

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نېاشد تن من مېباد      بلین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مېباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم      از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

by PAUL STREET  
21.01.2020

## Trump Showed Us Who He Was Before He Became President



Photograph Source: Ali Shaker/VOA – Public Domain

When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.

– Maya Angelou

“It’s amazing,” fellow CounterPuncher Eric Draitser recently wrote me, “that people ever thought a Trump administration would be something other than this.”

“This” is the demented neofascistic Trump-Pence regime, which openly violates basic constitutional norms and rules while conducting itself in barefacedly racist, sexist, and eco-cidal ways.

The long record of this presidency’s transgressions now includes the open dog-wagging assassination – on brazenly false pretexts – of a foreign military commander atop a state

(Iran) with which the United States is not at war and without the permission of a government (Iraq) on whose soil the monumental war crime took place. In response to mild Democratic Party criticism of the timing and grounds for the assassination of Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, Trump has re-tweeted a right-wing lunatic's tweet depicting Democratic Congressional leaders Charles Schumer (Senate Minority Leader) and Nancy Pelosi (House Speaker) in Muslim garb (a turban for Schumer and a hijab for Pelosi) in front of an Iranian flag.

Trump's "press secretary" (who never holds press conferences) went on Trump Television (FOX News) to accuse Democrats of taking "talking points from Iran" for questioning the reasons given for the reckless assassination.

A book published by a leading civil rights lawyer last summer finds 20 common themes, rhetorical tactics, and dangerous policies that Trump is "copying from the early Hitler government" in 1930s Germany: holding power without winning majority support; finding and using direct lines of communication with their base; blaming others and diving on racial lines; relentlessly demonizing opponents; constantly attacking objective truth; relentlessly attacking mainstream media; assaulting science; cultivating a fawning alternative media to spread his lies; regular orchestrated mass hate-rallies; extreme nationalism; making a big show of closing borders; embracing mass detention and deportation; using borders to protect selected industries; embedding rule by rewarding capitalist elites; rejecting international norms; attacking domestic democratic processes; attacking courts and the rule of law; glorifying the military and demanding loyalty oaths; proclaiming unchecked power; relegating women to subordinate roles.

The Trumpenstein will not likely leave the White House without bloodshed even if he is bested in the Electoral College next November. Don't take it from a leftist like me. The conservative American Enterprise Institute scholar Norman Ornstein and the right-wing Trump senior administration official "Anonymous" have both recently warned that the tangerine-tinted Twitter-tantruming truth-trashing tyrant Trump may not honor the outcome of an election result that doesn't go his way. "Members of Congress, governors and state legislators, leaders in civil society, lawyers, law enforcement figures and the military need," Ornstein says, "to be thinking about how they might respond."

Whence Trump's special love for despots and dictators of various ideological stripes (ranging from Vladimir Putin to the blood-soaked Filipino strongman Rodrigo Duterte, the murderous Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin-Salman, the North Korean dictator

Kim Jong-Un, the Brazilian eco-Nazi Jair Bolsonaro, and Turkish despot Recep Erdogan) around the world? “The president,” one top national security aide told Anonymous, “sees in these guys what he wishes he had: total power, no term limits, enforced popularity, and the ability to silence critics for good”

### **“Bring Back the Death Penalty...The Right to be a New Yorker”**

But, back to Draitser’s comment. Anyone who has been surprised by the nature of the Trump presidency wasn’t paying attention to pre-presidential Trump. The fact that the real estate baron and former reality television star Donald J. Trump was a malignantly narcissistic racist, sexist sociopath and an instinctual fascist was clear before he became a seriously viable presidential contender.

“The Donald” of the 1980s and 1990s was notorious for cheating contractors and workers, abusing his wives and other women, suing and defaming his critics, holding racist sentiments, and endless and shameless self-promoting. The son of a Ku Klux Klan member, a corrupt real estate mogul who sent the future president to military school, Trump made a political mark for himself during the late 1980s with harsh public comments about the “Central Park Five,” five black and Latino teenagers wrongly convicted of the rape of a jogger in New York City. Trump bought newspaper advertisements calling for New York State to “bring back the death penalty” in the aftermath of the attack. His statement contained this chilling statement:

“When I was young, I sat in a diner with my father and witnessed two young bullies cursing and threatening a very frightened waitress. Two cops rushed in, lifted up the thugs and threw them out the door, warning them never to cause trouble again. I miss the feeling of security New York’s finest once gave to the citizens of this City. Let our politicians give back our police department’s power to keep us safe. Unshackle them from the constant chant of ‘police brutality’ which every petty criminal hurls immediately at an officer who has just risked his or her life to save another’s. We must cease our continuous pandering to the criminal population of this City. Give New York back to the citizens who have earned the right to be New Yorkers” (emphasis added).

