. What qualifies him to manage the future of 300 million Americans toward innovation and growth or lead the world's western Alliance partners against the ambitions of Russia's Putin, North Korea's Kim and many more like them? Or is Donald Trump the man who can lead Americans into isolation and darkness and upset the delicate balance of goe-politics?

Yesterday, he said himself that he would need a "politician as vice president" to lead the legislative activities needed to implement "all the new laws" he envisions for the country. "*I don't have the experience to do that,*" Trump merrily states. This admission alone is cause for deep concern and underlines the nano measurements of the man, who would be America's chief law maker.

If the thought of being isolated, as a nation in a world full of dangerous challenges, strikes fear in your heart, take into account how many groups Trump has alienated during the first six month of his campaign: Politicians throughout the United Kingdom have called for a ban on Trump's entry into their county; a first in the history of our relations with one of our oldest alliance partners. The list of the alienated is growing but already includes women, Jews, Muslims, Mexicans, Vietnam veterans and former and incumbent presidents.

Trump's blithe abandon with which he insults any and all comers is amusing, yet it is a grotesque masquerade of so called *freedom of the politically correct*. Because of his ignorance of international relations, he gaily insults America's most important ally and biggest trading partner in Europe, calling Angela Merkel "crazy to let so many refugees into Germany." Does he offer any form of constructive solution – except to ignore them?

Strangely Trump has no word of criticism for the leadership in Moscow or Damascus, that is, Putin and Assad, who have and continue to create the chaos, death and destruction in Syria. Not even the outrageous bombing of Syrian hospitals and schools by the Putin-Assad military alliance has caught Trump's attention. Trump admires Putin and sees no difference between Putin's victims and people killed defending America. Does he have a constructive solution of combating IS? Everyone is waiting to hear it. Trump is already a shameful representative of the United States of America.

Trump's ignorance of geopolitics plays into Putin's hand, who is actively cultivating a strategy to divide and conquer Europe and separate the United States from Europe. Putin's blueprint for dividing Europe has been denounced in Germany and France. Donald Trump is a businessman and cannot be expected to be familiar with these issues. Yet his ignorance of them disqualifies him from the office of president.

GOP has always stood for, among other things, efficiency in government, free markets, and open debates. Trump would have the voters believe that in spite of a growing economy, near full-employment of 5.7%, the stock markets at near record levels, exports rising and gas and energy prices at record lows, that the country is failing. His manipulation of the facts or ignorance of them is remarkable. Others would call Trump a demagogue, manipulating the facts to rally those who cannot understand them. He would play on their emotions, their prejudices, fears and hopes to win their votes.

Unexpectedly, as a Republican, Trump is a proponent of big government and a police state. How big would the government have to be to round up and deport 11 million immigrants and to register all Muslims living within our borders; to say nothing of the implications for the tax payer, or the image of the USA around the world?

So how can this man win elections? He intimidates, insults, bashes, bullies, harasses and slanders opponents. Instead of offering solutions he offers a form of *entertainment* within an unusual, normally dry, setting. Seldom has a man with so few manners been a candidate for the White House

Assessing the historical dimensions, of Donald Trump's rise within the Republican Party, he is in violation of many of the humanitarian underpinnings associated with long standing American values reflected in the U.S. *Declaration of Independence* and *Constitution*.

The fathers of the Enlightenment, in the 17th and 18th centuries, such as John Locke and Adam Smith and philosophers from Germany, England and France, like Descartes, Newton, Kant, Goethe, Voltaire and Rousseau, all contributed to the break with medieval traditions, including brutality and absolute monarchies known for incompetence, prejudice, bestial punishment and imprisonment.

Thomas Jefferson used the reasoning rooted in the Enlightenment to formulate the *Declaration of Independence*. The USA has often been called a “child of the Enlightenment,” characterized by God-given rights to individual freedom, as well as promotion of wisdom, education, learning, knowledge and *humanitarian benevolence*, including social reform, generosity, idealism, honesty and unselfish acts.

With all this, supposedly, as part of his educational background, Donald Trump chooses to revert to using primitive prejudices based on xenophobia, race, color and religion to mobilize the basic instincts and win votes.

Why? He has no choice. He really doesn't understand the issues governing today's international relations or the U.S. Not only health care and social security and all the other national issues, he has no understanding of the power politics of China, Russia or North Korea, or of dealing with victims of climate change, droughts, civil wars, failed governments etc. Instead he relies on the primitive instincts which the Enlightenment enabled us to rise above in past generations. He is a demagogue riding on the backs of people's basic instincts.

Trump expects Christians to abandon their commitment to kindness and love of neighbor. How would you like to live with people who treat one another the way Trump treats people? Is he an example for us to follow?

Can democratic elections fail to produce the best leaders? Writing from Germany, it is a fair question. The history of Germany shows that Hitler was elected by a (manipulated) majority of voters.

For Americans much is now at stake. It is time to stand up, leaving nothing unsaid or undone, and to give our children an example of bravery and bold defense of the decent, honorable, generous soul of the United States of America.