



S.E. Cupp: GOP pols accepted Trump’s Constitution contempt

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“Disqualifying” and “un-American,” says John Bolton, the former national security advisor to former President Donald Trump.

Trump is “spinning out of control,” says conservative Fox News contributor Marc Thiessen.

“I’m at a loss for words — we need to move on,” says Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, who voted twice to acquit Trump of impeachment charges.

All of this shock and consternation because Donald Trump called for the “termination” of the Constitution of the United States, which he believes is necessary due to the “massive fraud” that was the completely legitimate 2020 presidential election that he lost fairly and squarely.

Call it collective amnesia, blind loyalty or willing ignorance, but the once-Trump-supporting-politicos-turned-newly-stunned-detractors who didn’t see this coming from a mile away sound pretty darn ridiculous.

Anyone shocked by the idea that Trump, who probably couldn’t recite a single constitutional amendment, or tell you when the document was written or why, would be willing to throw it out to soothe his own bruised ego simply hasn’t been paying attention.

He’s always been like this. So, congratulations, fellows. You’ve apparently just arrived at the conclusion that’s been obvious to anyone with a working central nervous system for years.

So obvious was this to anyone willing to see it that plenty of principled conservatives called Trump out early and often, even before he became president. I know I wrote countless columns and shouted warnings from the rooftops of cable news as early as 2015.

Constitution-loving Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., was so appalled by Trump’s lack of concern for these trivial matters that he called him a “delusional narcissist,” compared him to Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels and declared that “a speck of dirt is way more qualified to be president.” (He’d later go on to be one of Trump’s biggest supporters in the Senate.)

National Review editor Rich Lowry wrote in 2015 that Trump “has demonstrated about as much familiarity with the U.S. Constitution as he has with the Bible, which is to say, none.”

This is because in 2015 and 2016, during his campaign for president, Trump often talked openly (and ignorantly) about doing things that were — you guessed it — unconstitutional.

There was that time he talked about shutting down parts of the internet.

Or that other time he wanted to close mosques and create a database to track Muslims in the U.S.

Or those other times he talked — fondly — of Japanese internment camps and “Operation Wetback.”

And those times he suggested stealing Iraqi oil and the extrajudicial killing of terrorists’ family members.

Cool, cool.

A friend of the Constitution, candidate Trump was not.

But in case this was just speculative at the time, Trump would go on to prove us all right, making today’s “shock” at his “termination” suggestion seem laughable.

Over the course of his administration he broke with the founding document over and over and over again. He even openly mocked it from time to time.

“You people with this phony Emoluments Clause,” he sniffed in 2019. He was in fact sued for violating the clause by accepting payments from foreign and domestic officials who stayed at Trump hotels.

According to an accounting by the Cato Institute, Trump’s violations of the Constitution were numerous. He violated the appointments clause multiple times by keeping “acting” positions well past the statutory limit.

His 2018 steel tariff violated the separation of powers, as did his 2019 repurposing of military funds to build his border wall without congressional approval.

His 2017 airstrikes in Syria, without congressional approval, were also unconstitutional. So too was using his official Twitter account to block followers he disagreed with. As were his 2020 COVID-19 executive orders, which included overriding individual states’ authority to reopen the country.

When pressed on whether he had the constitutional authority to do that, he glibly replied, “I have the ultimate authority.”

He also talked frequently about making flag burning — protected by the Constitution — illegal, and kneeling for the national anthem a fireable offense. He wanted to overturn the 14th Amendment to end birthright citizenship.

This doesn’t even cover the abuses of power for which he was twice impeached. Nor does it touch his post-presidency efforts to skirt accountability, laws and justice for these and myriad other abuses.

Trump simply has no use or respect for constrictions of any kind, including and especially the very thing this country was founded on.

Yes, it's utterly ignorant. Certainly, it's appalling. And of course, it should be disqualifying.

But one thing it's not is surprising. No one who voted for or supported Trump over the past six years is in any position to scold him now for suggesting something he actually did in practice before, during and after he was president.

It was his total disregard for the Constitution that made many of us realize early on it was Trump who needed to be terminated.