

February 12, 2017 - TOLD YOU SO

In a particularly prescient *Pickings* post ([January 4, 2017](#)) we suggested the least of President Trump's problems would be hostile media. More danger would come from the federal bureaucracy which would obstruct him whenever possible. For example, we said, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) would find a way to accomplish "the reappearance of the disappeared." Here's that from a month ago; "The media will be the least of Trump's problems. Wait until the federal bureaucrats get into action. They will be on President Trump's agenda like white on rice. During the last eight years the Bureau of Labor Statistics statistically disappeared 15 million people. They have increased the number of people "not in the labor force" to 95 million from 80 million. This created favorable unemployment rates for the current administration. ***Pickerhead predicts the reappearance of the disappeared.*** ...

Guess what? The BLS started the very first month. Here's a report from [Washington Free Beacon](#);

The number of Americans not participating in the labor force declined to 94,366,000 in January, according to the latest [numbers](#) released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

More Americans joined the labor force this month, leading to an uptick in the labor force participation rate and a decline in the number of Americans who are out of the labor force.

The number of Americans not in the labor force hit a record-high of 95,102,000 in December. This month, that number declined by 736,000 individuals.

The bureau counts those not in the labor force as people who do not have a job and did not actively seek one in the past four weeks. ...

There is a [website for the BLS](#). Exploring there produced a two interesting charts. The first is a monthly chart for 10 years of the raw numbers for those not in the labor force. It is below. The only one found is for the unadjusted numbers which show a drop of 368,000 not the 736,000 indicated by the Free Beacon above. Presumably the difference comes from seasonal adjustments, but that could not be confirmed. Spend a lot of time on the BLS site and your hair starts to hurt. Is BLS an acronym for bullshit? One thing that stands out in the numbers, is that the January report, the first in the Trump administration, was the first time in 7 years the 'not in the labor force' number dropped from December to January. Coincidence?

The next chart is 10 years of the monthly unemployment rate we're all familiar with. Something interesting is here. Going back six years of a settled economy we track the year-to-year drop in unemployment from October to October. In three of those years the drop averaged 1.23%. In the other three the drop averaged .63%. The years with the largest drop in unemployment rates were 2012, 2014, and 2016. Why October you ask? Because that's the last report issued before nationwide elections. And what do the three best unemployment reporting years have in common? Why they're election years dummy! Coincidence?

Here's another item, this from the chart of unemployment rates. In September 2012 the rate went through the 8% level to 7.8 which carried forward to October. In fact, the September rate was revised to that level in the October report, so the October report was the first to reach the magic 7 percent level. Trouble is, it was over done and the December rate moved up to 7.9% and January was 8.0%. Would you be surprised to learn that was the only time in the six years we're covering there was a sustained (4 months) increase in the unemployment rate? But the job was done. A Democrat president was reelected. Coincidence?

Over the six years covered in the charts below, there were four anomalies. First was the large January 2017 decrease in citizens "not in the labor force." Next, for the first time in seven years those not in the labor force decreased from December to January. Third we see the large drops in unemployment occurred in election years. And fourth, the rate of unemployment rose for only one four month period; the one following the reelection of a Democrat president. What are the chances that all four of those anomalies would benefit one political party? These are the people who lay in wait for Donald Trump.

It was Mark Twain who popularized the phrase "There are lies, damn lies, and statistics." which Twain attributed to Benjamin Disraeli, the British Prime Minister. From the January 4th post also; "Fooling with statistics is how you get a paragraph like this from [Aaron MacLean of the Free Beacon](#).

... For years, Americans were told that after the financial panic in 2008, the president's policies had put us on a steady course to a strong economy. But in much of the country, people looked around them and thought, That just doesn't seem right. Especially in those parts of the country hit the hardest by the transition from the Industrial Era to the Information Age, people asked a number of questions. If the economy is doing so great, why are my adult children not moving out? If the unemployment rate is declining, why are so many prime-age males not working? And doesn't it matter that the quality of jobs for non-college graduates is so obviously worse than it was a generation ago? Why, instead of working, are so many people dependent on public benefits and falling prey to addiction? ..."

So out of nowhere, Trump is elected and the bien pensants on the coasts can't understand why. It is partly because they believe the lies of simple servants and the subsequent applause of the media. The media, by the way, that should have been drilling into the numbers, but never has.

