

THE LADY (TRUMP'S TANTRUM) OR THE TIGER (GOP SENATORS GET SPINES) [UPDATE-2]

[NB: Hey. Byline above – check it. Updates at bottom of post. /~Rayne]

It's Day 25 into the longest ever government shutdown.

Those idiot right-wing anarchists – there's nothing *liber* in this libertarian extreme –want to shrink government to fit a Norquistian bathtub. They don't want to give up their hold on this sodden pipe dream nor relinquish their addiction to anti-government propaganda.

Which means Americans are going to die. It's just a matter of time.

Did you know the U.S. suffers 48,000,000 cases of foodborne sicknesses a year, resulting in 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths in an average year WHEN WE HAVE A WORKING USDA FOOD INSPECTION SYSTEM?

Gee, I wonder what that experience rate does to the cost of health care?

And I wonder what happens when food inspections stop? We're finding out right now.

Hey, remember that annoying little problem with a mosquito-borne disease that causes anacephalic birth defects and is responsible for cases of Guillain-Barre in adults?

What happens when the CDC stops tracking it because the CDC is closed? Better remember to pack bug spray if you've booked a vacation someplace warm.

Oh, you're going to fly, though. What happens if the TSA and air traffic controllers quit because they've had to get other jobs to pay the bills?

Will you get on a plane anyhow and take your chances the planes will dodge each other and simply cross your fingers that you're not a casualty?

Even your trip across town could be fraught with peril if you rely on your smartphone to assist your navigation. A remotely-performed adjustment to phone magnetometers used by mapping apps didn't take place Tuesday because NASA was shutdown. (Hope the Defense Department doesn't need any highly accurate location services.)

That's where we're at right now. We don't have food inspections. We don't have disease monitoring. We are perilously close to having no border security at each airport and no air traffic controllers. We can't be sure automated navigation systems work.

And now the Coast Guard is now going without pay. How will that effect border security on the water? What are the chances deaths on the water will increase because search and rescue will soon be affected?

This is just the tip of the iceberg. We are on the edge of a nationwide meltdown.

This is the result of Trump's tantrum, demanding an unpopular border wall while irrationally weakening other points of entry to get it.

This is the result of his enabler, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who as Trump's favorite troll refuses to let any bill pass to reopen the government, who also refuses to consider a veto override to get past Trump's tantrum.

This is Door Number One, the Lady of increasing chaos.

Now let's look at the Tiger.

A "couple Republican lawmakers" implied if federal employees working without pay at airports walked out that the Senate would be forced to resolve this mounting self-inflicted crisis by re-opening government.

But that's not a new option – that's exactly what's already slowly happening at the airports. People can't afford the government's illegal demand that they work without a paycheck. They are slowly leaking away to new jobs when they aren't filing for unemployment. It's only a matter of time before Americans are infuriated about the collapse of air travel.

This is still the Lady scenario.

The Tiger is Door Number Two, a new and different solution.

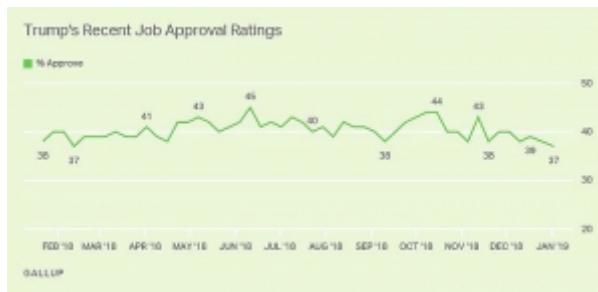
The bottleneck to reopening government is really only one man since the president cannot tell Congress what to do. The one man refusing to move any bills to fund and reopen the government is Mitch McConnell, who doesn't seem to care much that he's helping Trump hurt his own Kentucky constituents.

The option is to remove him as Senate Majority Leader, replacing him with another GOP senator willing to reopen the government and return to negotiations with the House on bills that are in stasis. Why a new Majority Leader who organized this and pulled it off would look like a hero to the public – handy if they were running for re-election in 2020 or for the presidency in 2024.

This option will take a majority of the 53 GOP senators to do so – at least 28 senators who can open their eyes and see the enormity of the threat caused by the shutdown, recognize their compromised status is already visible to the public and accept they must do the right thing in spite of being compromised.

19 Class II senators up for reelection, two who've announced their impending retirements, another senator who's up for a special election, and six more GOP senators could collaborate and get this done. Perhaps some of the brave ones who aren't caving in to Putin's demands to end sanctions. Maybe a single brave one starts by taking on John McCain's maverick-y mantle to ask for the leadership role.

They might even salvage their own impending races with a little distance from Trump instead of tying their cred to a less-than-happy 37% presidential approval rating.



There's the Tiger, ready to be freed from its cage to resolve this mess.

So what's your pick, GOP senators? Which door?

The one with the Lady or the one with the Tiger?

UPDATE – 3:30 PM EDT –

David Frum tweeted:



If Trump now reopens Govt, he visibly surrenders to Pelosi.

If Trump keeps Govt closed, he bleeds support faster. Workers miss next paycheck, air travel delays, govt services fail, and economy stalls.

Trump built the trap and walked into it. Pelosi just locked it behind him.

11:27 AM - 16 Jan 2019

As if this was a binary situation, only these highly polarized options available. Clearly the GOP Senate could provide a third option by throwing McConnell under the bus, voting in a new Majority Leader, and allowing a vote on extended funding at a minimum. GOP still looks like it's in control, workers can go back to their jobs, Democrats will accept this, and Trump doesn't have to double down.

Let's see if the GOP Senate is smart enough to come to this conclusion, though. They are awfully busy indulging in a lot of stupid, though.

Right now they are lamely engaged in virtue signaling about abortion. Seems McConnell can manage to allow a redundant, unnecessary bill to go to the floor – S.109, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions.

Yes, we've already had the Hyde Amendment on the books since 1976.

But I guess McConnell needs to look like he's doing something useful for the paycheck he's still hauling down while TSA workers are going to food pantries.

The 2019 Women's March this Saturday has also rattled some of these soft-handed slack-assed functionaries; making idle fapping gestures about abortion must be their method of exorcising teh wimmen before they take to the streets.

You may want to call your senators about this bill and express your displeasure that they're ignoring the threat to American lives the ongoing shutdown poses.

Oh, and maybe suggest they need a new Majority Leader if your senator(s) are Republicans.

Congressional switchboard: (202) 224-3121

UPDATE – 7:00 PM EDT –

Tweet by Matt McDermott:



It's remarkable how little blame Mitch McConnell has received for the shutdown. Trump aside, the Senate can end this shutdown immediately if McConnell held a vote on the exact same legislation that already passed unanimously. He refuses.

6:07 PM - 16 Jan 2019 from Manhattan, NY

Yeah, about that...why is it the one guy who has continuously said "Nyet!" to every bill which would reopen government is still getting a pass by the media?

Have the media bought into McConnell as some

omniscient political genius instead of a co-conspirator obstructing government including the operations of DOJ/FBI and the courts?