


Substantial Disruption



We Warned Them

By Mike Tully

We warned them. At least, we tried to. “Don’t do it,” we said. “Don’t be a fool.” We argued with facts, but facts vaporized between our lips and their ears. We tried logic, but they had no interest in logic. “It’s too big a risk,” we argued. “The danger is too high.” They refused to acknowledge the hazard, although to most of us it was obvious. You simply can’t elevate an unqualified, dim-witted narcissist to the American Presidency without risking the national welfare.

Many of us had the same conversation with Trump voters. We would present our case against electing Trump, based on facts and logic. They would always reply with some variation of this template: “Sure, Trump is a (choose pejorative noun), but he (insert stupid comment).” I can share two examples. When I told my Republican dentist that Trump was a con man, he replied, “Sure, he’s a con man, but he gets things done.” I pointed out that Trump “gets things done” with lies, fraud, and bankruptcies that wound up costing other people millions while he slithered away untouched. My dentist then said a relative of an acquaintance claimed to have damaging information on Hillary Clinton. He had no idea what the information was, but insisted, “It’s really something.” No, it wasn’t “really something.” It was nothing, but that didn’t matter. It gave him cover for his inexplicable decision to vote for Trump.

Hillary came up in the other example. I was trying to persuade an acquaintance in an email exchange to not vote for Trump, arguing that it was not in the nation’s interest. He didn’t find Trump likable, writing, “Sure, Trump is a dick. But I can’t vote for Hillary.” The salient factor wasn’t that Trump was a “dick,” but that he had one.

The 2016 election was fueled by fantasy and misogyny. Some Trump voters convinced themselves that he would bring refreshing change, “drain the swamp,” and reform the federal government. They were the somewhat reasonable ones. The rest were driven by a belief that the presidency cannot be occupied by a woman and the most pressing national issue was building a wall to keep undesirables – dark-skinned people – out. Hillary appealed to hope, the way her husband and Barack Obama did. Trump, on the other hand, offered hatred and division and peddled them with enough fury to put him in the White House.

Our most effective argument against Trump was the “3:00 AM telephone call” scenario. What happens in the event of a national or global emergency? How can you trust Donald Trump to exercise sound judgment and leadership should that happen? It seemed like a strong argument. Hillary, like her or not, had been through the crucible. As for Trump? He [told Howard Stern](#) that sleeping around without contracting STD was his “personal Vietnam,” adding, “I feel like a great and very brave soldier.” As President, he has designated himself a “very stable genius” who knows more about various subjects than anybody else. In fact, *Axios* in January of 2019 pointed out [two dozen examples](#) of Trump claiming to know more about something than anybody else. Recently, during a visit to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, [he claimed to have](#) a “natural ability” to understand complex medical issues.

Trump's supporters loved his boasts, but the rest of us knew better. What happens, we worried, if this babbling egomaniac faced an actual crisis? Will he put down his Twitter app long enough to take the 3:00 AM call?

We have the answer. The coronavirus pandemic is attacking hundreds of thousands, killing many, crashing the global economy, and Trump is panicking. Witness [his manic response](#) to a "softball" question by NBC's Peter Alexander. Watch the video if you haven't already seen it. The self-proclaimed "wartime president" is a pathetic and frightened little man.

"By any objective measure, Donald Trump's handling of the coronavirus crisis has been a failure," [writes Eric Lutz](#) in *Vanity Fair*. "After hamstringing the government's ability to respond to pandemics like the one we're now facing, he ignored warnings for months." Lutz added that Trump "failed to take timely, adequate action beyond cutting off travel from China, and offered empty assurances to the American people that the situation was totally under control. Only after the virus dramatically upended American life has he taken any action at all, and even then it's been woefully inadequate: states and hospitals remain in dire need of resources; his leadership has amounted to attacking the press, brushing off responsibility, and casually mocking a 73-year-old senator in quarantine; and he is now poised to undo whatever limited progress his administration has made by pledging to restart the nation's economy before the coronavirus even hits its peak in the United States."

The latter observation is the most chilling. "We're opening up this incredible country," Trump told a [Fox News town hall](#). "Because we have to do that. I would love to have it open by Easter." "Wouldn't it be great to have all the churches full?" Trump said a few moments later. "You'll have packed churches all over our country." Just you, dozens of your (literally) closest friends, and a dangerous virus raging through the congregation Old Testament style. Praise the Lord and pass the disinfectant!

When people practice social distancing, so does the virus. Act like you have it and avoid infecting others. If people have been listening to Trump and ignoring medical advice, there's a good chance they have it already and are spreading the danger.

Trump voters thought they were choosing a President. In fact, the damn fools were voting for the [Mayor of Amity](#) and now find themselves in league with the shark.