

Commentary from Stephen L. Richards

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Yovanovitch's firing reveals several aspects of Trump's character, all of which we already knew.

(1) Trump could have removed her at any time -- all he had to do was send Pompeo a cable. But every time Trump removes someone, he wants to humiliate and discredit them -- usually by tweet and by smear, This is not how a democratic leader acts. Because a democratic leader knows that a personnel change tends to show instability and poor judgment, she will try to minimize any disagreement, provide a neutral reason for the change (spend more time with family, etc) and avoid hurting the feelings of the person who has resigned. She will also know that a person who has been let go gracefully is less likely to tell tales out of school. A dictator, on the other hand, cannot acknowledge even a reasonable policy disagreement and will brand the former employee as a traitor and an enemy of the people. The end result under a Stalin or a Hitler is a show trial and an execution.

(2) Trump is not opposed to corruption. He is corruption. He hangs out with mobsters, sleazy lawyers, and corrupt businessmen. These are the people he likes and understands. He has never denounced corruption in any country, except the Ukraine. He has never denounced any corruption in Ukraine except the alleged corruption of the Bidens. He is the pawn of a corrupt network of Russian oligarchs who use his properties to launder money.

(3) Indeed, Trump's fake concern about the corruption of the Bidens cuts across the stated thrust of his foreign policy, which urges non-intervention in the affairs of other nations, tolerance for their violations of human rights, and alliances based upon our supposed shared interests with Russia, Turkey, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia. But Trump is not even a dedicated practitioner of realpolitik -- he will sacrifice American interests for the interests of a foreign power if he or his friends will benefit.

(4) Like many commen, Trump is both cynical and gullible. I have some doubt he knew that Perry, Lev, and Igor were out to line their own pockets and wanted to take out Yovanovitch because she was a dedicated and principled opponent of corruption. But his gullibility makes him very, very dangerous. A man who can be persuaded that Barack Obama was born in Kenya and the DNC server will believe anything. And if he will believe anything he will do anything.