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www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

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by PAUL STREET

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Trump: White Bread Not Yet Toasted



Photograph by Nathaniel St. Clair

The Orange Fascist Death Machine

Donald Trump is a fascist death machine. He's proved it again and again in numerous ways, including but not limited to these: the separation and caging of migrant children, hailing Nazi white supremacists as "fine people," pardoning sociopathic fascists and war criminals, holding regular white nationalist hate rallies, conveying far-right conspiracy theories, calling Confederate flags and statues valuable parts of "our national heritage," telling progressive nonwhite Congresswoman to "go back to the crime-infested countries you came from," calling Haiti and African nations "shit-hole countries," consistently

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defying the rule of law, repeatedly defying constitutional checks and balances, denying the seriousness of the coronavirus crisis, calling COVID-19 a hoax, calling COVID-19 the “Kung Flu,” ordering mostly Latinx meatpacking and poultry processing workers back onto infected killing floors, trying to kick tens of millions of Americans off of health insurance, rejecting international asylum law, telling border patrol agents to shoot migrants, sending paramilitary immigration officers out to round-up “illegals,” murdering Iran’s top military authority (and others) in Iraq, threatening Iran and North Korea with nuclear annihilation, banning travel from Muslim countries, reinstating the federal death penalty, tearing up environmental regulations, banning federal agencies from mentioning climate change, pulling the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Accords, using the COVID-19 crisis as an excuse to escalate his assault on environmental safety, disabling an accurate U.S. Census, purging his administration of anyone viewed as disloyal, stacking the federal courts with Christian fascists, telling cops to “take the gloves off” in repressing Black and brown “criminals,” calling Mexicans “rapists” and “murderers,” praising citizens who yell “White Power,” calling the media “the enemy of the people,” telling his supporters not to believe what they see and hear (and to accept just what he tells them), trashing women, attacking women’s rights, mounting an epic Orwellian war on truth, lying 10 times a day, conflating corporate Democrats with “the radical Left,” accusing Democrats of wanting to slaughter babies, rejecting and trashing climate and public health science, praising armed right-wing militia members who occupy state capitals to protest common sense public health restrictions, calling civil rights protesters “terrorists,” calling Black Lives Matter a “hate symbol,” deploying federal troops to crush social justice protest, claiming that the nation is besieged by the “radical Left,” threatening the tax exempt status of colleges and universities on the absurd grounds that they are being overrun by Marxists and anarchists, illegally diverting federal funds to the building of a nativist Wall...

...You know, stuff like that. I could go on (and on).

The pandemic that the mad-dog killer Trump helped fuel and fan is raging out of control, making America a diseased laughingstock around the world.

Undeterred by biological reality, the tangerine fascist death machine (TFDM) has sought to discredit the nation’s highly popular top infectious disease expert Dr. Anthony Fauci.

The demented Sickener-in-Chief's risible press secretary claims that the world is looking to the United States as "the leader" in handling COVID-19. This ridiculous boast is Orwellian madness on steroids.

And just yesterday (Wednesday, July 15th), we learned that Hospital data on coronavirus patients is being "rerouted to the Trump administration instead of first being sent to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (the CDC)." This profoundly dangerous authoritarian move will make critical medical data less transparent to the public as the TFDM continues to mass-murderously downplay the record-setting spread of the pandemic. It is a grave and criminal act whose significance is being drastically underestimate in corporate media.

Along the way and behind the scenes, hundreds have been charged federally for participating in the George Floyd protests. The demented fascist oligarch's June 26th "Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence" authorized the deployment of federal paramilitary forces to protect the Fatherland's monuments and property from "Marxist" and left "extremists."

As the nation struggles with a deadly pandemic whose racially disparate impact on nonwhite people certainly cheers the orange fascist death machine, the monster in the White House knows who the real danger to America is: "the radical Left."

Right. You betchya.

As scholars have long observed, fascism relies on the claim that the virtuous Nation is besieged by a powerful Left that must be crushed.

How It Could Stay in Power after 2020: Eight Reasons

Given the endlessly reckless, disease-, death- and Depression- driving lunacy of the wannabe fascist dictator Donald Trump, it is unsurprising that his approval rating is in the tank – a remarkably low 37-39% four months out from a presidential election. Two thirds of the nation, a super-majority, disapproves of how he has handled COVID-19.

