

Lies, Historical Amnesia, Bombast and Double Standards - Trump Speaks at the UN

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Trump's speech at the UN this morning is one of the best speeches I have heard aimed at an ignorant uninformed audience, essentially his Make America Great Again (MAGA) followers, and his political state handlers. Staying on script from the teleprompters, it was obvious that while many of these ideas were his, most of the writing, indeed probably all of it, was done by someone else.

The platitudes and homilies about peace, security, and sovereignty were many, supporting his idea that MAGA includes the whole world supporting and abiding by U.S. dictation. The information provided went far beyond homilies to being outright lies, large areas of historical amnesia - especially for Iran and North Korea - replete with double standards, and not so subtle bombast and hubris.

Introduction

The speech began with comments about how well the U.S. was doing. Trump noted that the stock market was at record highs. He did not mention that this was because of the Fed's zero interest policy, the essentially free money corporations could borrow to buy back their own stock and artificially boost the market; nor did he mention all the interventions the Fed and corporations use to control stock and commodities prices.

He followed by bragging about the great growth in employment, without noting that most of the new jobs are part-time, on call, and generally low paid service jobs (really, how many bartenders can one country have?). The employment statistics are manipulated through the artful use of a 'birth-death' model (with its assumption of more businesses being created, and thus more employment, than are going out of business) and the use of 'seasonal adjustments' (from which very small tweaks can produce large shifts in numbers). Ironically in his closing statements of trade, he argued that the U.S. has lost large numbers of factories and workers to other countries due to the unfair trade arrangements (how many bartenders again?).

The introduction continued with wonderful platitudinous lies about the beneficence of the U.S. way of life, such that "we do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone", and letting us "shine as an example for everyone to watch." He repeated it very shortly afterwards, saying the U.S. "did not attempt to impose our way of life on others," as if repetition makes it true - although it does become reality within the big lie technique of propaganda. In short, Trump has denied centuries of U.S. military/economic adventurism that imposed - well perhaps not exactly their way of life - their will, greed, avarice, and power on other people.

“Small group of rogue regimes...”

Trump then transitioned into his main topics, the “small group of rogue regimes” who did not abide by the ‘rule of law’ and sovereign independence. It could be asked whose rule of law – U.S. military law or international humanitarian law, or the UN Charter and the Geneva Conventions on occupied territories and prisoners of war? And of course it would never occur to him that these rogue states are the ones that generally have suffered highly due to U.S. adventurism into their internal sovereign affairs.

North Korea

North Korea was up first, the “depraved nation” that “imperils the world with nuclear destruction.” So why not the depraved nations such as the U.S. that has actually used nuclear weapons; or Israel that continually reminds friends and neighbours that it has its ‘doomsday option’; or Pakistan and India who remain outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which requires nations to find means to reduce their arsenals. No, the real nuclear threat grows from the dimly lit insides of Trump’s mind, accompanied by the still existing neocon desire for a nuclear first strike – perhaps trying to use North Korea as an example of what it can do.



Unfortunately, this is a case of enormous historical amnesia. North and South Korea had regular skirmishes against each other before the actual war. South Korea was a U.S. puppet dictatorship that killed many of its own citizens and has been reported quite authoritatively to have actually attacked and captured a North Korean town before the North retaliated en masse. Eventually, with the war stalemated, the threats of nuclear bomb use eliminated, the U.S. air force destroyed all infrastructure in the North, including all components of civilian support, killing an estimated one third of the population. And you wonder why they want nuclear weapons? And you forget what happened to Hussein and Gaddafi after they gave up their nuclear ambitions?

Iran

Next came “another reckless regime”, Iran, “an economically depleted rogue state whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed, and chaos.” My, my, Trump cannot seem to remember either U.S. history or the history of Iran. It was the U.S. (along with Britain) that overthrew the democratically elected Mossadegh government of Iran in 1953 over – you guessed it – control of oil. It was the U.S. that imposed the Shah and his secret service torturers, the Savak, on the people, who unsurprisingly rebelled and began their religious revolution.



Essentially Trump blamed Iran for all the wars, terrorists, and political chaos in the Middle East. More irony, as he then goes on to talk about his speech to Saudi Arabia in which he says the group agreed to “confront terrorism and confront the Islamic extremism that inspires them....to expose and hold responsible those countries who support and finance terror groups....” One can hear the Saudis quaking in their slippers at this line, as they silently go about their financing and arming of terror both for and against the will of the U.S., while maintaining the petrodollar as the world’s reserve currency in support of the truly greatest terror country in the world.