(Trump has since refused to apologize for his campaign against the Central Park Five despite the full exoneration of the falsely accused men.)

Trump said this when he became irritated by the presence of legally required braille dots on the elevator towers of one of his New York City building: “no blind people are going to live here.”

Trump's first wife Ivana told Vanity Fair in 1990 that her ex-husband kept a book of Hitler's speeches by his bedside table – a claim that seems all too reasonable given the openly fascistic nature of Trump's presidency.

Between 2005 and 2010, Trump ran Trump University, which was sued in two federal class actions based on allegations of defrauding its students with deceptive marketing and aggressive sales tactics. (Trump had to settle three lawsuits in November 2016, paying out \$25 million after being elected president).

### **A Birther and a Rapist**

After Barack Obama became the nation's first Black president, Trump embraced the absurd racist "Birther" charge that Obama's presence in the White House violated the U.S. Constitution because Obama had not been born in the United States.

Two months before announcing that he would enter the 2016 presidential contest, Trump tweeted this about the woman who was widely expected to be the Democratic Party's nominee: "If Hillary[Clinton] can't satisfy her husband, what makes her think she can satisfy America?"

This cruelly chauvinistic "social media" comment was richly consistent with Trump's long prior history of saying and tweeting degrading and demeaning things about women and girls including Bette Midler, Lindsay Lohan, Princess Diana, Kim Kardashian, Rosie O'Donnell, Nancy O'Dell, his wives, his daughters, and females in general. Late in the 2016 campaign, the world learned that Trump had bragged on tape about how his celebrity status permitted him to sexually assault women. Pre-candidate Trump has in fact been accused of sexual assault by at least 15 women.

### **Candidate Trumpolini**

Any doubts about the noxious, vicious, racist, sexist, arch-reactionary, and yes, fascistic nature of Trump should have been blown away during his 2015-16 run for the White House. Nobody who paid attention to Trump's anti-presidential campaign has had any business being surprised by his revolting, neofascistic presidency. Candidate Trump:

# Called Mexican immigrants rapists and drug-dealers and said "I will build a great, great wall on our southern border. And I will have Mexico pay for that wall."

# Revived "America First" – a phrase that became the public face of pro-fascist sentiment and opposition to fighting Adolf Hitler's Third Reich in the United States during the 1930s – as one of his leading campaign slogans.

# Regularly promoted the bizarre right-wing conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, who infamously suggested that the 1969 Apollo 11 moon landing never happened and that the Sandy Hook school shooting was faked. (“Your reputation is amazing,” Trump told Jones in an appearance on his show.)

# Referred to news broadcaster Megyn Kelly’s menstruation as follows: “You could see there was blood coming out of her eyes, blood coming out of her wherever.”

# Insulted Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina’s looks, saying “Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that?”

# Gave his fellow presidential contenders juvenile and nasty nicknames (“Little Marco,” “Low Energy Jeb,” “Crooked Hillary”).

# Suggested that voters didn’t really care about candidates’ policy positions and that he would win because “the voters like me, they understand me, they know I’m going to do the job.”

# Falsely claimed that Muslims in New Jersey celebrated the September 11, 2001 terror attacks: “I watched when the World Trade Center came tumbling down. And I watched in Jersey City, New Jersey, where thousands and thousands of people were cheering as that building was coming down. Thousands of people were cheering.”

# Openly mocked a disabled reporter (the New York Times’ Serge Kovalski) in the juvenile fashion of a vicious grade-school bully.

# Called for the banning of Muslim migration to the United States “until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on.”

# Outrageously repeated the right-wing lie that there had been a call for “a moment of silence” in honor of the murderer of five policemen in Dallas in the summer of 2016.

# Openly encouraged political violence at his campaign rallies, saying this (for example) at a rally in Cedar Rapids, Iowa: “They said, ‘Mr. Trump, there may be someone with tomatoes in the audience.’ So if you see somebody getting ready to throw a tomato, knock the crap out of them, would you? Seriously. Okay? Just knock the hell — I promise you, I will pay the legal fees.”

