



The Night Trump Became Presidential – The Speech



On the last day of February, 2016, 40 days into his Presidency, Donald Trump, the 45th President of the United States became ‘Presidential’, for the occasion of delivering his first speech to the Joint Houses of Congress. America and the World heaved a collective sigh of relief and praised him effusively for being ‘measured’, ‘restrained’, ‘kinder, gentler’, ‘conciliatory’, ‘keeping to the script’, etc., but most of all, for finally capturing that most elusive of qualities that seemed consistently to escape Donald Trump, just being ‘Presidential’.

Just being those ‘Presidential’ things, named above, was a big achievement for this President, who at most times behaved like a spoiled, petulant, vindictive, bully child, that consistently embarrassed everyone at family gatherings, except of course the relatives who delight in the coarse and boorish behavior of other’s children (*his far-Right base*).

The strange and mysterious thing is, this elusive quality of being Presidential seemed to come to all previous Presidents quite naturally, but unfortunately, to the chagrin of most Americans, and all of the rest of the World, till last night it seemed to escape Donald Trump entirely. But that being settled, that Trump is finally Presidential, we can move on to the ‘President’s Speech’:

Firstly, the speech was delivered in a much more polished and controlled manner than his previous performances, giving the impression that he may actually have prepared and rehearsed for this one.

Secondly, he did try to be conciliatory and only occasionally did his usually combative and abrasive self came out, in spite of the gravity of the occasion, like in the movies when an alien accidentally lets the real image slip through, when occupying a human form, before hurriedly re-concealing itself.

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Donald Trump started by condemning the attacks on Jewish cemeteries and buildings, and the two Indian immigrant engineers that were shot at by a ‘nationalistic’ American shooter who wanted them to get out of his country (*one of the engineers was killed*), being inspired by Trump’s anti-immigrant rhetoric to-date. Trump didn’t elaborate much on the condemnation of those anti-Semitic and anti-immigrant acts of racism and hate, and his delivery was mechanical rather than passionate, but it got the obligatory applause.

After that, it was a list of his campaign promises, the actions he has already taken and/or plans to take, to make ‘America Great Again’.

The big ones, of course, were:

Obama-Care: Donald Trump again repeated the oft-given forceful pledge to ‘repeal and replace’ ObamaCare, much to the delight of his fellow Republicans and less to the opposed Democrats, but again there were no real details as to what ObamaCare will be replaced with, except the usual refrain that he and others are working on something *really, really* good. The big issues of how it will cover *all* Americans with less cost, with possibly less revenues, was left largely to everyone’s imaginations.

Military Build-Up: This subject is a favorite one of Donald Trump’s because it has less opposition than some of the other more controversial proposals, even though the ‘Generals’ have made it clear that the U.S. Military does not need much of a build-up, and that the State Department, which Trump plans to gut to get the money for the Military build-up, is more important in their view to achieve peace in the World. But since Trump knows more than the Generals, and he is convinced of that, he is going ahead anyway, apparently with the biggest build up in U.S. history.

Infrastructure Build-Out: The other build-out that Donald Trump wants to undertake is a Trillion Dollar investment in infrastructure rebuilds in America. Roads, bridges, tunnels, airports, etc. that according to Trump are ‘all crumbling’. This massive undertaking, reminiscent of Roosevelt’s ‘New Deal’ or ancient Monarch’s public works programs to tide their people over tough times such as droughts and famine, is a good job creator, as Trump claims, possibly ‘millions upon millions of jobs’, but it will require a Trillion dollars, which are not readily available from Congress. So the ‘Grand Plan’ may not be that simple to implement. Donald Trump proposes to pay for it through government and private partnerships and economic growth. All these potential sources are fraught with risk. But Donald Trump isn’t the man to cross that bridge anytime to soon. Besides it sounds so good and gets so many kudos why spoil it with pesky details.

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Tax Cuts: Donald Trump is committed to the ‘largest ever’ tax cut to American Corporations, to make them internationally the ‘most competitive’. He feels that that in itself will be enough to bring good jobs back home to America from countries with far cheaper labour, perhaps resources, operational costs and proximity to the largest markets. He went on to reiterate, how great American companies were already staying in America at his behest, and were planning to invest Billions in new factories which would create ‘millions upon millions’ of good jobs. This kind of talk was pure honey to his support base and the Republicans in general; although some worried his protectionist actions may have adverse long term repercussions for America and American industry. But last night was not the time to fret about such piddling details.

Of course the expenditures on healthcare (*how much is the cost is a question mark*), Military build-up (*approximately \$54 Billion*), Infrastructure build-out (*a cool \$1.0 Trillion*) and then ‘massive corporate and individual tax cuts’ doesn’t at all square arithmetically, but then again it’s just pesky details, and Donald Trump is beyond all that.

TPP: Donald Trump boasted, although he tried to keep the boasting to a minimum even though it was obviously difficult for him; any way, he boasted that he had pulled America out of TPP (*Trans Pacific Partnership*) which according to him was an American job killer. The fact that some of the best brains in America, with extensive International trade knowledge and experience had negotiated that Agreement over years, to give America the edge, was another of those minor details that wasn’t suitable for examination at this time, or at any time. TPP was dead, he had saved future jobs, and he was a hero.

