

Cowards in the Age of Trump

If Donald Trump isn't the worst president in the entire history of the United States, he's certainly a serious contender for the title.

There is not enough room in all of cyberspace to tick off his many offenses. But he is good at a few things. No one in recent political history has been better at bamboozling those gullible MAGA supporters who practically worship at his feet.

Back in 2016 he told them he'd not only build a wall to keep illegal immigrants out of this country, but that Mexico would pay for it. That lie, which was one of many, helped him get elected.

Ever since he lost the election in November, he told his most loyal supporters, again playing on their gullibility, that he really won the election – and it wasn't just any old victory; it was a landslide win. And his trusting fans bought that lie too.

And, as was expected, the story was amplified by the president's sycophant friends in right-wing media.

It didn't matter to his fans or his media toadies that the president's legal team made their case to some 60 judges, some of whom Donald Trump himself had appointed – and that he lost every time out. It didn't matter to the president's most loyal, gullible, fan base because it didn't matter to the president.

That's also why it didn't matter to the so-called analysts on conservative cable TV and radio. They're cowards too – fearful that if they don't pander to Donald Trump's loyal base – if they don't cover for his many lies they'll lose their audience ... and their ratings ... and maybe their jobs.

And when he whipped up the crowd in Washington with more lies and conspiracy theories about how he really won the election, about how the Democrats stole it away from him, about how he would never concede and how he should rightfully remain in office for four more years, too many in the crowd responded by storming the Capitol – at the same time Congress was counting the Electoral College votes that would officially declare Donald Trump’s opponent the next president of the United States.

Which brings us to something else the president excels at: scaring the cowards in his party.

When they went on television – Fox News, mostly – they condemned the rioting, which was the easy part. But one politician after another – with very few exceptions – refused to state the obvious: that Donald Trump was the instigator, the one who whipped up the passions of his supporters, the one who said, “We’re going to the Capitol” to “try and give them the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country.”

The “we” in “We’re going to the Capitol,” of course, didn’t include the leader of the pack, the president. He went back to the safe confines of the White House.

But Donald Trump isn’t the only one who bears blame for what happened. The cowards in his party, the ones who never told him to stop the chaos that he caused almost on a daily basis – they also bear responsibility for the wretched end of his presidency.

They were afraid to stand up to him when he mocked the heroism of John McCain. They were afraid to stand up to him when he suggested a female opponent wasn’t attractive enough to be in the White House. They were afraid to stand up to him when he made fun of a journalist with a serious physical disability.

A friend of mine emailed me saying: “Ted Cruz is pandering to

Trump's insane ego when Trump mocked his wife's looks, mocked the looks of the woman Cruz said he'd pick for VP, and accused his father of being involved with Lee Harvey Oswald. Hell, in Texas this would get you off on grounds of justifiable homicide!"

Time after time after time over more than four long years they refused to draw a bright red line; they refused to tell him to stop acting like a schoolyard bully and start acting like the President of the United States of America.

And what exactly was it that his Republican enablers were afraid of? They were afraid of Donald Trump's rabid base, the voters who would never abandon him – no matter what.

They were afraid that if they stood up to Donald Trump, the MAGA crowd would make them pay for their disloyalty. They would either find a primary opponent to run against them or if that failed they'd sit home on Election Day and let the Democrat win.

Yes, the GOP has a problem, one brought on by Donald Trump and his party's cowardly refusal to stand up to him and confront the loyalists who blindly trust and support him. So what to do?

Here's an idea for Republicans: Stop being cowards. Stop fearing the wrath of those rabid Trump supporters – the ones who will demand loyalty to their leader long after he's out of office, the ones who won't support you if you ever say a bad word about Donald Trump. Let them go and start their third party as they're already threatening to do.

The Republican Party will be better off without them. Like Donald Trump, they alienate more voters than they attract.

At the same time, mainstream Republicans should focus their efforts on a bloc that has voted for GOP candidates in the past, but abandoned the party when Donald Trump came along.

They should make their case to those educated, moderate, suburban voters – mostly women – who voted for Joe Biden because they couldn't stomach four more years of Donald Trump.

If the GOP wins them back, they can win elections. But it takes courage to stand up to a bully. Profiles in courage are always hard to come by, but cowards in the age of Donald Trump, unfortunately, have been plentiful.