A broader look at federal bureaucrats written by Tevi Troy, was in [Commentary](#). The title of his article is "Will There be an Internal Revolt Against Trump?" To which we ask, "Is the Pope Catholic? Does a bear poop in the forest? etc. etc. My first face-to-face encounter with the federal bureaucracy came on January 22, 2001. I was the deputy director of a "parachute team" for incoming president George W. Bush, and our job was to "secure the beachhead" at the Department of Labor on the first day of the new administration. (The political realm loves to borrow military metaphors.) That meant stopping the department from issuing guidance, rules, and statements that reflected the views of the

departing Clinton administration. The most important tactical objective in this mission, we were told, was this: Secure the fax machine! (It was 2001, after all.) At that time, there was one specially designated fax machine used to send new regulatory language to the Federal Register, which publishes all newly minted regulations. There was a bureaucrat I'll call Mitchell Sykes whose job it was to man that fax machine. We were to find Sykes and stop him from doing anything. ...

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Diamond noted in his story that the older, more senior career HHS officials he spoke to were "more sanguine," having seen transitions in the past. It's possible, therefore, to say that the less judicious individuals were just venting and will come into line come the inauguration. But it's also possible that these younger staffers may represent the new face of a more partisan career bureaucracy. First, the overtness of the career officials cited was alarming, especially given how careful they typically are. Second, Diamond points out that there are 1,000 HHS officials who "can trace their jobs back to Obamacare." Presumably, these individuals will be most resistant to repealing and replacing Obamacare, the stated policy of the new president. And finally, the open speculation from a career official, even if anonymous, about serving as an "internal saboteur" should raise alarm bells among not only incoming political officials but also career employees, whose jobs are directly tied to their ability to work with, and generate the trust of, political appointees. ...

Yes, we did find some humor.



Washington Free Beacon

[94,366,000 Americans Not in Labor Force as Participation Rate Ticks Up in January](#)

242,000 more Americans working part-time jobs this month than last

by Ali Meyer

The number of Americans not participating in the labor force declined to 94,366,000 in January, according to the latest [numbers](#) released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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The labor force participation rate, which is the percentage of the population that has a job or actively looked for one in the past month, increased from 62.7 percent in December to 62.9 percent in January.

While more joined the labor force this month, the number of unemployed individuals increased by 106,000 Americans, leading to an increase in the unemployment rate.

The unemployment rate for all Americans increased from 4.7 percent in December to 4.8 percent in January. This measure does not account for those individuals who have dropped out of the labor force and simply measures the percent of those who did not have a job but actively sought one over the month.

The "real" unemployment rate, otherwise known as the U-6 measure, was 9.4 [percent](#) in January, which increased from 9.2 percent in the previous month.

There were 5,840,000 [Americans](#) working part-time in January who would rather have a full-time job but cited economic reasons for not having such employment. This number increased by 242,000 over the month.

According to [the bureau](#), involuntary part-time workers are "persons who indicated that they would like to work full time but were working part time (1 to 34 hours) because of an economic reason, such as their hours were cut back or they were unable to find full-time jobs."

"It looks like the optimism of the last two months is boosting the demand for workers," said Juanita Duggan, president and CEO of the National Federation of Independent Business. "That's a great thing for Americans looking for jobs and a strong sign that the U.S. economy is heating up."

"Fifteen percent of small business owners said that finding qualified workers was their single biggest problem," said Bill Dunkelberg, chief economist at the association. "That's an increase from the previous month and more proof that the labor market is getting tighter."

"In a tight labor market, business owners have to raise compensation to attract and retain the employees they need," he said. "The competition for qualified workers is getting more intense, and I would expect that in the next few quarters more firms will try to increase prices to cover the higher cost of labor."

Commentary

Will there be an internal revolt against Trump?

Of bureaucrats I have known, worked with, and couldn't fire.

by Tevi Troy

My first face-to-face encounter with the federal bureaucracy came on January 22, 2001. I was the deputy director of a "parachute team" for incoming president George W. Bush, and our job was to "secure the beachhead" at the Department of Labor on the first day of the new administration. (The political realm loves to borrow military metaphors.) That meant stopping the department from issuing guidance, rules, and statements that reflected the views of the departing Clinton administration. The most important tactical objective in this mission, we were told, was this: Secure the fax machine! (It was 2001, after all.) At that time, there was one specially designated fax machine used to send new regulatory language to the Federal Register, which publishes all newly minted regulations. There was a bureaucrat I'll call Mitchell Sykes whose job it was to man that fax machine. We were to find Sykes and stop him from doing anything.

