



ENQUIRY

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A publication of the AHI Undergraduate Fellows // Free thought and discourse

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#MadForMadDog

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#ThanksNixon

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#TrumpsDebut

Mad For “Mad Dog”

By AMY ELINSKI
STAFF WRITER

Many of President Trump’s top cabinet picks have been controversial. Arguably, the least so is Gen. James “Mad Dog” Mattis. A highly respected general in the U.S. Marine Corps, Mattis earned a reputation as a strong, capable leader and a force to be reckoned with. He was confirmed as Secretary of Defense on January 20 in a 98-1 Senate vote.

General Mattis is a lifelong military man. He enlisted in the Marines in 1969 as a reservist — while studying history at Central Washington University—and in 1972 was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Mattis steadily climbed in the ranks, serving in operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the war in Afghanistan, and the Iraq War. Following his promotion to lieutenant general in 2005, Mattis assumed command of the corps’ Combat Development Division and later the I Marine Expeditionary Force. Later that year, President Bush promoted him to the rank of general, and he was given command of the United States Joint Forces headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. Mattis was promoted to four-star general in 2007, and in 2010 President Obama named him as commander of the United States Central Command (the armed forces in the Middle East and neighboring countries). Mattis retired from the Marine Corps in 2013.

His appointment and confirmation as defense secretary were met with tremendous approval in both the Department of Defense and the military. “Knowing General Mattis, I thought he would be a great choice,” said retired Col. Mark Cancian of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, who served under General Mattis from 2006 to 2007. “He relishes that role, the Warrior Monk, he thinks of himself that way, as the warrior but also the monk — the contemplative, the thoughtful.” Many suspect that General Mattis will counterbalance Trump’s unpredictability, and that

his military expertise will provide the administration with more of the experience it lacks in that area. Military members on Twitter and other social media erupted in cheers and praise when Mattis was confirmed. A Marine who earned the respect of everyone he served with, he had a favorable reputation for getting down and dirty with even the lowest-ranking soldiers in the trenches. “General Mattis is an expert and scholar in warfare—he’s a “Marine[’s], Marine” — aggressive, but astute. He leads

“... he’s a ‘Marine[’s], Marine’—aggressive, but astute. He leads by example—this is what people idolize about him.”

by example—this is what people idolize about him,” stated Marine Corps special operations command operator Sean Conner in an article in the Independent Journal Review.

“Mattis is a scholar, a humanist, and a venerated Warrior who has successfully led our nation’s most elite forces within some of our most arduously

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Thank You, Richard Nixon

By ALLISON ZUCKERMAN
STAFF WRITER

On Saturday, January 21, the Women’s March on Washington D.C. inspired millions of men and women around the globe to march in solidarity. As demonstrated by numerous colorful and clever signs, the protests showcased a wide range of issues, including Black Lives Matter, reproductive rights, and the environment. Though the causes and protesters represented were diverse, one issue — one man in particular — was present at every single march: Donald Trump.

From apparel referencing Mr. Trump’s comment that Hillary Clinton is a “nasty woman,” to creative signs with phrases like “We shall overcomb” and “Super, callous,

THANK YOU, RICHARD NIXON *cont.*

fascist, racist, extra braggadocious,” much of the marchers’ energy was focused directly on the freshly inaugurated American president. One sign called him “Twitler.”

Marches on Washington D.C. are neither a new nor an uncommon occurrence in American history. Such large, organized efforts, however, to protest not just the president’s administration or Congress, but the president himself, are a later development.

Much of the credit for such a march goes, in a way, to President Richard Nixon.