Drain the Swamp: He said he ‘drained the swamp’ by banning *lobbying* by ex-government officials for 5 years, and for other governments forever, but blithely ignored his ‘*swamp filling*’ actions of appointing *Billionaires and Wall Street bankers* to the most important *Government Departments* that put control solidly into the hands of the biggest swamp dwellers. Again, minor details, the Swamp was drained, because he said so.

Deregulation: He emphasized the decimation of regulations in America because, according to him, they stifled American innovation and genius, the creation of jobs, and made America uncompetitive, ‘a disaster’ in fact. To make the point, Trump talked about some century plus old Exhibition as an example of America’s prior innovative prowess, and went on to claim that since then, America has basically stagnated. It seemed to escape his notice that since then America had gone on to become the greatest and most prosperous nation on Earth, a slightly significant fact that didn’t seem to register at all.

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Also, a bit contrary to his and the Republicans goal of cutting Government to smaller size, Donald Trump has proposed to imbed special units within all Government Agencies who will monitor and cut regulations to the ratio of 2:1. For every 1 (*one*) new regulation to be adopted, 2 existing regulations must be cut. The monitors will be there to make sure of compliance to new rules. The cost and size of this additional bureaucracy to be imbedded into the existing bureaucracy was not addressed, neither was the seeming contradiction in the stated goals of cutting back.

Donald Trump did not address the potential damage to the public from gutting protective regulations, particularly in the financial arena and in the protection of the environment, which could impact their and their children's health. The potential damage to the public in economic and health terms was entirely ignored, even though examples of catastrophes in both areas are of recent vintage, as are the existing scars on the public psyche.

The implicit message was that if jobs were being created at the cost of people being taken advantage of by unscrupulous finance professionals, and at the cost of streams, rivers, ground water and air contamination, who cared, it was the price of doing business. And under Donald Trump (*he made it clear*) America was back in business of doing unfettered business, whatever the cost to America and Americans, and the World. This message warmed the cockles of the hearts of every hard-Right Republican and Steve Bannon, and froze the Democrats and every Liberal-Progressive in America.

Ignoring past mistakes of the deregulated financial industry which resulted in criminal activity by finance professionals, and market and economic crashes, and ignoring universally accepted science on climate change, is a Donald Trump, Steve Bannon, and Republican thing, and they certainly were all very pleased with the Trump agenda - *prosperity with pillage* - an ultra - Right dream "fair trade".

Immigration Reform: Donald Trump elaborated and emphasized his commitment, to insure immigration laws were enforced, and that America was cleaned out of illegal 'bad dudes', who were being expelled even as he spoke. Law and order were the big theme in the speech, and Trump singled out some victims of crimes by some illegal immigrants for mention at the venue, promising them they would not be forgotten, although one had the distinct impression that he would readily forget. But this was a show and they made a political point for him.

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As did the poor widow of the Navy seal killed in the botched Donald Trump ordered American raid in Yemen, whose father-in-law (*the Seal's father*) wasn't buying the glorification of his son as a hero but blamed Trump for sacrificing him in a badly planned raid that had not been necessary, except for the aggrandizement of Trump himself, trying to look like an hero early in his troubled Presidency.

Donald Trump and the rest of the lawmakers made an emotional and prolonged acknowledgement of the sacrifice of the Navy Seal while the cameras focused on the increasingly distraught and sobbing widow. Unfortunately the sacrifice was unnecessary and the wife would much rather have had her husband alive and by her side, than the adoration of the President, the politicians and the people; as would have the father much rather have his son alive than be proclaimed a hero (*the father is an armed forces veteran and understood Trump's real purpose for ordering the raid and refused to talk to, or be comforted by Trump*). Trump, of course blamed others for the raid, insisting 'they wanted to go'; and he had no choice? And it was planned by Obama administration.

And, he did not mention the innocent Yemeni civilians killed in the raid, 25 or so being women and children. Apart from the grotesque and ugly reality that those people's lives don't matter (*which in America they don't, as not a tear was shed for them*), this misadventure of Donald Trump's new Presidency was a very high price for Yemenis and America to pay, for the new President seeking a lift by looking heroic.

Political props (*people brought in so their story can be told as an illustration of a political point*) have become de-rigor in today's politics and every recent President has used them, including Obama. But in some instances, these political props certainly seem contrived, and the people selected as the props look decidedly uncomfortable being thrust into such public glare.

Donald Trump talked about further strengthening and protecting the law enforcement agencies, and the uniformed policemen and women that put themselves in harms' way every day. He of course didn't mention the people that have been victims of police brutality or unprovoked shootings (*especially the young black men*) and any new measures to protect them.

There was more, a lot more of Donald Trump marketing plan to 'Make America Great Again', but the material is too ripe for further eyebrow raising analysis, as it would stretch on to an unreasonable length.

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So suffice it to say that Donald Trump's popularity numbers will pop for doing what every President so far has done effortlessly, to act Presidential and read off of the teleprompter without undue stumbling. Trump managed to do that last night.

He was Presidential. It doesn't change anything and he will soon revert back to his normal self, but last night being Presidential was certainly something.

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