We were barely in the door when the cultural differences between the federal bureaucracy and the rest of America became apparent. We arrived at 8 a.m. The vast majority of career officials, we learned, did not arrive at 8 a.m. So we had trouble finding Mitchell Sykes. We began asking around and were met with shrugs and unknowing looks. The director of the parachute team began to grow agitated. His face reddened, his voice rose, and he slammed the table once or twice. Finally, well after 10, more than two hours after we had first arrived, we were told that Mitchell Sykes was outside our office. With great anticipation, we looked to the door to catch our first glimpse of the all-powerful bureaucratic potentate, the man who controlled the entire Federal Register for the \$12 billion, 17,000-strong behemoth called the Department of Labor. And in walked...a nebbish. Balding, bespectacled, with J.C. Penney slacks hiked up above his waist. In a somewhat high-pitched voice, he introduced himself: "Hi, I'm Mitchell." The parachute team director looked at him and hesitated a moment, wondering if this could really be the man we were seeking, then asked, "Are you Mitchell Sykes?"

"Yes," he responded meekly.

The director said: "I want you to stop sending all regulations to the Federal Register right now."

"OK," Sykes squeaked.

This was my first introduction to the challenges of the federal bureaucracy. Trying to get anything done requires knowing the pulse points and the people—and then crossing your fingers that they can or will comply. Of course, as a conservative from the think tank world, I had heard tales of the liberal bias of career officials. The skepticism about the ideological motivations of career officials was a subset of a larger conservative skepticism about the administrative state. Steven Hayward sums up this attitude nicely in his new book *Patriotism Is Not Enough*: "That bureaucratic government is the partisan instrument of the Democratic Party is the most obvious, yet least remarked upon, trait of our time."

Transition briefers had warned us of the practice of "burrowing in." This term refers to the maneuver by political officials at the end of an administration to shift their jobs into the career civil service, thereby securing lifetime tenure and allowing them to advance their ideological

agendas or simply impede needed reforms. Early on, we saw a shameless attempt at burrowing in at the Department of Labor in the person of the woman who had been Labor Secretary Alexis Herman's chief of staff. She tried to convince us that she was sympathetic to the incoming administration. Knowing that I had worked for Missouri Senator John Ashcroft, she told me that they worshipped at the same church. I was unconvinced, as was the savvy Labor secretary for whom I worked, Elaine Chao, now Donald Trump's nominee as secretary of transportation. Later, but not that much later, we saw that the attempted burrower had gone on to become chief of staff at the Democratic National Committee.

Another thing we learned about early on was the lifetime tenure rules—technically known as "civil-service protections." These rules made it exceedingly difficult to fire even obstinate and uncooperative career officials. Walking through the building, we often saw people wearing "Bring Back Baxter" buttons. "Who is Baxter?" I asked. Apparently, Baxter was a career official at DOL. (He was also an officer with the local union for government employees.) During the Clinton administration, Baxter came to believe he did not have to work on departmental business in order to receive his taxpayer-funded paycheck. When he was challenged by Department officials, he threw a tantrum, became abusive, and continued to refuse to do governmental work. To their credit, President Clinton's political appointees began the hard and painstaking work of building a case against Baxter that would enable them to fire him. (There are indeed mechanisms for dismissing federal employees, but they are arduous and subject to review and being overturned.) After a number of years, the Clinton Department of Labor brought the case and fired the man. Baxter and the local union ginned up protests, distributed the buttons, and filed an appeal. An arbitrator ruled against the Department, and Baxter returned to the office, secure in the knowledge that he would never have to do a stitch of work in exchange for his government paycheck. He was now truly untouchable, unaccountable, and bureaucratically invincible.

The appearance of the Baxter Buttons was also a message for the incoming political team. If the Democratic Clinton administration had failed to get Baxter, there was no way the Republican Bush administration would be able to pursue and win a similar case. As one of my colleagues, a senior political administrator, recalled, the ugly memory of the Baxter case continued to resonate, as his attempts to make personnel shifts were made more difficult by the fear of losing another Baxter-like battle.

