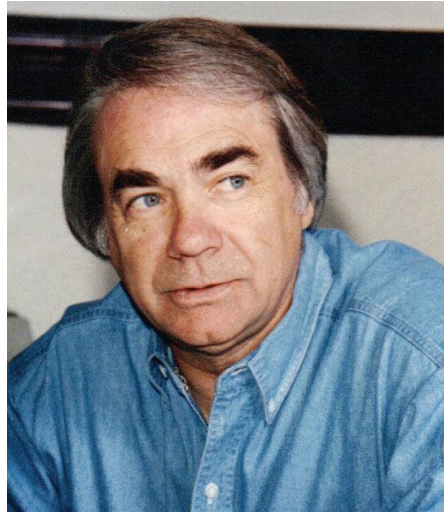


What's the end game of Trump's desperation?

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Despite having failed to prevail in any consequential legal challenge to overturn the presidential election, President Trump and his team of conspiracy theorist attorneys — egged on by hardcore supporters and advisers, members of Congress and an element of the media — have continued to insist he was re-elected overwhelmingly and his victory stolen by massive fraud and foreign interference.

Even the most devoted Trump disciple must have concluded by now that the Biden Administration will assume office Jan. 20 and the ex-president will retire to Florida to plot a takeover of the Republican Party and his comeback in 2024.

Given the apparently pointless strategy of perseverance, it is reasonable to ask: “What is the end game here?”

Any hope that the Supreme Court will agree with the president and set aside the election in whole or in part vanished long ago.

The bizarre and dangerous demands that martial law be invoked, the Constitution suspended and Trump continue in office were quickly consigned to the loony bin where they belonged.

Even a nascent movement to block the Congress from exercising its Constitutional duty to certify the election was dismissed by Republican Party leaders horrified at the prospect of becoming party to what amounts to a coup to seize power, a turn of events normally reserved for “Mission Impossible” films set in a banana republic.

Might the end game be a Trumpian strategy to assert a dominating influence over the yet to be written history of the 2020 presidential election?

Could the goal be to assure the Trump view of the election – fraud-riddled and worthy of a RICO violation – be given attention and veracity equal to the Biden view of a victory given him by a nation weary of the tumult, chaos and muddled policies of the past four years?

Trump is an individual obsessed with the acclaim of others, indulging in self-praise at every opportunity even when demonstrably unrealistic.

From his insistence that the audience for his inauguration in 2017 was the largest in history to his repeated claim that he accomplished more on behalf of African Americans than Abraham Lincoln, Trump lifted exaggeration and embellishment to new heights.

He thrives on the roar of the crowd, the chants of support from campaign audiences and the crush of television cameras following his every move while recording his every utterance.

His need for attention and adulation is the equivalent of the human species need for oxygen.

He gleefully and shamelessly diminishes his opponents by hanging derogatory nicknames on them. His vocabulary is stuffed with one- or two-word descriptions of the intellectual shortcomings of his critics or anyone who disagrees with him.

It is not at all difficult, then, that, given his history and personal pathology, that defeat at the hands of Joe Biden — the highest and most public rejection of his career — was so devastating and drew the intensity of vitriol embodied in his reaction.

Responding by creating a mythology for academics and scholars to study and accept in their works of history fits neatly into Trump's obsession with bending reality to his will.

The ongoing legal challenges to his failed re-election effort are an integral part of that strategy.

It is crucial to Trump's self-esteem to insert doubts about the legitimacy of Biden's election into the historical record. It is equally important to him that his defeat be presented as a classic case of victimization, that sinister forces at play robbed him of his rightful due and punished millions of Americans who cast votes for him only to see their desires stricken.

A steady stream of litigation based on anecdotal evidence and affidavits alleging firsthand knowledge of illegal behavior by election officials is necessary to maintain the narrative that Trump was cheated out of a victory that he earned and deserved.

The greater the attention to the Trump attorneys' legal maneuvering and arguments, the greater their credibility in the eyes of historians who, it is hoped, will accord it equal weight with the Biden narrative.

Seventy-five years ago, England's Prime Minister Winston Churchill was turned out of office and was asked how he felt he'd be treated by history.

“History will treat me very well,” he responded, “because I intend to write it.”

Trump, it would appear, intends to follow old Winnie’s advice.

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