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The Chaotic Life of Donald Trump

A woman recently wrote a letter to my city's newspaper lamenting witnessing a driver reaching out his window to give money to a lawful panhandler on a street corner. As the panhandler went for it, the driver snatched it away and drove off.

That's a basic Donald Trump move.

The difference between him and that shamed unidentified driver is he mostly reneges, if only temporarily, to get the attention that's his oxygen. There's meanness, bullying and vindictiveness connected with those thoughtless actions.

Not for the first time, Trump at the last minute, without warning, unjustifiably pulled out of the concluded bipartisan congressional deal to provide additional financial relief to millions made jobless by the relentless COVID-19. The upshot: An unconscionable delay in helping hungry people who anxiously awaited the money to feed themselves and their kids.

Trump's primary excuse to justify his planned veto of the legislation was his demand that Congress give adults \$2,000 instead of the \$600 that's in the bill. How nice that sounds, eh? More help for the needy. What a guy.

Yet he must know that conservative congressional Republicans never would go for such a payout because of their pretend concern about the deficit. Never mind they didn't complain about the deficit when giving their friends, donors and big businesses a \$2 trillion tax cut in 2017.

Taking care of their wealthy constituents is what conservative Republicans do, except when Democrats are in power. That's when the deficit suddenly starts flashing its claws like a *Game of Thrones* dragon. Spare me the hypocrisy.

Sure, the \$2,000 gambit was a good excuse. It makes Trump look good to his followers only weeks before he exits the presidency. It's something he can use in his 2024 campaign, if he runs and is not behind bars. But it just was one more unnecessary Trump-created chaotic scene and another of his lies.

“Trump stalled on signing that relief bill solely for the purpose of theatrics,” Michael Bauer, 76, an architect of Santa Fe, N.M., emailed me in response to my query. “It’s empty but appealing heroics for his base.”

But, he wrote, “This was an act of desperation to influence the senatorial runoffs in Georgia and to cement his role as the GOP figurehead over the next four years.”

Bauer’s reference to Georgia was to the two Republican senators competing against two Democratic opponents in a runoff election scheduled for Tuesday.

The outcome could determine whether the Democrats take control of the Senate. It would leave current Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell without the power to obstruct Joe Biden’s ambitious agenda the way he did President Barack Obama’s. That also would give Trump a leg up on any clash between him and McConnell over who leads the GOP.

“I also think,” Bauer wrote, “that he (Trump) didn’t care one bit, and could possibly have been perversely pleased, that his delay in signing caused millions of unemployed people distinct hardship.”

Trump withheld signing the relief legislation for no other reason than he wanted more daily headlines and network TV reports and never-ending conversations about him on cable television. That’s what it’s all about – him and only him. That’s all everything’s been about for five years.

Proof? Just look at the continual lying about how he won the election and the repeated allegations about voter fraud and mail-in balloting fraud that never existed because there’s never been evidence except for isolated cases. That’s why the courts threw out his challenges to the election.

In another move, Trump vetoed the \$714 billion Pentagon budget bill. But the House Monday overrode the veto with a stunning overwhelming vote, Republicans joining in. They apparently have had enough of him, especially if Trump attacks the military, their budget favorite.

He wanted to cut a provision in the bill that gave a legal shield to social media companies. He doesn’t like them because he objects to their cautionary labeling of his postings. Just like a child whose favorite toy is taken away.

Trump has insisted the Senate adopt the stand-alone House-passed bill that adds \$1,400 to the \$600 in the second coronavirus relief legislation, a weeks-long demand of Democrats and now some heavyweight Republicans. McConnell, R-Ky., naturally, has balked and is trying to stall bringing it to the Senate floor by adding items to it, including the social media provision Trump wants.

As I write this, Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt, who has been pleading for weeks to give more money to the jobless, threatened to block a planned vote to override Trump’s veto of the Pentagon budget bill unless the Senate passes the new relief legislation.

“Let’s not muddy the waters: Are you for the \$2,000 or not?” he asked McConnell.

As for the panhandlers, they're active. They won an ACLU challenge to an Albuquerque, N.M., ordinance outlawing panhandling in a federal district court battle in 2019, which ruled the ban unconstitutional. Other cities followed suit.
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