Then of course there were the infamous stories of laziness or incompetence. Most everyone in the political world has heard about officials who never show up for work, who have full-time jobs at big-box stores while they are on the government clock, or who can be found most afternoons during the working day at the local pub. I cannot testify to whether these stories are true or not, only that political officials hear and share them all the time. The stories range from the appalling to the ridiculous. Sometimes it can be hard to tell which. One friend of mine named Susan regaled us with the tale of a career receptionist at the Department of Health and Human Services who never passed messages her way, because she was unaware that calls directed to "Sue" were indeed meant for Susan. Very patiently, Susan had her assistant write "Sue is short for Susan" on a sticky note and affix it to her desk. The calls finally began to flow.

Well over 99 percent of the 2 million-plus people working in the federal government are career officials. Even in the White House, where the president has far more say over personnel, career officials dominate: Of the 1,800 or so people who work for the Executive Office of the President, approximately two-thirds of them are career. The vast majority of people working at the largest offices within the EOP—the Office of Management and Budget, the National Security Council, and the U.S. Trade Representative's office—are career officials.

Many are dedicated professionals who work long hours and are extremely knowledgeable in their areas. This is especially true in the White House, where career officials tend to be the best of the best, hard-working and talented. But it is also true among the highest echelons at most departments, the SES, or Senior Executive Service. Top career officials I worked with at HHS could have made vastly more money working in the private sector but chose to dedicate significant portions of their careers to public service. The political scientist John Dilulio has written a thoughtful book, *Bring Back the Bureaucrats*, arguing that we need more, not fewer, career officials, to accomplish all of the tasks that Congress has assigned to the administrative state. Regardless of whether you accept his argument, it is clear that career officials do dominate the federal government, and presidential administrations need to take that into account. To be a successful political appointee, you had best learn not only how to work with, but also how to get the most from, career officials.

As for the question of bias, which generally dominates Republican thinking on the question of career officials, it is true that career federal officials are more likely to be Democrats than Republicans. A 2015 poll found that 44 percent of federal employees were Democrats or Democratic leaning, as compared with 40 percent who were Republican or Republican leaning. Senior-level federal officials, with whom top politicals would have the most interaction, were even more Democratic-leaning, by a 48 to 40 margin. And of course, people in the D.C. metropolitan area tend to be even more liberal, meaning that D.C.-based career officials are coming from a more liberal pool of individuals. So it is safe to say that most of the career officials that politicals encounter will be more likely to be Democrats than Republicans. At the same time, the numbers also suggest that while the preference exists, it is not necessarily overwhelming.

In my experience, this likelihood of Democratic lever-pulling does not, however, mean that most career officials bring their political predilections into the carrying out of their duties at work. But some do, and they can do a lot of damage. Lois Lerner and her partisan allies at the Internal Revenue Service appeared all too eager (and able) to quickly execute the Obama administration's bidding to withhold preferred tax treatment from conservative organizations. But this outrageous and infuriating series of incidents was such a big deal precisely because it was such a blatant example of what career officials should not be doing. And there are certain offices, such as the Division of Civil Rights at the Justice Department, that tend to openly collaborate with Democratic administrations and resist working with Republican administrations. This office covers some of the most contentious issues, including voting rights, hate-crime prosecutions, allegations of police bias, and transgender rights. The prospect of an incoming Trump administration has some officials musing in the press about a possible "exodus" of career staff from that challenging division.

Offices like Lerner's at the IRS or Civil Rights at Justice, I believe, are exceptions—troubling exceptions, to be sure, but not indicative of the overall relationship between politicals and careers government-wide. There have been many occasions when careers resist excessive action by Democrats and support proposals coming from a Republican president. They may like the Democrats better on the whole. Few would deny that. But to the extent that career officials display a bias in the transmission of their duties, it tends to be not in favor of their political parties but instead in favor of the prerogatives of their agency.

What does this mean? Career officials do not want to see their agencies embarrassed and so will typically resist or argue against actions that can be seen to discredit or harm the reputations of their agencies. They do not want to see the power of their agencies diminished, so they will resist actions that favor another agency over their own. And they believe in the mission of their agencies, so they want the agencies to continue carrying out that mission.

