

# OPINION: Where's the leadership from the Oval Office during the #TrumpShutdown?

By Bruce Ditata

On the anniversary of his inauguration as POTUS, Donald J. Trump yearned for a Mar-a-Lago getaway, celebratory gala with his deep-pocketed cronies, the exhilaration of basking in praise he always yearns for.

Instead, he found himself shuttered in the White House, unable to join the opulent festival at his beloved Florida retreat. Outside the security moat on Pennsylvania Avenue, protestors chanted slogans, pounded drums, carried signs-against Trump and his policies, as well as for women's and immigration advocacy. It was one of hundreds of women's marches across the nation to coincide with the anniversary of the President's inauguration.

A short distance away from the executive offices on Capitol Hill, lawmakers lobbed verbal grenades across the aisles in the United States Senate after a vote to keep the government running, which failed on the day before Trump's anniversary.

The vitriol flowed like the champagne at Mar-a-Lago with Democratic and Republican members blaming each other for the government shutdown which, officially, began on January 20.

Democratic Senators perseverated on their unwillingness to "kick the can down the road" on the need to establish long term funding and public policy agreements to fund the Dream Act, border security, military personnel, children health insurance, medical facilities, and immigration legislation.

Republican Senators, conversely, accused their Democratic colleagues of being intransigent on issues they have always supported for the sake of one single issue- the Dream Act- the long established program due to expire in March of 2018 which offers a path to citizenship for the offspring of illegal immigrants, young people who call America their home, the only country they have even known.

Meanwhile, the stalemate in the Senate rages on and the government shutdown continues, a situation labelled as "trench warfare." It has elicited harsh attacks against Democratic Senators by Trump subordinates, while the President has remained, mostly, silent with the exception of an anti-Democratic Party tweet and an aggressive, campaign style attack advertisement.

Where is the leadership from the Oval Office, the decisive intervention of a self-proclaimed deal maker, who railed against his predecessor, Barack Obama, for failure to bring both political parties to the negotiating table?

Without Trump working decisively to end the impasse, does this stalemate, causing the federal government to grind to a halt- the question becomes will historians in point of fact, accurately categorize it as the #TrumpShutdown?