

Is Trump mad or bad?

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Trump's first few days in office make it clear he's either mad or bad, because there are no other explanations available for what is happening. But is it possible he's both?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2ETqhw9H7c?si=xdczG7qAndtW9b8G>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=7n46h-17c4d8f-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

Is Trump mad or bad? I ask the question because I don't know the answer as yet.

What is very clear is that Trump is worse than I expected, and I really had very low expectations. But quite whether he is literally off the planet with regard to his insanity, or he's off the planet with regard to the evil that I think that he is trying to impose upon America, I'm not sure.

The Bishop of Washington clearly was. She clearly thought he was bad. And in a pretty moving sermon that she gave on Tuesday, which Trump had to attend along with his Vice President, his family and others from the administration, she made it clear that he should moderate his views.

He should care about the migrant who is now living in fear.

He should care about the LGBTQ community, who are now living in fear.

He should, no doubt, care about women, many of whom will now be living in fear because Trump is going to remove their rights over their own bodies.

He is, therefore, a threat. And in terms of basic morality, all of which is based upon the idea that we should care for others as we do for ourselves, then Trump is bad. He is clearly wanting to impose a tyranny through fear upon vast numbers of people in the USA, and he's going to back it up with law.

He's already said that those who oppose his ideas about diversity and inequality inside the federal government, and beyond potentially, will face the risk of prosecution.

He's already said that those officers in the law enforcement agencies of the USA who oppose his attempts to deport migrants who do not have the right paperwork will be prosecuted.

He is using fear to literally oppress his opponents. And this is already apparent.

So, it's quite obvious that this is, in a very real sense, a tyranny. A reign of terror, if you like. Because what he is using is fear to drive people to change their behaviour. And they will, let's have no doubt about it. People have a survival instinct. Lots of people will realise that they have no choice if they want to continue in their job but do what Trump wants, even if it goes against every better instinct that they have.

So, there's not a shadow of a doubt in my mind that Trump is bad. He is doing evil. In a plain, straightforward, moral sense. Don't bother about whether it's Christian or any other religion that says that. I'm just talking about the standard that we all know about what is right and wrong.

And we all know that the bully, which is what he is being after all - he is using his power to oppress those he knows to be vulnerable and who have required support in the past, which support he is withdrawing - he is bullying those people, and we all know that bullies are thugs, and do eventually, of course, have their comeuppance.

But is he mad? I think that's also a question we have to ask. I watched with care when he was giving the second speech of the inauguration process on Monday. Not the first one, which he gave in the Rotunda at the Capitol, but the second one, which he gave to the people who couldn't get into the Rotunda.

It was a rambling, incoherent, vain, inglorious mess, utterly bizarre in the claims that he made. If anybody else had made such a speech - anybody else literally in politics almost anywhere in the world had made that speech - they would have been thought to be mad. Trump seems to get away with it. But is that because he's mad?

I contrast that speech with that which Biden made when he got to the St. Andrews Air Base on his way out of Washington and into retirement. It's always been said that Biden suffers with cognitive impairment. Maybe he does. But if you compare the two speeches, one was coherent and one wasn't. One was in touch with reality and the other was not. Biden was coherent and was in touch with reality, although he did sound like a very old man. Trump did not sound coherent and most certainly seemed like somebody who was out of touch with reality. Frankly, he seemed mad to me.

And I'd almost describe the way in which he is acting now with regard to - is it 200, is it more? - executive orders, as mad.

He's making declarations, but he hasn't worked out how he is going to deliver these policies into law. And a great many of them do require some form of legislative approval from Congress and the Senate before they can become law.

The Senate he can pretty much guarantee to give the support he wants. There is a Republican majority there, which is solid enough that he will always get his legislation through.

Congress, that's a different story. He has, in theory, got a majority of just five. Mike Johnson, the Trumpite, Speaker of this Congress, is clearly worried about whether he can carry all the Republicans with this Trump legislative agenda.

Why is he worried? Because in the US, they don't have a strong whipping system as we are used to, for example, in the UK.

In the UK, if Labour says to a Labour MP, you will jump and vote that black is white, then by and large most Labour MPs will jump and vote that black is white. In the US, that's not the case.

There is a long and frankly honourable tradition, in many senses, of members of political parties voting against that party and with the opposition when they think that is the right thing to do. There is much less comeback on them when that happens. And there are Republican members of the House who will decide to vote against Trump because either they have enormous majorities in their own seats, or their constituency parties back in the areas that they represent are not MAGA mad, or, because frankly, they intend to leave Congress in 2026 when all the House seats are up for election anyway. Whichever one of those it is, it only takes two or three Republicans to vote with the Democrats. to oppose measures that Trump is going to put to the House.

The fact that Trump has not taken this into consideration, but has simply passed declarations that put ideas into temporary laws, and which demand action now, but for which there is no plan for implementation, suggests that, as I was saying earlier, he may be out of touch with reality.

And madness is being out of touch with reality. It means you simply can't comprehend the world as it really is. And maybe Trump can't do that.

Maybe Trump can't imagine the fear that his release of the January 6ers is creating amongst those who testified against them. or the police who were victimised.

Maybe he can't imagine the fear of those who might now be denied American citizenship because that's what he's trying to do.

Maybe he can't imagine the fear of those people who are technically illegal migrants into the USA, but who have established a life in that country, paid their taxes, become parts of communities and who are now to be expelled to a life unknown.

Maybe he can't imagine what it's like to be persecuted for your gender or other identity.

Maybe he just can't imagine what it's like to be tortured for the fact that you hold moral principles dear.

All of those things suggest a disconnect between him and reality.

Is Trump mad? Look, I can't prove it.

I can look at the evidence and say that evidence does not look good for him.

Is he bad? I think that's beyond doubt. This man is doing terrible things with the deliberate intention of creating fear. If that isn't bad, I don't know what is.

Trump may be mad; he is bad, and the consequences are terrifying.