This bias in favor of the prerogatives of an agency does have practical consequences. Someone who signs up to work for the Environmental Protection Agency is more likely to support robust regulation of coal production than, say, someone who works at a conservative think tank. But they also might be resistant to overly aggressive and costly regulations that might lead to criticism of the agency in the Wall Street Journal or, worse from their perspective, the Washington Post. Furthermore, while the EPA official may be more likely to be a liberal, the official at the Pentagon or the Department of Homeland Security might have a more Republican-friendly approach because of job-related insights into national-security threats. Some of these officials may be sympathetic to President Trump's law-and-order views and tough-on-terror stance. They may also have been frustrated with Obama's more weak-kneed approaches to these issues.

Above all, career officials have a healthy and realistic sense that Republican and Democratic administrations are different and bring different characteristics with them. I recall one career official in an agency security office who told me that the incoming Obama administration officials were likely to have sexual and narcotic histories that could make it difficult for them to obtain security clearances. When I responded with a knowing smile, he told me that I should not get too cocky: "You guys," he said, referring to Republicans, "get tripped up for shady business practices."

This sort of back-and-forth is typical during changes of administration. Career officials are savvy bureaucratic maneuverers. They understand that Republicans come into power looking to reduce the size of government, while Democrats seek to expand its regulatory reach. They have plans and option papers and briefing books on the shelf prepared for Republican administrations and for Democratic ones alike. They are happy to tell political appointees which ideas have been tried before, and why they failed, and perhaps even how they could be made to succeed. Certainly, some will leak, but so will some politicals. And some will cooperate more than others. But for the most part, experienced politicals know who careers are, what they do, and how to work with them. Some meetings of a political nature should of course be held without career officials in the room, but it's a mistake to shut them out of all meetings. As imperfect and generally pro-Leviathan as the arrangement is, both careers and politicals typically know the score, and there is a generally understood détente among them.

The question for 2017 is whether this détente will hold.

Donald Trump is a different kind of president from the type we have seen previously. He is blunter and brasher and generally more hostile to the way things are done in Washington. In addition, the opposition to Trump is more adamant, and even perhaps more unhinged, than at any point in the modern age. This hostility to Trump may reshape the relations between career and political officials in a way that could affect the ability of Trump to carry out his ambitious agenda.

There is some evidence for this notion that things may be different this time. A poll in February 2016 showed that one-quarter of career officials would consider quitting their jobs if Trump secured the presidency. Still, 67 percent said they would remain in place, which is not surprising given the lifetime tenure of these jobs. These positions are not given up easily. Furthermore, the promises of those who would consider quitting in the face of a political event they opposed should be taken with a grain of salt. The long line of cars driving north along the I-5 from Hollywood to Canada has not yet materialized, for example.

There were indications of bureaucratic resistance to the legitimately elected president during the transition period. In one Politico piece, career officials at HHS were disturbingly candid about their disdain for President-elect Trump, while at the same time protecting themselves in the veil of anonymity. One told reporter Dan Diamond that "it's tough from the career staff side," before asking, "Do you stay and try and be the internal saboteur?" Another called the Trump win "obviously shocking and upsetting," a third "soul crushing." One of the staffers quoted paid lip service to the fact that they "respect the need to have a peaceful transition of power," but added that "it's just frustrating to calmly hand over the keys when you know they'll wreck the car." Politico's Blake Hounsell quoted one anonymous, presumably career, official lamenting the appointment of ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson at the State Department: "I've been resisting the urge to drink since 7 a.m., when I read the news."

Diamond noted in his story that the older, more senior career HHS officials he spoke to were "more sanguine," having seen transitions in the past. It's possible, therefore, to say that the less judicious individuals were just venting and will come into line come the inauguration. But it's also possible that these younger staffers may represent the new face of a more partisan career bureaucracy. First, the overtness of the career officials cited was alarming, especially given how careful they typically are. Second, Diamond points out that there are 1,000 HHS officials who "can trace their jobs back to Obamacare." Presumably, these individuals will be most resistant to repealing and replacing Obamacare, the stated policy of the new president. And finally, the open speculation from a career official, even if anonymous, about serving as an "internal saboteur" should raise alarm bells among not only incoming political officials but also career employees, whose jobs are directly tied to their ability to work with, and generate the trust of, political appointees.

Another worrisome portent was open resistance to what should have been viewed as routine requests. Trump's transition team posed a list of questions to different departments regarding the agencies' activities in recent years. Such questions are standard operating procedure, and transition teams of both parties present them to agencies during transition as a matter of course. As part of this process, the Trump team asked which career staffers at EPA and the Department of Energy were involved in climate-change policy. These questions made their way into the press and led to hyperbolic headlines such as "Trump team's demands fuel fear of Energy Department 'witch hunt.'"