Also unsurprisingly, the Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden leads Trump by big margins in numerous key battleground states (where alone there is a real presidential election thanks to the absurdly un-democratic Electoral College system) and matching Trump even in some traditionally "red" (Republican) states like COVID-19-plagued Texas.

So, “Trump is toast,” as numerous liberals and some lefties have been telling me for the last year, right?

Maybe. But not necessarily. I seem to recall Hillary Clinton being a “sure thing” around this time of year in 2016. I’m not making any predictions this time around. Maddening as the prospect of a second Trump term may be, it remains a distinct possibility for at least eight reasons:

+1. The corporatist and imperialist awfulness of Lyin Joe Biden. Time and space do not permit me here to replicate what I have previously written about the sheer right-wing miserableness of the dismal and demobilizing Democrats’ latest depressing, dollar-drenched dog of a presidential nominee. For more details please see my following previous publication on this depressing topic:

+ Joe Biden: An Imperial Corporatist Wrapped in the Bloody Flag of Charlottesville, Counterpunch, April 26, 2019

+ “Democratic Adults in the Room?” Truthdig, June 20, 2019

+ No Joe: On Character, Quality and Authenticity, Counterpunch, September 6, 2019.

+ The Democratic Party’s Campaign to Re-Elect President Trump, Counterpunch, January 3, 2020

+ Joe Biden is Demented Racist Shark Food, Counterpunch, March 9, 2020

+ Dear Berners: Dementia Joe is How Much “Your” Party HATES You, Counterpunch, March 13, 2020

+ “Old White Male Plutocrat,” Rt.com, May 10, 2020

Biden’s egregious record as a cringing corporate pet and a vicious hawk is going to make it even more difficult than usual for progressives to make marks next to the name of the usual “running dog lackey of the bourgeoisie” the Democrats place on the presidential ballot. This is a candidate who declares “no empathy” for the economic struggles of Millennials (“give me a break,” Biden said in response to young adults “complaining” about bad jobs and unaffordable health insurance) and says he would veto Medicare for All if it came to his desk. (You can’t make up shit like that).

+2. Biden’s cognitive decline. Shame on Barack Obama and the rest of the Democratic establishment for putting up an apparent dementia victim (this is the position of numerous professionals I have consulted) as the answer to a president that Noam Chomsky rightly calls “the most dangerous criminal in human history.” What will Obama et al. have to say for themselves when Joe “You Know the Thing” Biden forgets his own name and has to

be led off the online Democratic Convention stage by a personal care assistant? (It's not for nothing that the Democrats are keeping Biden as far out of the public eye as humanly possible this summer and fall. They have no idea what kind of verbal and mental screw-up he may put out on the airwaves and Internet)

+3. The astonishing amount of money the Trump noise and hate machine is raising from billionaires and multi-millionaires pleased with his regressive tax cuts, his ongoing efforts "dismantle the regulatory state," along with his sweetheart deals for corporate friends. Trump's giant billionaire-funded war chest will pay for a head-spinning and truth-trashing blitzkrieg of neo-McCarthyite and nativist attack ads and "social media" gaslighting. Look for the TFD's deep-pockets campaign to connect Biden to "the Chinese Communist Party," "Antifa," the "radical Left," and "the Chinese virus." One likely will claim that Biden and the "radical Democrats" have been conspiring with China to defeat Trump by crashing the U.S. economy with the virus. Repeated often enough, such made paranoid-style messaging will take hold with a not completely insignificant band of the electorate. Trump and his campaign will of course relentlessly attack Biden's mental fitness, ironically enough given Trump's clear status as a nearly illiterate malignant narcissist.

+4. The certainty of some big Trump-Barr "October Surprise" akin to the James Comey FBI revelations that helped sink the "lying neoliberal warmonger" (Adolph Reed, Jr.'s accurate description in a widely read essay asking people to vote for to block the fascist Trump) Hillary Clinton in 2016. Expect high-profile prosecutions of former Obama administration officials, maybe even Biden himself. Also to be anticipated is a bogus Trump administration claim to have successfully shepherded a COVID-19 vaccine or cure.

+5. Mass racist and partisan vote suppression, silence over which is a longstanding gentleman's agreement between the major parties.

+6. Practical ballot-taking and ballot-counting difficulties related to the complexities of holding a national election amidst a likely deepened pandemic.

