

## Veterans and the view from Air Force One

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What does Trump see when he looks in the mirror? Like others who check all the boxes for sociopaths and malignant narcissists, he sees himself as “The greatest.” He even has extraordinary bootlickers in Congress who regularly call for his image on Mount Rushmore. (When little, one of our daughters would call it “Rount Mushmore.”) Trump describes himself as a genius and sits awake at night obsessing over the Nobel Prize that he demands but can neither spell nor pronounce. (For years, he has referred to it as “the Noble Prize.”)

Einstein was never strutting around Princeton, saying, “Hey, I’m a genius!” and it was with self-effacing humility that the truly great Isaac Newton wrote, “If I have seen farther than others, it is because I stood on the shoulders of giants.” Any of us who have had exposure to mental health syndromes recognize that Trump’s combination of ignorance and hubristic self-worship is a derangement, the consequences of which are afflicted on the rest of us.

So, let’s imagine Trump flying over our country in Air Force One. What might he be thinking as he looks down on all those tiny houses and 342 million people rushing about like little ants? Most likely, he views us as serfs who should be looking up and praising his greatness. One of his narcissistic gratifications is that no one can escape having him in their heads several times a day. His never-ending compulsion is to be the center of attention, “either the bride at the wedding or the corpse at the funeral.”

Thus, we can surmise that Trump does not see a huge segment of Americans striving to make ends meet, dealing with tragedies, burdened with problems that sap their strength and in need of help, for he completely lacks the slightest ability to put himself in another’s place. Instead, he sees a citizenry he has bamboozled into electing him twice, and perhaps he can’t help laughing that his outrageous lies work so well. He seems to regard us citizens as gullible yokels who deserve to be conned, much as Mark Twain’s Huckelberry Finn said to Tom Sawyer about pulling off some scam, “Ain’t we got all the fools in town on our side, and ain’t that a big enough majority in any town?”

And when cemeteries come into view, what is Trump thinking, then? He has revealed his mentality often enough, as when he bantered (on camera) with the host of The Howard Stern Show, saying –while others were dying in a jungle on the other side of the world-- that avoiding venereal disease was his own “personal Vietnam,” laughing and agreeing that he should get “a Congressional Medal of Honor for Screwing.”

That this is evidence of an utterly perverted mind doesn’t even begin to say it. Making light of a deeply tragic and very problematic war for his own sick gratification is an indelible obscenity, a character revelation which, all by itself, should have disqualified him from any elected office. Supporting this grotesque character as Commander in Chief is a travesty, an extreme dishonoring of all those 58,318 names on that long grim memorial wall in DC. Some of us sat with grief-torn families and buried their dead. Christ looked at the multitudes with compassion, saying that people “were like sheep without a shepherd.” Trump looks down and sees “suckers and losers.”

Most of us have a few war stories: if not our own, then from previous generations. In 1945, my uncle was one of those who drove the Jeep for General George Patton when our Seventh Army pushed into Germany; he saw, firsthand, the results of Nazi atrocities. When my wife and her sister were just tiny girls, their father was on Okinawa in some of the worst fighting in the Pacific --kamikaze suicide planes, and all-- this in WWII, which Trump declared had ended on May 8<sup>th</sup> so he could have a Soviet Union-style military parade on his own birthday. All of us know that the bloody war continued to grind on with bodies piling up for another full three months and ended only when atomic bombs were dropped on Japan in August.

Thus, anyone who has stood in a cemetery with head bowed on Veterans Day thinking that Trump is motivated by anything even slightly resembling service to our country is captive to a delusion. Whether cruising up there in The Big Sky of Montana or above another part of America, the sacrosanct idea of “We the People” is the farthest thing from his mind.

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