

It looks like Trump is MADA – Making America Dysfunct...

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Nothing Trump is saying, doing or enacting makes any sense – so is his real goal to Make America Dysfunctional Again – or MADA?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_Qo3Ff80wQ&si=qSEq-3C7o0bqYlw9

There is no audio version this morning: in fact the YouTube is audio only as I was not near enough to a video set up when I made this, but did have audio kit with me.

This is the transcript:

Donald Trump said that when he became president, he would Make America Great Again, or MAGA for short. But I don't believe him. I think he's going to make America MADA, by which I mean, he's going to Make America Dysfunctional Again. Let me explain.

If you are a good president, you deliver coherent policy that people understand and which can be implemented by those who you expect to follow the laws that you create.

Now that's an obvious statement of fact. You would think it was a tenet of good management.

It should be something that a person of Trump's age, who is after all approaching nearly 80, and who has claimed to be in business all his life, should know. But the reality is that he is displaying no sense of coherence about the policies that he is putting in place, at all.

Let me take a simple example. This is the case of tariffs on Mexico and on Canada.

On the very day that he came into office, Trump said that he was going to impose tariffs on all imports from those two countries of 25%.

He claimed that the countries in question would pay them, when absolutely everyone who knows anything at all about tariffs knows that this is not true. Tariffs are paid by people within the country which imposes the tariff, not by the people who are exporting goods into that country. And so, from the outset, what Trump said was economically incoherent. It seems that he does not understand the policy that he is putting in place.

But worse than that, to some degree - because the policy is bad enough in itself - is the fact that he has been utterly inconsistent as to what he wants to do with regard to these tariffs.

He announced them in January, and in February he said that they would be delayed, until at least April. So, instead of them being imposed during the course of that month, they were delayed and everyone who put plans into place for what might happen had to put those plans on hold. This is not good for business.

Then, having delayed the plans, he announced during the course of the first week in March that he would, after all, be putting these tariffs onto imports from Mexico and Canada and would be doing so in days.

And then, two days later, he reversed that decision and has delayed again.

Now, what's the consequence of this utterly incoherent approach to management?

Well, first of all, it is clear that Donald Trump is running a dysfunctional government. He does not know what he is doing, in other words. There is no joined up thinking. I hate the term - I believe it was popularised by Tony Blair and that's good enough reason not to like it, but it seems to be applicable in this case - because nothing that Trump does makes any sense at all.

Worse than that, what he's doing is actually diminishing the political value of the statements that he makes. If he really wants to deliver an America that is great again - whatever that might mean - then people have to believe that he is capable of doing so. But every time that he makes an announcement that he's going to do something, and then that he isn't, and then that he is, and then that he isn't, and then that he modifies it, and then he changes again - which is exactly what has been happening with regard to these tariffs - he diminishes the value of what he has to say.

Those people who believe in him will begin to have doubt.

Those who do not believe in him will realise that they were right all along and that this man is a charlatan in charge of a country of which he has no comprehension as to the means of management.

And let's also just stand back for a moment and think about this with regard to taxation.

If we go back to 1776 - and I am not talking about the fact that the USA became independent in that year - I am going back to 1776 because that was the year in which Adam Smith - generally recognised to be the first economist in the world - published his book, *The Wealth of Nations*. And in that, he published what he called the Four Tenets of Taxation.

Now, there are reasons to doubt whether he got those tenets right because they are too vague for use in the modern world. But one of them certainly stands up to scrutiny. And that was that taxes should be predictable, or certain. And what he meant was that the person who is expected to pay the tax should know what that tax is and be able to plan for it accordingly.

And I think that's right. There is an absolute necessity when it comes to taxation to be transparent about the reasons for a tax, transparent about who will pay the tax, transparent about why the tax is being imposed, with transparency about the benefits of the tax for the society on which it is being charged. These aspects of transparency are key to a good tax system, and I've done a lot of work on this issue over the years.

But what Trump is doing is ignoring all of those factors. He's, in fact, ignoring the tenets of taxation that were put forward by Adam Smith, to which most of his economic advisors would, I suspect, subscribe.

Instead, what he's doing is playing games with the taxation system for supposed political advantage.

He's not taking people with him. And remember, that all taxation in a democracy is ultimately by consent. People have to agree to be taxed.

He is not consulting people.

He is not engaging people.

He is alienating people with this tax and all along he's doing everything to undermine the functionality of his government.

And that's precisely why I say what Trump is doing is Making America Dysfunctional Again or MADA.

And this is the way in which I see everything progressing with regard to his administration.

There is no sign that there is actually a plan in what he is doing, unless it is to create chaos.

But out of that chaos, what does he want?

Is it that he sees that this is the opportunity for the vulture capitalists to come in and to claim assets and to therefore take advantage of the situation of that chaos to become oligarchs with supreme wealth - the sort of situation that happened in Russia in around 1990, after all?

Or is it that he simply wants to destroy democracy?

Those are the only two logical conclusions that you can draw from his behaviour.

But maybe we shouldn't even be logical.

Maybe Trump is just dysfunctional.

Maybe he doesn't know what he is doing.

Maybe he is just flailing around, wondering what to do next. Letting Musk have his say. Destroying everything in sight. Creating uncertainty and deliberate chaos. So that mayhem will follow, from which he takes some sort of totally dysfunctional pleasure.

Whatever it is, Trump is failing the people of the USA.

He's failing the people of Canada and Mexico.

He's failing the people of the world.

He's just failing.

It's as simple as that.

Trump is a dysfunctional president, creating a dysfunctional economy that will ultimately lead to a dysfunctional state. Trump is Making America Dysfunctional Again.