+7. The distinct possibility that Trump will use the pandemic he has fanned as an excuse to cancel the November elections. He will declare the coronavirus a national emergency requiring suspension and reiterate his false claim that mail-in-ballots are fatally subject to fraud.

+8. The likelihood that Trump will question the legitimacy of an Electoral College count that does not go his way. Trump has been seeding the narrative that he cannot be fairly voted of office from day one of his twisted reign. With its arch-authoritarian white-nationalist Christian fascist Attorney General William Barr in the lead, the death machine will tie up a Biden victory in the courts. Millions will hit the streets, leading Trump to invoke the 1807 Insurrection Act and deploy federal troops against “radical Left terrorists.” The ball will pass into the hands of the nation’s top military commanders, with an uncertain outcome, especially if Biden’s victory margin is small. Local, county and state police forces, instinctually and institutionally fascist, can be expected to side with the Antichrist and against the populace.

The Really Critical Thing

Even if Trump is successfully voted out and can be compelled to leave without incident (as is quite possible), the wisdom of Howard Zinn will remain essential: “the really critical thing isn’t who is sitting in the White House, but who is sitting in—the streets, in the cafeterias, in the halls of government, in the factories. Who is protesting, who is occupying offices and demonstrating—those are the things that determine what happens.”

This counsel still applies if the ridiculous right-wing corporate clown Joe Biden becomes the nation’s 46th president on January 20, 2021. Nothing remotely progressive will happen under a Biden-Harris administration without masses of people regularly demanding change in the streets, on the shop-floors, in the town centers, in the halls of government, in the fields. Another miserable center-right elitist corporate presidency on the model of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama will produce a neofascistic successor presidency (Tom Cotton?) so vicious and right-wing as to make some people nostalgic for the Trump years, absurd as the sounds.

The Rightward Ratchet

Not that politics is all about voting but it is an election year and here’s an argument for lesser-evil left voting that is all too rarely made: the Democrats are more effectively able to falsely and dangerously pose as a popular opposition party when they are out of office. They are more effectively exposed as the corporatists and imperialists they are when they hold office and their false promises of progressive change are held up against their policymaking (and non-making) roles in power.

And here's a counter-argument against lesser-evil voting that is also too rarely made: sheepishly promising one's vote without conditions to corporate and imperialist Democrats ("lying neoliberal warmongers") doesn't help push only the Democratic Party further to the starboard side (thereby putting it out of touch with the nation's silent progressive majority in ways that open the door to Republicans by demobilizing Democratic voters). It also helps ratchet the Republican Party ever further to the apocalyptic and neo-fascistic right as the Democrats steal more and more of the Republicans' onetime pro-business, imperial and authoritarian agenda. Even as they scream (with no small evidence) about the scary dreadfulness of the rightmost party, left Lesser-Evilists are helping push the Republicans into fascist, white-nationalist territory. It's the only space the Republicans have left in a party system that has gone far to the right of the citizenry.

Revolution Time: What Have We Got to Lose?

I personally get why many on the left will vote Biden to block Trump in contested states. If I weren't registered in a "safe state" (an amusing term in these wildly precarious times), I might consider it myself. But it is not about getting corporate Joe Biden in and pushing him left, a fool's mission. However next November turns out, it's about setting serious about what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called near the end of his "the real issue to be faced" beyond superficial matters: "the radical reconstruction of society itself." We need to organize for and undertake a giant rolling popular uprising that targets the whole U.S. state-capitalist societal order and its vast imperial and repressive edifice at home and abroad—the broad institutional and cultural structures of oppression (including the Democratic Party) that made something as noxious as a Donald Trump presidency possible in the first place. As Chris Hedges noted in a May 2018 essay bearing the prophetic title "The Coming Collapse":

"The Trump administration did not rise, *prima facie*, like Venus on a half shell from the sea. Donald Trump is the result of a long process of political, cultural, and social decay. He is a product of our failed democracy. The longer we perpetuate the fiction that we live in a functioning democracy, that Trump and the political mutations around him are somehow an aberrant deviation that can be vanquished in the next election, the more we will hurtle toward tyranny. The problem is not Trump. It is a political system, dominated by corporate power and the mandarins of the two major political parties, in which we don't count. We will wrest back political control by dismantling the corporate state, and

this means massive and sustained civil disobedience.... If we do not stand up, we will enter a new dark age.”

The “new dark age” may well already be underway. It is long past time for a real American Revolution. What have we got to lose?

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