Something similar happened at the State Department, where a request to disclose teams working on gender issues led to similar hysterical headline. The State Department agreed to the request, only because the query asked for position titles, not names, of those involved. The Energy Department, however, actually refused to supply the names of the career officials involved in such activities. This decision was presumably made by political, not career, officials, and it called into question President Obama's pledge of his full cooperation with the transition. It also sent a powerful message to the career officials: Their resistance to legitimate requests would be largely ignored, and possibly lauded, by the mainstream media.

One other potential difference between previous political-career interactions and the current one is the level of controversy regarding the issues Trump highlighted in his campaign. Candidate Trump ran on repealing Obamacare, combating political correctness, and law and order. Many career officials in these agencies have seen their mission in opposite terms—they were tasked with promoting the Affordable Care Act, maintaining speech regimes on campus, and creating new guidance on how to monitor allegations of racism by police officers. This discrepancy, coupled with then President-elect Trump's calls to initiate a hiring freeze for federal workers, led to a Washington Post report about federal agencies rushing to fill any possible vacancies before

the January 20th turnover. Presumably these new hires would not only get in before a hiring freeze, but also share the Obama administration's perspective on these hot-button issues. So it is fair to assume that the mistrust between political and career officials will be higher in this new administration than in previous administrations. It certainly seems possible that the intransigence of the career officials could be more significant to efforts of the incoming administration than in previous changes of power. If so, the Trump team, already convinced of the hostility of the establishment, may be even warier than a typical GOP political team.

Should there be this kind of open dislike of the Trump politicals by career officials, how might that manifest itself? The careers have a number of tools they might employ. One is the leak. Career officials often have good ties to the media who cover their department, and they know how to get a message out. In addition, stories leaked against a Republican administration are often taken at face value and hyped by both the media and the opposition party. Sometimes leaked charges lead to investigations, many of which are spurious.

Leaking is noisome but ultimately not that effective. When I was serving at the Department of Labor, a particular Washington Post columnist had a knack for getting marginally embarrassing scoops about the international travel of political officials. After the second or third time it happened, it became pretty clear from which office the leaks were emanating. The solution was to limit access to people from that office. This might have the impact of keeping non-leakers out of the loop along with the actual perpetrator, but it was better than foolishly handing a hostile columnist more grist for his attacks. Career officials are generally not happy about being excluded from their official duties, and therefore will have an in-built incentive to put their own pressure on the leaker to knock it off.

Another tactic is "slow walking" policies to which career officials object. This can work for a time, and on certain projects, but it also becomes obvious fairly quickly what is happening. Political leaders have tools with which to combat intentionally dilatory behavior. Senior politicals do annual reviews for careers, and these reviews affect bonuses and salary increases. Politicals also have some say over assignments and placement. An obstinate employee can't be fired, as we have seen, but can be offered a job at the same level in North Dakota or another distant state. This does not have to be done too often before the word spreads that the politicals know how to use the tools at their disposal and that they are willing to employ them.

A third tactic career officials can use is resignation. This is of mixed utility. Politicals, especially in the Trump administration, may see the resignation of a resistant employee as an opportunity, both to get rid of a problem and to hire someone more cooperative. The civil-service rules may make it hard to fire someone unsympathetic to the president, but they do allow some leeway to hire people who are friendly. This ability to shape the incoming career hires may in fact be one of the reasons that, following eight years of Obama, many career officials may be resistant to the incoming administration. In addition, while one or two people might resign, organizing a mass resignation from civil-service jobs that effectively grant lifetime employment and generous benefits is unlikely. The truth is that some career folks may grumble, or leak, or privately seethe, but it is unlikely that they will be able to stop an administration from accomplishing its major administrative priorities.

What this account should reveal, beyond some minimal amusement, is that the career officials are just part of the playing field. They don't make it impossible for Republicans to accomplish anything, and they don't necessarily make it easy. They are a factor all incoming administrations need to deal with. Unwise administrations come in and go on hunts for burrowed-in officials, shut out careers from all decisions, and generally try to do the work of thousands of career officials with a handful of political appointees, many of whom have little experience with the

agency in question. HHS has a workforce of 70,000, with only about 150 political appointees. It is impossible to get much done unless the politicals let the career officials do their jobs under the direction of the senior political leadership.