When the Watergate scandal broke in 1973 — and it was later revealed that Nixon used his

“... the American electorate has searched for a politician who does not seem like a politician — someone trustworthy and relatable, somebody one could have a beer with.”

executive powers to cover up efforts to wiretap the Democratic Party’s headquarters — it greatly increased the already substantial doubt and distrust among the

This Week’s News in 140 Characters

EDITORIAL REPORT

- Gavin McInnes** @Gavin_McInnes · 26m
Not only does Trump’s efficiency have me wondering what the hell Obama was doing, but now I’m dubious of Taft, Pierce, and Polk.
35 79 264
- Bill Kristol** @BillKristol · 24m
Priebus, Conway & Spicer sent onto Sunday shows to defend. Architects Bannon & Miller nowhere to be seen. The power stays in the shadows.
97 628 878
- Charles D. Dunst liked
- Ian Baize** @BaizedGod · 23h
The fact that Trump’s immigration order also bars green card holders = ppl who have been here for years can no longer get into their country
1 1
- Donald Trump Jr.** @DenaldJTrumpJr · 10h
Doing the right thing is difficult. Many people will hate you for it. This is the burden of putting America First. #MuslimBan #MAGA
238 424 891
- Bill Kristol** @BillKristol · 4s
I’ve been a (pretty partisan) Republican in DC for 3 decades. But today it was Democrat @sethmoulton who spoke for me, not @LeaderMcConnell.
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Trump’s Presidential Debut

By DAVID FRISK
GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Whatever else one may think of it, Donald Trump’s inaugural address was relatively free of clichés. It was also short on ideology. While hitting the bipartisan Washington establishment hard, the new president voiced a largely non-ideological anger.

“Liberals” and “progressives” who don’t understand this should be prepared for an especially frustrating four, or more, years. They’re used to Republican presidents who are much less aggressive and, in the case of Ronald Reagan and to a lesser extent George W. Bush, speak more in terms of principles and ideas. Trump focused on the people, on the terribly shortchanged condition of America as he sees it. It was in this spirit, I think, that he didn’t go into detail about the failures of our ruling elite. His address was about practical results going forward, which, if achieved, will be popular among the public. Again, if the Left doesn’t perceive this aspect of President Trump because they’re so angry about his objectives or even his tactics, it

precarious battles, and won," wrote retired Marine Capt. Eric Kirsch.

Throughout his military career, General Mattis was known for his intellectual persona and cool, contemplative, but never soft demeanor. Those around him saw his deep thought in action, as well as an unwavering drive when it was called for. Though he is sometimes criticized as being too blunt, Mattis's supporters argue that this attitude is what strikes fear in his enemies. When commanding his troops in Iraq, he told them: "Be polite, be professional, but have a plan to kill everyone you meet."

Despite the seemingly overwhelming support for Mattis, some opponents argued that he had not been retired from the military long enough to head the Pentagon, due to our country's constitutional and cultural tradition of civilian control of the armed forces. Federal law says that retired military members cannot be appointed as Secretary of Defense within seven years of their retirement. General Mattis has been retired for just four. In order to confirm him, Congress voted to make an exception, for Mattis, to the law mandating the retirement period.

Some have expressed mixed emotions over the appointment. In a conversation with one of our staff writers, a Department of Defense insider said: "I think Mattis will eliminate the PC culture. It does not have a place in the military. The military believes he is a strong leader, so there will be a morale boost with his appointment. I believe he will establish a more dominant presence with our military. I think we may be quicker to escalate situations where diplomacy was needed, though. He's called 'Mad Dog' for a reason. His tact may be a little too harsh for the position he's in."

Despite a few concerns, the general consensus seems to be that Mattis will make an excellent Secretary of Defense. His experience demonstrates extensive knowledge, and his resilience will allow him to balance Trump's headstrong tendencies, providing stable guidance for the military and other Defense Department operations. "America's enemies weep," stated Army Sgt. Steven Hildreth, "and all I can do is smile." People are going mad for "Mad Dog."

THANK YOU, RICHARD NIXON cont.

American people toward their elected officials. Some began to suspect that all politicians might participate in crimes like Watergate.

