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Trump's Nuclear Weapons are Standing Up And Standing By



Photograph Source: The White House – Public Domain

The President of the United States has the power to fire off thousands of nuclear weapons and destroy the world. As succinctly [explained](#) by William Perry and Tom Collina in the *New York Times*, “Mr. Trump has the absolute authority to start a nuclear war. Within minutes, the president could unleash the equivalent of more than 10,000 Hiroshima bombs. He does not need a second opinion. The defense secretary has no say. Congress has no role.”

This is the Trump who contracted the Covid 19 virus and on October 2 was taken to hospital where he was drugged to the eyeballs, [referred to](#) the infliction as “a blessing from God”, and [declared](#) “I’m a perfect physical specimen.” He then [was flown](#) to a massive election rally in Florida on October 12, joining his supporters in shoulder-rubbing maskless happiness and [announced](#) “Now they say I’m immune. I feel so powerful. I’ll walk in there. I’ll kiss

everyone in that audience. I'll kiss the guys and the beautiful women, just give you a big fat kiss."

The mental instability evident in these and many other utterances of that "perfect physical specimen" is disturbing. And the fact that it exists in a man who could destroy the world is terrifying.

The immediacy of nuclear danger is evident in Trump's attitude to the presidential election itself. As the *Financial Times* [noted](#), he "has refused to commit himself to a peaceful transfer of power if he were to lose on November 3, citing unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud. He told one rightwing group, the Proud Boys, to 'stand back and standby' during last month's presidential debate." His 'Proud Boys' supporters constitute one of the armed and deeply bigoted militias that have recently surfaced in the U.S., and nobody knows how they will react in the event of a Trump defeat. It is of some concern [that](#) "Facebook has taken down at least 6,500 pages and groups linked to more than 300 *US militias* [emphasis added] after it announced in mid-August that it was culling groups that host 'discussions of potential violence' on its platform, including 'when they use veiled language and symbols'."

If Trump refuses to stand down and get out of the White House in January in the event of a Biden victory, what happens to the nuclear football carried by the military aide who is always the president's closest shadow? Would Trump insist on retaining possession of the case containing the essentials required for ordering nuclear war? Would the military officer carrying the football obey such an order? What would the rifle-toting 'Proud Boys' or other armed militias do about it?

Trump [told](#) CNN that "The only way we're going to lose this election is if this election is rigged" and [tweeted](#) "This will be the most corrupt Election in American History!" but did not elaborate on what he will do if in his own judgement he loses the election by alleged fraud. In any event the period between announcement of the result and Inauguration of the 46th President on January 20 will be fraught with uncertainty because Trump will still have the power to issue executive orders that do not require Congressional approval and, above all, the power to commit his country to war.

Given Trump's mental condition and likely reaction to electoral defeat, the immediate future looks dark indeed, but the one certain thing is that Trump will not lift a finger to help the poor and unemployed who are struggling against the effects of the pandemic. It is [recorded](#) that in 2019 there were 34 million Americans living in poverty. There were countless millions of children going hungry in the world's richest country and their lives have got immeasurably worse since the virus struck, but the bankers haven't been suffering, any more than suppliers of nuclear weapons and associated gadgetry.

On October 14 the *New York Times* [reported](#) that the Goldman Sachs "had a significantly more profitable quarter than expected, lifted by continued strength in the trading of stocks and bonds and gains from certain investments. The bank reported earnings of \$3.62 billion,

far higher than Wall Street analysts had projected, and revenue of \$10.78 billion for the third quarter.” Just along the road, JPMorgan Chase enjoyed third-quarter profits of \$9.44 billion which was a mighty increase on its \$4.76 billion last quarter and even better than the \$9.08 billion it raked in the same quarter a year ago.

This year in the United States, while children starve and banks are making vast profits, the nuclear arms’ industry is being given \$28.9 billion for “modernization” of its vast assets, including \$7 billion for command, control and communications, \$4.4 billion for Columbus Class nuclear submarines, and \$2.8 billion for B-21 long range strike bombers.

So Trump is assured of much support from the money kings and the military of which he is Commander-in-Chief. In September Fox News reported that 235 retired generals and admirals had signed an open letter saying among other things that “Donald J. Trump has been tested as few other presidents have and is the proven leader to confront these dangers” which is an intriguing claim to make about a man whose heartless crackdown on would-be immigrants resulted in a thousand children being taken from their parents. NBC reported that Trump “instituted a ‘zero tolerance’ policy that separated migrant children and parents at the southern U.S. border” and officials “have yet to track down the parents of 545 children.”

These kids were torn away from their parents and are unlikely to ever see them again. And the irony is that Trump has the backing of hundreds of retired generals who believe “the 2020 election affords the American people an urgently needed opportunity to affirm their devotion to the Constitution of the United States and to the American way of life.”

The Generals are right up there with the Proud Boys with the American Way of Life.

Realism does exist among some of the right wing, as in the case of Mitt Romney who is a longtime Republican and was the party’s selection to run for president against Barack Obama in 2012. Now a Senator, he is ferociously opposed to such humanitarian schemes as Social Security and Medicare, is committed to increasing military spending, and opposes reform of the financial sector of the economy. In short, he is a card-carrying, authoritarian near-copy of President Trump.

But Romney has realized what is happening in America and unlike other Republicans who have similar sentiments has spoken out against its current state. On October 13 he tweeted that the country “has moved away from spirited debate to a vile, vituperative, hate-filled morass that is unbecoming of any free nation. The world is watching America with abject horror.” He now admits that Trump has spent four years confronting and insulting fellow-Americans as well as nations that have even mildly opposed his disjointed foreign policy.

America is suffering from instability in the White House and carnage on its streets. While poverty is rife and the pandemic is killing thousands in the richest country in the world its nuclear weapons are under jurisdiction of an unhinged egotistical sociopath. Given Trump’s public pronouncements it is likely he will not accept defeat in the November 3 election. The

country will then descend even further into what Romney calls a “hate-filled morass” — but the main international anxiety concerns control of nuclear weapons. Is this unstable man in the White House going to be allowed to continue to wield his present authority to start a nuclear war?

It is not surprising that the world is “watching America with abject horror”, because Trump’s nuclear weapons are standing up and standing by in a period of major international tension. Is anyone in Washington prepared and able to control him?

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