

The Unspoken Spread of Fascism

By Fred Nagel

It is difficult for most Americans to judge just how dangerous Donald Trump might be. It is not that the clues are missing; there is a daily list of lies, racist comments, misogynist ramblings, and outrageous self dealing. But most citizens just don't have the right vocabulary to put his actions into some sort of context, even in these pandemic times.

The left has been more confident about where Trump fits in the general run of very bad presidents. He is simply a fascist, whose behavior is very similar to other calamitous dictators we have seen in the 20th century. This conclusion becomes

Trump is not talking about the workings of a democracy, or the endlessly touted separation of powers between the Congress, the Executive, and the Judiciary. Bikers for Trump is simply a Brownshirt organization, waiting for their leader's call to violence.

There are some aspects of fascism that fit Trump quite exactly. Comparing Trump's behavior to the list of fascist characteristics created by the Italian scholar, Umberto Eco, in his essay "Eternal Fascism" is especially revealing.

Trump believes in sudden decisions rather than reflection, or as Eco describes it, "the cult of action for action's sake." Eco's fascists often equate disagreement

Fascism may be encouraged by someone with the right combination of charisma and viciousness, but in the end it becomes a social illness that moves whole populations toward war and genocide.

increasingly believable when Trump talks about a confrontation that could happen if he doesn't get his way. "I can tell you I have the support of the police, the support of the military, the support of the Bikers for Trump—I have the tough people, but they don't play it tough—until they go to a certain point, and then it would be very bad, very bad."

of their policies with treason, and so too does Trump. Fascist leaders cultivate the "fear of difference" which encourages racist aggression towards minorities and foreigners. In Trump's world Mexicans are rapists and Muslims are terrorists. Eco refers to another characteristic as an "obsession with plot," and Trump's con-

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Are Bikers for Trump the 21st century's Brownshirts?
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'Haunted by Our Genocide from Half a World Away'

By Kevin Tillman

I feel suffocated by this genocide. I live half a world away from Palestine in nowhere Arizona, yet everywhere I go, it's there. Whether I'm trapped in an endless cycle of Zoom meetings for work, watching kids shoot on goal at soccer practice, driving my kids to school as we listen to music not of my choosing, or walking our overly active beagle around the park, the genocide is always there. I'm not in any physical danger. I'm not a soldier on the ground any more. I'm not a policymaker. But as an average citizen, I can't stop thinking about it.

The first thing I do in the morning is grab my phone and check what's happening around the world. The latest horror now etched in my mind came from an article by abubaker Abed titled "Shaaban Al-Dalou, Burned Alive in Gaza, Would Have Been 20 Today", courtesy of Jeremy Schahill and Ryan Grim's new Drop Site. It was

about a 19-year-old engineering student named Shaaban Al-Dolou, who was set on fire by an Israeli bomb that was dropped in the night while he was lying in a tent in the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the central city of Deir al-Balah. Shaaban was being treated for wounds from a previous U.S. funded Israeli bombing, along with the rest of his family.

I then found a flood of videos of the attack where I can see the red and white flames of the firebomb dancing around the wreckage of the hospital equipment. People are frantically trying to help, but can't. The flames cast a shadow that turns all of the tents and other material into black-and-gray silhouettes.

My eyes focus deeper into the flames. The fire is consuming young Shaaban's body, still lying in the hospital bed. I can't avert my eyes. His left arm sticking up in the air. Something about the way his fingers and thumb are positioned holds my attention. I keep staring. I feel wrong for watching, but also compelled to do so. He



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can't flee. He can't be saved. Death, in all of its ravenous horror, is inescapable for him.

I navigate to an interview with Shaaban's father. With bandages and ointment protecting the major burns covering his body, he speaks about how he saved his youngest siblings but couldn't save his oldest son, "Shaaban was engulfed in flames. I stood there, helpless, completely surrendered. I told him "Forgive me, my son. I couldn't help you.

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