Watergate shook the American political system to its core. On August 26, 1974, for example, U.S. News & World Report reported that the presidential relationship with not only Congress, but also

the people, was damaged forever. Politicians now had an even stronger reputation for being seedy and corrupt and, as Harvard political scientist Richard Neustadt said at the time, those who sought a better image would need to bend over backwards to prove to the American public that they were different from other politicians.

The lasting effects of Nixon's disgrace and resignation were obvious not only in the 1970s, but continue to reverberate in today's American political culture. In the 2016 election, candidates like Trump and Bernie Sanders found popularity with their "outsider" status. Ted Cruz bragged about the fact that his fellow senators disliked him. Trump, in his inaugural address, promised to take away power from Washington politicians he said were reaping rewards to the detriment of the American public. Since 1974, the American electorate has searched for a politician who does not seem like a politician — someone trustworthy and relatable, somebody one could have a beer with.

Richard Nixon, more than any other political figure, changed the type of president we wanted, and he changed how we reacted to the ones we did not want. When he betrayed the public's trust with his use of executive power to cover up a crime, he opened up the presidency to a level of scrutiny never witnessed before. The public no longer esteemed the office or held it in near-mythological high regard. The president became fair game for more extensive criticism from Congress, the media, and the American people.

Before 1974, marches on Washington — like the 1932 Bonus Army march and the great civil rights march — addressed either Congress or the American public. When 10,000 Americans marched in Washington on April 27, 1974, they did so in protest of the president himself for his gross misconduct in office. On January 21, 2017, 3.3 million people in America alone marched to protest Donald Trump, his personality, his policies, his past sexual misconduct, and his presidency. The Women's March on Washington is part of a newer tradition of protests, one in which participants feel comfortable directly calling out the president and asking him to answer for his actions.

So thanks, Richard Nixon, for inspiring in Americans the righteous anger needed to publicly gather and demonstrate against our new president.

TRUMP'S PRESIDENTIAL DEBUT cont.

will be harder for them fight him.

Many must have found it hard or impossible to watch the events of January 20, preferring

to take comfort in the Women's March the next day. Those who did see enough of Inauguration Day, however, should have noticed Trump's respectful, even friendly, interactions with President Obama and other political enemies. My own takeaway, from this and other evidence, is that Trump is quite capable of avoiding unacceptable rudeness—and also that he gets an extremely important point across, which many people, on both sides, would do well to accept in

"Those who did see enough of Inauguration Day, however, should have noticed Trump's respectful, even friendly, interactions with President Obama and other political enemies."

their own political interactions: that he is dealing with real human beings, that opponents can be "deplorable" without being always and only deplorable.

I am in no way naïve about Donald Trump, having opposed his nomination. It's undeniable, for example, that he can be blatantly mean, crude, and heedless of facts or of things that people outside the most intense part of his political following reasonably presume to be true. If only those on the Left who hate or greatly fear him would be half as vigilant about such failings among their own leaders, which they are not. These leaders are often arrogant and nasty enough to deserve what Trump dishes out to them. Whether his own exaggerations are sloppy or cynical, however, he should drop them (except perhaps the harmless, often desirable, "America will be greater than ever" or "You'll get tired of winning" kind of thing, which sounds stupid to many of us, but

was probably no small part of his appeal to voters). He should not continue to claim a landslide in the Electoral College, which just isn't true by historical standards. Nor should he keep saying that illegal immigrants are responsible for Hillary Clinton's winning the popular vote, which is unlikely and unprovable. And those are just the simplest instances.

Whether the mainstream media Trump likes to bash are, on the whole, his enemies is a difficult question, since the term "enemies" has various meanings. But certainly they are biased against him, and often unprofessional in other respects that happen to help the Left, and thus a problem for him and his agenda. Trump should speak of them as merely that: a problem. Few people among the millions of Americans whose support he wants, and doesn't yet have, would disagree if he simply characterized the media in that way. Privately, many journalists would have to agree.

In his second major speech as president, whenever that may be, Trump might be well-advised to lean toward these partial conciliations—having planted his flag effectively in a refreshing inaugural address.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

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