

The Real Reason Trump Likes Generals

By Miles Hamby, PhD

With the resignation of Trump's National Security Advisor retired Army Lt. General Michael Flynn, with other generals being reviewed as his replacement, one begs the question – why does Trump seem to like military generals and admirals?

On several occasions while on the campaign trail, Donald Trump discounted military generals and admirals, such as his statement in the Fall of 2016 “I know more about ISIS than the generals do”, adding “Believe me.” Yet Trump now has three retired generals in his administration -- US Marine Corps General James Mattis as Secretary of Defense, US Marine Corps General John Kelly as Secretary of Homeland Security, and, until his resignation on February 14, US Army Lt. General Michael Flynn as National Security Adviser.

Our government has been set up intentionally to insure the military is subjugated to civilian control – i.e., controlled by the people of the country. Indeed, military officers attest to this in their oath of office (which I took at my commissioning in the U.S. Air Force) by stating “I swear to uphold and defend the constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and bear true faith and allegiance to the same . . .” Can Trump not find a civilian, or at least former military officer who isn't right out of the military (re: the waiver needed to appoint Gen. Mattis as Secretary of Defense)?

So what's up with this almost obsession with generals from a man who has never served a day in his life in U.S. military service? The arguments and conjectures, both pro and con, for former military officers serving in key government positions are many. But when it comes to Trump, they miss the point. It's narcissism!

Although Trump's personality has not been officially diagnosed, the empirical characteristics of narcissism are there. In her article “Narcissistic Politics in Intimate Relationships: 7 Signs of Narcissistic Abuse” published by Partners in Prevention (to end domestic abuse) (Retrieved Feb 14, 2017, from http://www.enddomesticabuse.org/article_narcissistic_politics_abuse_signs_524.php?gclid=CLXOgcSKkNICFVa5wAod8uMCwQ), author Jeanne King, PhD, defines seven characteristics of narcissism:

“1) No Empathy - They do not have the ability to authentically embrace the experiential world of another person unless for selfish gain. . .

2) No Remorse - There is no conscience, no compassion, no concern about the impact of their behavior on others, even those they love. From the narcissistic abuser's point of view, the other person deserves what they got.

3) Entitled –They live in a world in which they have privilege to that which is beyond your imagination . . . they believe that they deserve what they seek . . . because it is already theirs.

4) Deceptive – They will tell you whatever they believe you need to know in order to get what they are attempting to extract from you. .To [the narcissist], a lie is not a lie; it's a mechanism to leverage outcome.

5) Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde – These people will project a persona that is 180 degrees from who and what they really are. Whether priest, doctor or politician, they are not as they wish to have you believe. . .

6) Emotionally Dependent -- These people require the emotional support and admiration of their narcissistic supply as oxygen to sustain them. They truly cannot function naturally and normally without the object of their narcissistic abuse serving as the foundation for their existence.

7) Uses Battering for Control – And when their narcissistic supply is in question, battering [through verbal abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, or physical abuse] becomes the . . . means to shift the power and control within the relationship. . . so they gain the advantage they need to feel on top again.”

Although there is no evidence of any direct physical abuse perpetrated by Trump, there is certainly ample evidence of the other forms openly displayed in his campaign rallies over the past year to include condoning physical abuse and violence.

So what is the real reason Trump appoints so many generals? Because he has a high regard for them? Don't be silly! Because, as a narcissist, he just loves being in charge of them! Remember the Fox News debate on March 3, 2016? Responding to NSA/CIA Director Michael Hayden's comment that the military would refuse to follow illegal orders from a "President" Trump, candidate Trump said "They won't refuse. They're not gonna refuse me. Believe me," adding "I'm a leader, I've always been a leader. I've never had any problem leading people. If I say do it, they're going to do it." (retrieved Feb 14, 2017, from <http://www.mediaite.com/tv/trump-the-military-would-not-refuse-my-orders-even-if-they-consider-them-illegal/>)

Mr. Trump – it may have worked in Germany at the end of the Weimar Republic, but this is the 21st Century and the United States of America!