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## Trump and Giuliani Go Full IS in Attack on Biden and Democrats

It's often been noted that countries that go to war tend to adopt the behaviors of their enemies in fighting them, and then bring that war and the techniques they have appropriated home where they begin to apply them domestically.

For at least two decades, since the US in 2001 launched its so-called "War" on Terror following the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in 2001, the US, under a series of three presidents, has waged a grossly illegal war around the globe against alleged terrorists, real or perceived, in countries as remote as Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria. In this borderless, lawless "war" the US has turned to the same kind of terrorism that it accuses its enemies of using.

Not content to just drop bombs on militants, it has turned to drone execution by Hellfire missiles tipped with explosives that destroy countless innocent civilians in the interest, sometimes, of "taking out" just one purported terrorist. They then launch a second missile when people run to help rescue victims of such attacks, or wait until the funeral, and then attack that. (It's a tactic called a "double tapping," a term used by soldiers who illegally put a bullet in the head of a wounded enemy fighter instead of taking the person into custody and providing medical assistance as required by international law.)

These attacks on terrorist leaders are, in the lingo of the trade, referred to as "decapitations." It's the same term applied to what the Taliban in Afghanistan or IS fighters in Syria or elsewhere use to describe how they kill captives in their actions, which they, without an airforce or access to drone technology, dispatch in the old-fashioned way, with a large knife or a sword.

Now soundly and decisively defeated in his bid for re-election (Biden's winning the national vote by 4% and by 6 million votes and counting, with only heavily Democratic New York State — and primarily even more heavily Democratic New York City — having a significant

one-sixth of its votes in the form of absentee ballots left to count) and having won 306 Electoral College votes, 36 more than needed, Dear Leader Donald Trump is turning to IS tactics in his flailing effort to hang on to the White House.

Last night, on Fox News's "Sean Hannity Show," Rudy Giuliani, the head of Trump's legal team that is filing dozens of lawsuits in so-called swing states that narrowly went for Joe Biden this year seeking to overturn those Biden victories, told Hannity that the Democratic Party had been taken over by "the Clintons," and then added that the leadership of that party "needs to be beheaded." He made a hand-across-the-neck gesture to emphasize his meaning.

Hannity cut the interview off abruptly at that point, but the Fox News shock-jock shouldn't have been caught by surprise. Giuliani has been calling the recent election a "vast Democratic conspiracy" to steal the election since the day after the voting when it became evident that Biden was going to win handily. He echoes his boss, Pres. Trump, who says much the same thing all the time without specifically calling for beheadings, preferring the slightly tamer "Lock 'em up!" as his mantra.

But a man or a president is responsible for the actions of his hirelings including his choice of attorneys, and President Trump has not sacked his raving top lawyer Giuliani, even now that he is actively promoting the beheading of the opposition party's leadership. By allowing Giuliani to continue in his post despite his latest felonious call for the beheading of the president-elect, Trump has fully brought America's monstrous tactics from the "War" on Terror home.

If some whack-job cult follower of Trump's now decides to carry out Giuliani's Fatwa, the blame will fall squarely not on Giuliani's but on Trump's head.

The toxic stench of the "War on Terror" has already spread over the years to include many in both parties (remember Hillary Clinton's suggestion, as Secretary of State, for a drone to "take out" journalist Julian Assange while he was holed up in Ecuador's London embassy apartment?)

But Trump and the Republicans in Congress and Republican-run state legislatures who continue to meekly endorse President Trump's mad efforts to overturn the election — most recently by appealing to Republican legislatures to move to replace elected Electoral College electors with pro-Trump electors even if their states' voters went for Biden — have taken things to a qualitatively darker place. By perpetuating the fraud that the election was stolen and that it would be legitimate to toss out the results and substitute the will of those legislatures, they are, like Giuliani, encouraging IS-like behavior.

I'm the first to agree that the US electoral system is a cesspool and an embarrassment, terminally corrupted by money from large corporations and wealthy. But the reality is also that the corruption equally applies to Democrats and Republicans, not to one party. The reality too is that except in the fevered mind of fact-challenged conspiracy advocates, there is

no fraud in voting machines and automated ballot-counting machines. The fraud in US elections happens before the voting starts and while it is happening in the form of orchestrated voter suppression, and at least these days, that kind of fraud is overwhelmingly the work of Republican-run states and county election districts.

What's happening now is more akin to what we see routinely in Third World countries that hold periodic elections, and then screw around with access, ensuring that the autocrat and his (usually) acolytes and lackeys win their races. In many of those countries, like Belarus, the coup leaders in Bolivia, and former dictator Augusto Pinochet in Chile, violence against the opposition and its leadership is part of the game.

The amazing thing is not that Trump has adopted this troglodyte fascist approach to trying to cling to power. We have had ample experience with his authoritarian tendencies beginning with his 2016 campaign and through four ugly years of his madcap presidency to have been able to predict this. Just look at his backing for armed attacks on peaceful demonstrators by GI-Joe clad right-wing thugs like the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, or for the propaganda-addled kid he has lionized who murdered two demonstrators and seriously injured a third with an assault rifle in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

What's demoralizingly shocking is the 73 million votes Trump received on Nov. 3, at least half of which came from cultists who swoon over his fascism, and the other half of whom opportunistically support him because they hope he will back their personal minority-backed goals like outlawing abortion, preventing affirmative action, killing unions, destroying environmental regulations, etc.

In the end, come Jan. 20, President Trump will be removed from the White House one way or another, but the stench of his four-year tenancy will remain and will linger in the air of the US until the next government, hopefully, manages to disinfect the place by both punishing the president and his criminal abettors in advisory or administrative posts, and until voters oust the lackeys in Congressional and state legislative offices who enabled his crimes and offered support for them afterwards.

The stench will also continue in our collective nostrils until those Democrats who helped create the environment that made a Trump possible in the first place through their criminal wars and through domestic policies that have favored the wealthy and large corporations, while allowing ordinary Americans to struggle in poverty or to survive by borrowing on their homes trying to meet expenses on a paycheck-to-paycheck basis for years, are also ousted from power.

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