Trump also denounces the recent Iranian nuclear deal, saying he “cannot abide by an agreement” that could lead to a nuclear weapon and that it is “an embarrassment to the United States.” Well, no, Trump is the true embarrassment – or should be – as the other co-signatories to the agreement have so far stood by it.

Syria and segues

Of course Syria could not be left off the table, after a brief sojourn through Afghanistan (“new rules of engagement”). Trump brags that the U.S. accomplished more in eight months than in the previous three years, and thanked the UN for their assistance in liberated areas. Really? Has Trump taken out Russian citizenship? The UN is not in Syria, and it is Russian leadership that has liberated most of Syria from U.S./Saudi/Qatari supported terrorists.

This segment segues into the problem of refugees and thus, through implication, with Mexico. Arguing that the U.S. is a “compassionate nation” he indicates that the country that loses people as immigrants is worse off because those are the people who could change the defects of the country they are leaving....? But what if – what if those defects are caused by unfair trade agreements (Mexico was overwhelmed with U.S. subsidized corn that pushed many farmers off their lands into the hands of corporate landlords in the Maquiladora) and the predatory practices of businesses within the U.S.?

This segues again into another topic the UN itself with part of the argument being that “some governments with egregious [pretty big word there, Donald] human rights records sit on the United Nations Human Rights Council.” Were you perhaps referring to Saudi Arabia, the titular head of the UNHRC, you know, the country that won’t let women drive or vote or dress how they want – and supports al-Qaeda and ISIS and attacked the sovereignty of Yemen and Qatar and suppresses dissent domestically and with its neighbour Bahrain? Yeah, those egregious guys.

Socialism is evil

Following this came his attacks on Cuba and Venezuela with his own egregious statement [yeah, pretty big word eh, Donald?] that the worst countries in the world are those where “Socialism has been faithfully implemented.” Wow, this statement involves ignorance of current affairs, of global and U.S. history - anything in short that has to do with any and all economic/military practices of the past two centuries.

So the Scandinavian countries are failures? Well, perhaps they didn't implement socialism fully, that's their problem. And Cuba a failure? I would argue that in spite of U.S. sanctions and embargos that Cuba has done quite well considering, with Cuban life expectancy rising, and the U.S.' falling, Cuba has a higher literacy rate than the U.S., and their health services are free - not only domestically, but provided throughout - imagine this - hurricane battered islands of the Caribbean!



Former President of Chile, Salvador Allende

Further, more globally, yes there have been failures within socialism. The Soviet Union is perhaps the biggest example, but they self-corrected. How's China doing? Are they not competing with you for global economic supremacy? And what about Iran - oh yeah, you guys overthrew their social democratic government. And then Chile - oh yeah - you provided Pinochet with the power to overthrow the democratically elected Allende social government there. And Vietnam - well millions of tons of bombs later, along with chemical weapons - without forgetting the bombings in Laos and Cambodia and you almost defeated communism there. The list goes on, the reader's best reference on this should be the writings of **William Blum**.

But I forgot Venezuela. Another oil country. Another country that has seen U.S. fomented attempts at government overthrow. Another country that has had large corporate oil interests that were taken over by the state. Another country that has had sanctions placed on it. And by gosh, socialism is the reason they are failing....?

Trump claims all of Latin America as good economic partners - perhaps that is because all countries of South and Central America have at one time or another - Honduras under Hillary Clinton's watch most recently, 2009 - undergone covert or overt U.S. intervention to

bring their governments into line with U.S. corporate interests – thus good economic partners, with a distinct lack of sovereign integrity.

Finale

What was truly significant during this anti-socialist tirade was the reaction of the audience when he announced that the implementation of socialism was the problem in all these failed countries. There was an immediate and distinct shuffle and commotion with only a few scattered bits of applause (probably from Macron, Trudeau, Merkel, always by the U.S. in spirit). Throughout the speech, the cameras also focused in on the leaders being taken to task, and all had the same disgusted, steadfast, steely look of someone who has to listen to an idiot ramble on with the usual imperial rhetoric and hubris. Well, except for Netanyahu, who was seen nodding in agreement to Trump’s rhetoric.

The speech ended with more of that hubris and rhetoric, repetition of the platitudes and bombast from the introduction – another good sign Trump did not actually write the speech, who would probably not know this paradigm of good speech/essay writing. Claiming that the U.S. is “among the greatest forces for good in the history of the world,” he eventually signed off, much to the relief of all but his ardent followers and the U.S. deep state.

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