

Why Did Trump's Top Republican Critics of 2016 Become His Top Apologists?

As John Bolton and others have explained, everything the president says and does is with reelection as his primary consideration. The same is obviously true for his Republican enablers in Congress when you revisit what they said about Donald Trump in 2016, as detailed in this excerpt from chapter 7 of the best-selling book, *A Warning*:

New Jersey governor **Chris Christie** said the candidate lacked the credentials for the nation's highest office....

Sen. Ted Cruz lambasted him as a "narcissist" and "utterly amoral." Cruz argued that voters could not afford to elect someone so unfocused and social-media-obsessed....

Rep. Jim Jordan, a leading conservative and one of the founders of the Freedom Caucus in the US House, wished Republicans in Congress had acted sooner to "avoid creating this environment" that allowed someone like candidate Trump to rise.

Texas governor **Rick Perry** labeled Trump "a cancer on conservatism" and a threat to the nation's future. "The White House has been occupied by giants," Rick noted. "But from time to time it is sought by the small-minded -- divisive figures propelled by anger, and appealing to the worst instincts in the human condition." Perry said the businessman was peddling a "carnival act that can be best described as Trumpism: a toxic mix of demagoguery, mean-spiritedness, and nonsense" and that he was running on "division and resentment."

Sen. Lindsey Graham... said he would not vote

for the man, who he called a "jackass" and a "kook." Those who know Lindsey understand that he wasn't using those words lightly. He meant them.

Talking Turkey



By JIM SMITH

Sen. John Thune... expressed reservations throughout the race, but after the Access Hollywood scandal, he said the party no longer needed its candidate. "Donald Trump should withdraw and Mike Pence should be our nominee effective immediately," he tweeted in the wake of the scandal...

Many other elected conservatives chimed in throughout the campaign, calling the Republican nominee a "bigot," "misogynist," "liar," "unintelligent," "inarticulate," "dangerous," "fraud," "bully," and "unfit" for the presidency....

[South Carolina congressman **Mick Mulvaney** declared Donald Trump] "one of the most flawed human beings ever to run for president in the history of the country"... Roughly twenty-four months later, Mick would become Donald Trump's third chief of staff.

The above excerpt is edited for space, but you can read it unedited at www.JimSmithBlog.com, where I'll also have some useful links.

Last week I wrote that readers of this column who support Trump seem reluctant to answer the question, "How do you feel that the man you support is adored by alt-right extremists, white supremacists, etc." Three readers responded, but

none of them actually answered the question:

Tom H. wrote: "First, I have absolutely no knowledge of those groups adoring Trump that you have mentioned.... It seems perhaps you may have somewhat of an association with them by thinking or believing I or any conservative would.... My research found very little disruptive actions or behavior that even aroused the Fake News Media. I believe your question is based on your personal hatred of Trump with no other meaning than to create your opinion and blemish the Conservative party...."

Robert L. wrote: "I would imagine that YOU might likewise be 'adored' by people whom both you and I find not to our liking.... I do not question you because of who likes you. Rather, I question you for developing such an inane theory...."

Tom B. wrote: "Your challenge to Trump supporters to justify their support of him in view of the far right extremists who also support him is a false dilemma... Just as support by communists and socialists and extreme leftist loonies who support Democrats does not preclude you from also doing so. Nor does it imply that you identify with or would associate with those groups."

These quotes, edited for space, are also printed in full in my blog posting of this week's column.

Email me at jimsmith@ecentral.com. These columns are also posted at www.JimSmithBlog.com and are archived at www.TalkingTurkey.online.