# Complained that it took too long to remove protesters from his rallies “because nobody wants to hurt each other anymore.”

# Threatened to undo First Amendment free speech protections, saying this at a rally in Texas: “If I become president, oh, do [the New York Times and the Washington Post] have problems.... I’m going to open up our libel laws so when they write purposely negative and horrible and false articles, we can sue them and win lots of money.”

# Refused to disavow racists like David Duke and his followers.

# Re-tweeted the claim that Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush “has to like Mexican illegals because of his [Hispanic] wife.”

# Called for the “punishment” of women who have “illegal abortions.”

# Told an Iowa rally that he “kn[e]w more about ISIS than the generals do. Believe me.”

# Suggested that Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson was a child molester.

# Praised Russia’s authoritarian head of state Vladimir Putin by saying this to MSNBC in December of 2015: “He’s running his country and at least he’s a leader.”

# Said that Hillary Clinton “got schlonged” by Barack Obama during the 2008 Democratic presidential primary.

# Told an Iowa rally in January of 2016 that “I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and I wouldn’t lose voters.”

# Said in a February 2016 Republican presidential debate that “I would bring back waterboarding. And I’d bring back a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding.”

# Absurdly told New Hampshire voters in February 2016 that the nation’s “real unemployment rate under Obama” was 35 to 42 percent.

# Absurdly tweeted that President Barack Obama would have attended Supreme Court Justice Anton Scalia’s funeral “if it had been held in a mosque.”

# Said this when asked by MSNBC hosts in March of 2016 who he got foreign policy advice from: “I’m speaking with myself... because I have a very good brain and I’ve said a lot of things...My primary consultant is myself, and I have, you know, a good instinct for this stuff.”

# Said this when asked on “The O’Reilly Factor” if he would use nuclear weapons in Europe: “Europe is a big place, I’m not going to take cards off the table.”

# Called US Senator Elizabeth Warren “Pocahantas” because of her claim to possess Native American ancestry.

- # Told a California rally in 2016 during a major drought that “there is no drought.”
- # Spotted a Black person at a June 2016 California rally and yelled “look at my African-American here”
- # Embraced racial profiling in a June 2016 CBS interview.
- # Said this at a June 2016 rally in New Hampshire: “That could be a Mexican plane up there. They’re getting ready to attack.”
- # Labelled the distinguished long-term U.S. Congressman and Senator Bernie Sanders “crazy Bernie” in July of 2016.
- # Told the 2016 Republican National Convention that “I alone can fix” the nation’s problems – a frequent cultish theme in Trump’s campaign rallies.
- # Brought on as his chief political strategist the neofascist Stephen Bannon, the editor of the popular white-nationalist Website Breitbart News.
- # Encouraged armed right-wing violence against the government by making the following provocative statement at an August 2016 rally in North Carolina: “Hillary wants to abolish... the Second [right to bear arms] Amendment... and if she gets to pick her judges, nothing you can do, folks. Although the Second Amendment people—maybe there is.”
- # Insanely told an August 2016 Florida rally that Obama was “the founder of ISIS OK? He’s the founder. He founded ISIS and I would say the co-founder would be crooked Hillary Clinton.”
- # Falsely told a September 2016 “National Security Forum” that “I was totally against the war in Iraq” and then told the same forum that “If we would have taken the oil [in Iraq], you wouldn’t have ISIS.”
- # Refused to let go of his absurd claims that Obama was born outside the United States in a September 2016 interview with The Washington Post.
- # Said this to FOX Business Channel’s right-wing host Lou Dobbs about the mass-murderous Egyptian strongman Abdel Fattah el-Sisi: “He’s a fantastic guy. ... He took control of Egypt. And he really took control of it.”



# Suggested that a distinguished federal judge hearing a case involving Trump's fraudulent Trump University was biased against Trump because the jurist was "Mexican."

# Called for a "national [racist] stop-and-frisk law" (which would create a national racist state of martial law) in the name of "law and order."

# Embraced torture ("it works") and called for the murder of alleged Islamic terrorists' families.

# Asked why the U.S. had nuclear weapons if it couldn't use them.

# Insanely advocated the nuclear weaponization of arch-reactionary and absolutist Saudi Arabia.

# Mocked Asians in a juvenile way in front of hot microphones.

# Regularly led rally crowds in the chant "Lock Her [Hillary] Up" – a remarkable call for the incarceration of his major party opponent.

