

Analysis:

Donald Trump's Terrible, Awful, No Good, Very Bad and Very Scary Horror Show

His presidency, to paraphrase Churchill, is turning into denial wrapped in resentment inside a blinding rage.

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President Donald Trump speaks during a news conference in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017.

One of the most shocking things about President Donald Trump is that he keeps on shockin'. Just when you think you've seen it all, it turns out you ain't seen nothing yet. Trump's raucous Thursday night press conference is a case in point, to put it mildly. Anyone who cares for the future of humanity could not have slept well after the Donald Horror TV Show was finally over.

The details don't really matter; it's the themes that count. Trump does not live in the same reality as the rest of the world. He either invents or is fed lies and fabrications that he embraces and then cannot let go. His perception of international affairs, including nuclear confrontation, is juvenile and shallow. He is completely lacking in self-awareness. He cannot admit a mistake. He cannot accept criticism, attacking his attackers instead. He cannot tell truth from falsehoods, reality from delusion or the difference between The Presidency and "The Apprentice." He is obsessed, to the point of lunacy, with the "reviews" that his performance gets in the media.

As far as we know, of course, Trump's situation isn't as bad as Justin II of the Byzantine Empire, who heard voices in his head and bit the heads of his servants; or Charles IV of France, who thought he was a wolf when he wasn't convinced he was made of glass; or Sultan Ibrahim I of the Ottoman Empire, who appointed the fattest woman he could find as Governor of Damascus; or Emperor Caligula of Rome, who appointed his horse as Consul and feasted on the testicles of his victims.

Trump may not be clinically insane, but he is definitely not normal. If anyone thought his campaign antics were a calculated act and that he would calm down after his election victory, the opposite seems to be happening. Incapable of overcoming unexpected obstacles or coping with inevitable failures, Trump persuades himself that nothing is his fault and that he is the victim of a vast

conspiracy. It is a vicious circle: the more Trump becomes defensive, the more media and his political rivals depict him as unhinged, the more he gets outraged and so on. His presidency, to paraphrase Churchill, will soon be defined as denial wrapped in resentment inside a blinding rage that is directed at the rest of the world.

It is in this context that one should view Trump's shameful refusal to denounce anti-Semitism or his steadfast denial that there was anything wrong with his Holocaust Day statement that refrained from mentioning Jews. Although he is certainly not "the least anti-Semitic person you'll ever meet in your life," as he has ridiculously claimed, and while he has paraded his anti-Jewish prejudices in public – remember, the Jews are great dealmakers who buy their candidates to do their bidding? – One can still give him the benefit of the doubt. Trump's problem, however, is that he cannot empathize with anyone but himself, and therefore cannot feel the pain he is causing American Jews. He cannot tolerate even implied criticism, and therefore he attacks anyone questioning him about anti-Semitism, as he did on Thursday, when an ultra-Orthodox reporter asked him a tame and legitimate question. And he cannot accept responsibility, apparently for anything, preferring to excuse himself instead with fantasies of perpetual plots against him.

Psychiatrists and mental health experts are now debating whether it is proper for them to diagnose Trump by remote control, but most are not disputing the very real possibility that the president is emotionally handicapped, to say the least. Frankly, however, medical knowledge or experience aren't necessary in order to diagnose Trump. It's crystal clear to most unbiased people who have been around for a while that his behavior is erratic, deeply disturbing and almost obviously incapable of handling the harsh demands of his job. Given that he is the president of the United States, with a vast arsenal of nuclear weapons at his disposal, Trump's Presidency could very well be the most serious threat facing the world.

Of course, not everyone agrees: 40% of Americans approve of the way Trump is handling his job. Many Republican politicians agree with him that the liberal elites and their underlings in the media are distorting reality and defaming the U.S. president, while others are so fanatically dedicated to achieving their ideological goals that they're willing to take the risk. And then there is Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and many right wing Israelis, whose hatred for Barack Obama and slavish devotion to the occupied territories have made them, to what may turn out to be their everlasting shame, into Trump's most enthusiastic cheerleaders.

This is a time when men and women are put to the test, especially those, such as Congress members, cabinet secretaries and one vice president, who can actually

make a difference. One thing is for sure: time is running out. Sooner rather than later, the president will be forced into a corner, possibly confronted by difficult circumstances or initiatives gone wrong, in which he will have to make a fateful decision. Given how he seems to react when faced with adversity, prospects for the future seem dicey, at the very least. Alarm bells are ringing everywhere, the question is whether it isn't already too late to put out the fire in time.

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Haaretz, Feb 17, 2017 5:40 PM