

July 23, 2019

WASHINGTON EXAMINER

Oh, How Europe Hates Republican Presidents

By Matt A. Mayer

The revelation of U.K. Ambassador Kim Darroch's view on President Trump is a timely reminder of how biased Europe is against the American Right.

For people who deem themselves to be sophisticated and nuanced, European leaders, their followers, and the European media are little more than sophomoric and predictable when it comes to judging U.S. presidents. Darroch's opinions aren't problematic because they are negative towards Trump; rather, they are problematic because they are utterly predictable and therefore contain little useful information for U.K. leaders.

I've spent a good deal of time over the last 15 years working with Europeans, spending time in Europe, advising Europeans across the continent, and hosting European media members in the U.S. during presidential and midterm elections. That extensive exposure to European elites has led me to these conclusions.

Over the last 40 years, the U.S. has elected six presidents, four Republicans and two Democrats. With the exception of George H.W. Bush, who presided over Ronald Reagan's third term and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Europe's knee-jerk reaction to the remaining U.S. presidents has fit too nicely into two categories.

Specifically, if the U.S. president was a registered Democrat like Bill Clinton or Barack Obama, Europe swooned with praise over his election and found little to fault in his presidency. If, however, the U.S. president was a registered Republican like Reagan, George W. Bush, or Trump, then Europe predicted the end of the world due to his election and found little to praise in his presidency. The same goes for those men and women who ran, but lost. Democrats Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, Michael Dukakis, Al Gore, John Kerry, and Hillary Clinton were all deemed superior candidates in Europe; Republicans Bob Dole, John McCain (the pre-anti-Trump version), and Mitt Romney were viewed as threats to the world order.

Obama's selection to receive the Nobel Peace Prize before he even did anything as president is the prime example of European irrationality over Democratic presidents. Yes, of course, Obama's election to the presidency was historic, but the world didn't become more peaceful by that election. Its mildly coincidental that Carter and Gore also got Nobel Peace Prizes for failing to secure the peace, yet Reagan and Bush 41 received no accolades for ending the Cold War and defeating the Soviet Union, thereby freeing tens of millions from the yoke of communism and ushering in an era of relative global

peace.

Moreover, Europeans gush over the intellectual prowess of Democratic U.S. presidents despite little evidence that figures like Clinton or Obama are mental giants. In stark contrast, Republican presidents are always deemed dimwitted despite as much or more evidence of their intellectual prowess. For every Bush 43 verbal slip, there is an Obama gaffe to match. Except for Midwesterner Reagan who went to a small Illinois college, the rest attended Ivy League schools with the elite of America. Europeans can quibble over how each got in or how he did once in, but, again, the quibbling always ends up with the Democrat being brilliant and deserving and the Republican being dumb and privileged.

Finally, on the issue of foreign policy, Europeans believe Democratic presidents are always reasoned peacemakers who fully understand the delicate balance of the international order and the importance of supranational organizations. They also believe Republican presidents are reckless cowboys, warmongers, and heavy-handed dolts incapable of comprehending how to navigate the international stage and who wrongfully disdains global groups.

Yet, it was Obama who used drones to kill so many, including Americans abroad without due process. And it is Trump trying to extricate America from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Trump's efforts to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons (it didn't cease trying to after signing a worthless deal with Obama) and to bring North Korea into the 21st century should be applauded. Instead, Europeans charge the anti-interventionist Trump wants a war with Iran (read: they want to protect their corporate contracts with Iran) and belittle every move he makes to defang Kim Jong Un.

No matter how the coin lands in Europe, Democrats always win, and Republicans always lose. It just isn't possible that every Democratic U.S. president is great and every Republican president is terrible. That overly simplistic European view is boring, old, and beyond ready for the ash heap of history.

Perhaps the transatlantic alliance would be stronger if Europeans stopped worshipping Democratic presidents and denigrating Republican presidents. Such caricatures are good for movies, perhaps, but not for allies.

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