

Is Trump Crazy? Personality disorder? Or crazy like a fox? By Steven Jonas

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There is much speculation about President Trump's mental state. Crazy? Personality disorder? Or crazy like a fox? I hold to the latter view. As I said then: "I think that this man is not out-of-control, ever. I think that he only appears to be, on occasion, and I think that that is planned." I make one exception to that observation. (I am a physician, but not a psychiatrist, and therefore I am not limited by the "Goldwater Rule" in commenting on Trump's mentation.) Low self-esteem is a common problem. NO self-esteem at all, not-so-much.

I do think that Trump suffers from the latter. Otherwise, why would he spend so much time telling us how good he is, and why would he have had his cabinet officers lined up for that cringeworthy (it's such a privilege to work FOR you) session that occurred some months ago. It's possible that the primary reason he withholds his income-tax returns, Russia connections or no, is that they would reveal how really bad a businessman and deal-maker he really is. But, as my favorite New York Times columnist Gail Collins (and Charles Blow, Paul Krugman, David Leonhardt, and Nick Kristof do run close seconds) likes to say --- but I digress.

Trump is rather a great dissembler, a great liar, and an absolute master of the WMD: Weapons of Mass Distraction (nothing new there). But case in point, the whole "NFL thing," while certainly being done to confirm his racist cred. with his racist base also has served, for some days at least, to distract from the absolutely awful job his government has been doing in re Puerto Rico. (After all, the Puerto Ricans may be US citizens, but they are predominately Latino and Trump's policy of choice towards them would be to "Build a Wall".) At the rate he is going there, this one may turn out to be a humanitarian disaster that will make Bush's Katrina pale in comparison.

So, if one takes a step back to look at Trump in the context of where he really wants to get to, he is indeed consistent in pursuit of his basic policies and programs: racist, misogynist, xenophobic, homophobic, Islamophobic, eviscerating the Federal government Executive Branch functions, returning the Federal Courts to their most Scaliaesque form, massively cutting taxes for himself and the rest of the rich, maintaining an aggressive foreign policy so as to further bolster the Military-Industrial Complex, and so on and so forth. Most supposed mis-steps have a purpose, and those that don't, like the Access Hollywood tape, can be easily covered up by some grandstand move, which may appear to be from an out-of-control place, but really isn't. A major part of this is the supposed "change of positions" thing, which if you look at what his central policies really are, is actually a mirage. Which brings us to Roy Moore.

Trump supposedly supported Big (and he is) Luther Strange in that one, although he did allow in at least one speech that he would be OK with the Alabama Cowboy, the Dominionist Roy Moore, too. Steve Bannon, supposedly separated from Trump but really not (they talk on the phone on a regular basis), made that clear when, in speaking for Moore, said that he, Moore, is Trump's kind of guy. (As I have said elsewhere, when Trump resigns the Presidency because Bob Mueller has gotten the goods on him, family, and staff, and Trump then proceeds to set up an outright fascist party, Bannon will be its CEO.) So, let's see about Roy.

Moore is indeed a racist, a violent homophobe (homosexual acts should be against the law [as they are in, say, Saudi Arabia and Uganda), and an Islamophobe (the self-proclaimed of "Constitutionalist" apparently never got to the "no religious test for office" part of the Constitution, you know, like in "Heller" that other "originalist" Scalia excised the first clause of the Second Amendment). Moore holds that "God" stands above the Constitution (and of course he would be the interpreters of what "God" is). Which makes him, like Mike Pence (and Ted Cruz, a Dominionist). Which also makes it OK for him, as a state Judge, to tell court officers in Alabama that they don't have to obey a US Supreme Court ruling if they disagree with it (which got him bounced from the bench a second time).

Moore thinks that the Declaration of Independence, especially the "Nature's God" phrase, is part of the Constitution. It isn't, for if the Framers, some of whom wrote the Declaration, wanted it to be, they would have included it. As for his position that peoples' rights are granted by God, in referring to "Rights" the Declaration states that we are all "endowed

by our Creator" with them. If the writers of the Declaration had wanted to state that it is/was "God" who did that, they would have said so. Indeed, as an atheist, I am perfectly happy with "our Creator," for I read it as the sum of the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology. And of course, if the Framers wanted "God" to be in the Constitutions they would have included him, her, it or they. Oh yes, as for the "Christian Nation" thing, the word "Christian" doesn't appear either. He also thinks that the 9/11 tragedy was God's punishment for a wayward nation (wayward in Moore's sense, of course).

Which brings us to the Republican Rightward Imperative thing, about which I have writing for years. With his views on the Constitution and specific issues as outlined above, Moore is to the Right of most currently elected Republicans. BUT, Luther Strange is no "liberal" Republican. He was right down the line with Trump and Mitch McConnell. Yet Moore, waving his little pistol around and riding a horse as if he were out on the range somewhere, went to his Right and beat him. Moore and his people, starting with Bannon and his number one money pot, the Mercer Family, have seen the Rightward imperative working for Republicans for years, as indeed it did for Trump himself, and just went right down that path, to victory (in a Republican primary, at least).

Well, one might say, criminalizing homosexual conduct and calling 9/11 a product of the wrath of God might be crossing a bridge too far even for what now passes as "mainstream" in the current Republican Party. Surely, many elected Republicans will stand up against that, won't they? Well, no. At least on the first day, most Republican Senators who I saw interviewed said that they "really had to delve into the issues and judge Moore's positions 'fairly.'" "Not that familiar with them," they said. Oh really? What are they not reading or seeing? Even the "sensible Republican" Congressman Charlie Dent of Pennsylvania, who will not be seeking re-election, refused to come out and condemn Moore.

This, folks, is the Republican Rightward Imperative in action. My-oh-my! What will we be seeing, when in a couple of years, Moore himself is the object of it?

Postscript: On the second morning after the Las Vegas horror, on "Morning Joe" Mika Brzezinski noted that, having had several Democrats on to talk about gun control, they had invited several Republicans to address the same issue. None would appear.