# Denied twice in October 2016 that he had sexually assaulted women by revoltingly suggesting that neither of two accusers were attractive enough to merit rape.

# Suggested during his third debate with Hillary Clinton that he might not accept defeat in the 2016 presidential election.

### **Believe Them the First Time**

Donald Trump has been precisely the terrible, corrupt, right-wing, anti-intellectual, white-nationalist, racist, sexist president and indeed fascist he warned the world he would be.

"When someone shows you who they are," the famed novelist Maya Angelou once wrote, "believe them the first time."

"You think I'm going to change?" Trump said in May of 2016. "I'm not going to change."

### **"Black People Are Too Stupid to Vote for Me"**

One individual who has not likely been completely surprised by the racist, sexist, and fascist nature of Trump's presidency is Trump's longtime and former personal attorney and "fixer" Michael Cohen. In November of 2018, Cohen told Vanity Affair about something Trump said while he was traveling with the future president through a poor Black Chicago neighborhood during the late 2000s: "only the blacks could like this."



After the great South African anti-apartheid activist and president Nelson Mandela died in December of 2013, Trump said this to Cohen: “Name one country run by a black person that’s not a shithole. Name one city.” The United States’ president at the time was Barack Obama.

Cohen also recalled a conversation with Trump after his boss returned from a 2016 campaign rally. When Cohen observed that the rally crowd was mostly white, Trump responded, “That’s because black people are too stupid to vote for me.”

After being convicted of helping Trump criminally pay off two women to keep silent about their extramarital affairs with the future president during the 2016 campaign, Cohen would tell Congress that Trump reminded him of the German fascists who exterminated Cohen’s Jewish relatives in Germany during the 1940s and warned that Trump would not leave the White House without bloodshed.

### **Gopnik’s Warning**

Another person likely unsurprised by Trump’s horrifying presidency is New Yorker columnist Adam Gopnik. “Trump,” Gopnik wrote in July of 2016, summarizing elementary facts of Trump’ life: “is unstable, a liar, narcissistic, contemptuous of the basic norms of political life, and deeply embedded among the most paranoid and irrational of conspiracy theorists. There may indeed be a pathos to his followers’ dreams of some populist rescue for their plights. But he did not come to political attention as a ‘populist’; he came to politics as a racist, a proponent of birtherism.” As Gopnik had explained two months before, the correct description of Trump needed to include the word “fascist” in one way or another:

“There is a simple formula for descriptions of Donald Trump: add together a qualification, a hyphen, and the word “fascist.” The sum may be crypto-fascist, neo-fascist, latent fascist, proto-fascist, or American-variety fascist—one of that kind, all the same. Future political scientists will analyze (let us hope in amused retrospect, rather than in exile in New Zealand or Alberta) the precise elements of Poujadisme, Peronism and Huck Finn’s Pap that compound in Trump’s ‘ideology.’ But his personality and his program belong exclusively to the same dark strain of modern politics: an incoherent program of national revenge led by a strongman; a contempt for parliamentary government and procedures; an insistence that the existing, democratically elected government, whether Léon Blum’s or Barack Obama’s, is in league with evil outsiders and has been secretly trying to undermine the nation; a hysterical militarism designed to

no particular end than the sheer spectacle of strength; an equally hysterical sense of beleaguerment and victimization; and a supposed suspicion of big capitalism entirely reconciled to the worship of wealth and “success.” It is always alike, and always leads inexorably to the same place: failure, met not by self-correction but by an inflation of the original program of grievances, and so then on to catastrophe. The idea that it can be bounded in by honest conservatives in a Cabinet or restrained by normal constitutional limits is, to put it mildly, unsupported by history (emphasis liberally added).” [Adam Gopnik, “Going There With Donald Trump,” The New Yorker, May 11, 2016].

Prophetic words, suggestive of something that Refuse Fascism and other left organization are saying nearly four years later: we will not remove Trump and defeat Trumpism in “normal [bourgeois-] constitutional” ways: it will take a great mass and grassroots social movement beneath and beyond the “normal” legal and electoral channels. The sooner will build it the better for all, at home and abroad.

***CounterPunch 20.01.2020***