Opinion
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by Pat Perriello

View Author Profile
perriellop@aol.com

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President Donald Trump participates in a Cabinet meeting Sept. 9 at Camp David near Thurmont, Maryland, discussing Hurricane Irma as it approaches the coast of Florida. (Official White House Photo/Shealah Craighead)

While visiting our granddaughter in Atlanta these past two weeks, we rode out Tropical Storm Irma. We were without power for 24 hours, and there were plenty of

small tree limbs everywhere, but compared to what so many others experienced with Harvey and Irma, we were truly fortunate.

However, the experience does give rise to what has been President Donald Trump's first significant success beyond his Supreme Court nomination of Neil Gorsuch. He and his administration have handled two hurricanes without any serious missteps. They deserve credit for their response to these natural disasters.

The president followed that up with a three-month budget deal that included a temporary debt ceiling increase, and funding for hurricane relief. The most interesting aspect of the deal is that it was made with Democratic leaders in Congress, not Republican leaders.

Amazingly, it appears that other possible deals could be in the offing. A deal seems close on protecting Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. At least a temporary fix for the Affordable Care Act seems possible, even though one final attempt at repealing the law may be in the works. Other possible areas of cooperation could include infrastructure, and even a tax reform package.

Has the famous pivot finally occurred? If so, how long will it last? Why has Trump decided to work with Democrats and even bypass the leaders of his own party in Congress?

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Clearly, the president was looking to score fast legislative victories. He discovered that a coalition of Democrats and a few moderate Republicans exists that is capable of passing significant legislation. Trying to use only Republicans was getting him nowhere.

He also seems to find it easier to work with Democrats, particularly Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer. Both New Yorkers, they seem to have a way of communicating with each other that has eluded Trump with both Mitch McConnell and Paul Ryan on the Republican side.

So how long will this pivot last? It will last as long as the president sees it as in his own interest. There are signs that the rapprochement is already fraying, but things had been going so badly for the president that he felt he had to try something different. Nothing was getting done and he finally found a way to make something

happen. He also liked the positive coverage he received following the deal with Congress.

What we know about this president is that he is not committed to an ideology. He is primarily interested in winning. His inconsistent and even contradictory rhetoric about everything, whether health care or immigration, suggests that it is impossible to predict which way he will go on an issue, or when he may decide to move in the opposite direction.

What is more difficult to figure out is what he may actually be thinking. Is he thinking, for example, that if Democrats like what he's doing, maybe they won't impeach him if they take over the House next year? Maybe he hopes that Democrats will decide their agenda has a better chance of passing under a President Trump than under a President Pence. It is in fact possible that such an analysis may be correct.

What we know for sure is that we have a president who is completely unpredictable. When we believe we have figured out what he is going to do, he is likely to do something dramatically different. Such a president can be dangerous and we can only observe with concern what may unfold.

But, in my estimation, the Trump presidency is still all about the Russian investigation. How long it will take, we don't know. What the ultimate outcome will be, we can't know. But it is still quite possible that if events continue to unfold as they have thus far, the days of this presidency could still be numbered.