If a new political team is thoughtful and knows what it is doing, it can get a lot done. As a former senior political head of administration at a cabinet department told me, "When you get in, you take some time, you get rid of the bad apples." This does not mean dismissing them, of course. The Baxter case described above demonstrates the folly of that approach. But there are tools wise administrators can use to elevate cooperative officials and move aside obstinate ones. This does not entail making the decisions based on ideology or partisan affiliation. It does mean looking at the willingness of the officials to do the legitimate tasks they are assigned to do.

If the Trump administration heeds these lessons, it can accomplish much in four or possibly eight years. Perhaps not as much as promised in the heat of a campaign—few administrations can—but still a great deal. But to do so requires coming to grips with what the career bureaucracy is, what isn't, and how an incoming administration can best deal with it.

Looks Catholic to Us

(The hat is the giveaway)

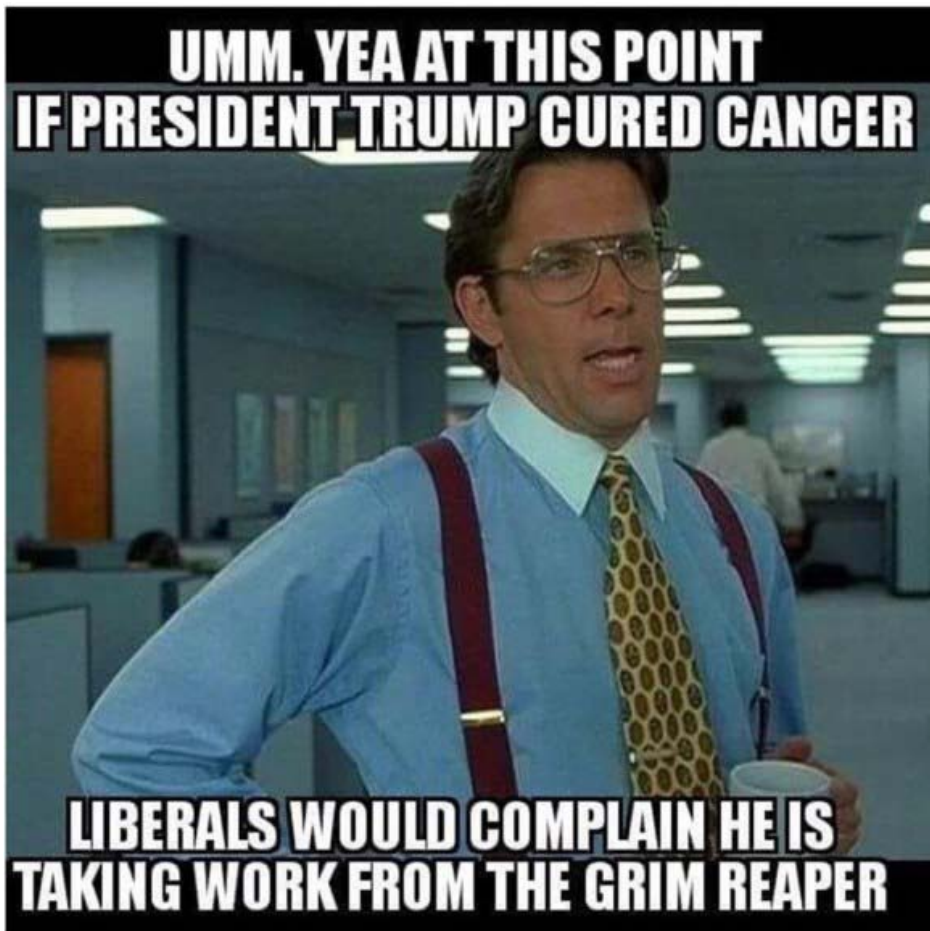




Well, I guess that answers that!



Monday Lisa





**TRAVEL RESTRICTED
FROM IRAQ, IRAN, SYRIA,
SUDAN, SOMALIA,
AND YEMEN. LIBERALS:**

**TRAVEL RESTRICTED
FROM IRAQ, IRAN, SYRIA,
SUDAN, SOMALIA,
AND YEMEN. LIBERALS:**



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 **PATRIOT HUMOR**

**TRUMP CALLS CNN OUT
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FOR A PRESS CONFERENCE
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