

Descent into Barbarism: Trump Attempts to Sell War And Genocide as Virtues at UN

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It can't get more outrageous. US President Donald Trump stood in front of the United Nations and openly threatened unilateral war and genocide. It's a sign of the times that such criminal rhetoric is so casually spouted by the world's biggest military state.

When American leaders address the UN General Assembly, people are generally used to hearing a litany of falsehoods about world events and narcissistic deceptions over America's global role.

But when Trump made his debut speech on Tuesday, it marked, in addition to the usual American delusions, an unprecedented embrace of criminal militarism.

The nadir in his 40-minute rant came when Trump said the US would "totally destroy" North Korea - if it threatened America or its allies. The qualifier is a threadbare legal justification. It's also just a cynical excuse for American aggression.

"The United States has great strength and patience, but if it is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea," said Trump. Mocking North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, he added: "Rocket Man is on a suicide mission for himself and for his regime."

Trump also called for forceful confrontation - regime change - against Iran, which he vilified as a "corrupt, murderous dictatorship." He made similar veiled threats against Venezuela and its "socialist dictator" President Nicolas Maduro.

International war crimes lawyer Christopher Black said Trump's speech amounted to a stunning self-indictment. The Canadian-based attorney said the American president's words were a shockingly explicit repudiation of UN principles and international law on several counts.

With regard to North Korea, Black said: "The US president is threatening aggression under the false guise of 'defense.' By openly stating the US will act alone to use military force is a violation of the United Nations' Charter. Such unilateral use of military force is also a violation of the Nuremberg principles which condemned Nazi Germany for promulgating similar baseless justifications for its aggression."

The lawyer also added that Trump's warning to "totally destroy North Korea is advocating the genocide of an entire people." Says Black: "Any military response to any attack has to be proportional - just enough to stop the attack. Trump's stated objective to wipe the North Korean state and its people from the face of the earth is the crime of genocide under international law."

It should be deeply troubling that the supposed leader of the world's most powerful country so openly and disgustingly makes a virtue of barbarism. As American writer Tom Feeley succinctly described Trump's diatribe at the UN: "An ignorant savage who spewed hatred all over the nations of the world."

No wonder Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping opted to skip Trump's landmark speech. So too did German Chancellor Angela Merkel. It's amazing how anyone could sit through such torturous distortions. In a sane world, someone should have slapped handcuffs on Trump and hauled him off to a criminal court.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani was also absent. While the North Korean ambassador walked out of the General Assembly chamber as Trump was taking the podium for his address.

When Trump declared his criminal intent toward North Korea there were audible gasps of disquiet among the hundreds of delegates. Several times during Trump's tirade, the White House Chief of Staff John Kelly was seen covering his face with his hand or shifting uncomfortably in his seat. The body language spoke of shameful "embarrassment" – a word that Trump, ironically, used twice during his address referring disparagingly to others.

Anyone with a normal cognition of recent world events had to have cringed at almost every sentence uttered by Trump. It says something that the few delegates who appeared happy with Trump's harping included Israel's premier Benjamin Netanyahu and the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia – two actual rogue states that were unsurprisingly left out of Trump's harangue.

Even the US media seemed embarrassed by the president's boorish and bloodcurdling tone.

Pundits on CNN were staggered by Trump's threats of annihilation toward North Korea. The New York Times called it "a bellicose debut" while the Washington Post said Trump's "bellicosity and swagger" was "an incoherent mess." Admittedly, those news outlets have been opposed to Trump's presidency all the way since his election. But there was a different quality to their reaction to his UN speech – one of aghast disbelief that an American president could be so uncouth and unabashedly criminal in what he was advocating.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif blasted Trump for "ignorant hate speech" which, he said, was unworthy of a considered response.

Zarif is right. The torrent of falsehoods and delusions that Trump verbalized are hardly worth rebutting in detail, so crass were they in their upside-down view of the world. It's so unhinged, it's beyond argumentation and reason.

But let's do a few illustrative choice quotes where irony is dead as a rock.

Trump said: "Rogue regimes represented in this body not only support terrorists but threaten other nations and their own people with the most destructive weapons known to humanity."

That's cloying, considering the recent reports of the American CIA allegedly funneling \$2.2 billion worth of weapons to terrorist groups in Syria to overthrow the elected government of President Bashar Assad. And considering that Trump in front of 193 nations was threatening North Korea with "total destruction."

Trump made a dig at Russia and China when he said: "We must reject threats to sovereignty, from the Ukraine to the South China Sea. We must uphold respect for law, respect for borders, and respect for culture, and the peaceful engagement these allow."

Eh, this sanctimonious advice from the leader of a country that has subverted the sovereignty and borders of more nations than any other in history, including that of Ukraine where Washington

violently installed a neo-Nazi regime in February 2014. American aerial bombing of numerous countries simultaneously, including Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan, is a curious “respect for borders, sovereignty, and law.”

Trump talks about the “scourge of rogue regimes” without a hint of self-awareness about his own country’s depredations or of its Israeli and Saudi allies. He said: “The scourge of our planet today is a small group of rogue regimes that violate every principle on which the United Nations is based. They respect neither their own citizens nor the sovereign rights of their countries.”

Finally, perhaps the crowning absurdity was this: “The United States of America has been among the greatest forces for good in the history of the world, and the greatest defenders of sovereignty, security, and prosperity for all.”

Trump’s predecessor Barack Obama and other US presidents were also remarkable for their skill at spouting similar distortions and delusions. In that regard, Trump’s bravura nonsense was more of the same ridiculous “American exceptionalism.”

But setting Trump’s speech apart was his flagrant embrace of criminal militarism as a matter of US foreign policy, and his nauseating invocation of genocide in a war on North Korea.

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