

Trump vs Deep State: Will Trump Upend Neocolonial World Order?

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Global Research, October 15, 2020

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Military](#), [WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Former Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney released an extraordinary statement on Tuesday, decrying a political scene he said “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 added.

Romney tweeted his statement under the title “My thoughts on the current state of our politics.” “I have stayed quiet,” he said, “with the approach of the election.” “But I’m troubled by our politics,” the sole Republican to vote to impeach Trump added in his statement.

“The president calls the Democratic vice-presidential candidate ‘a monster’. He repeatedly labels the Speaker of the House ‘crazy.’ He calls for the justice department to put the prior president in jail. He attacks the governor of Michigan on the very day a plot is discovered to kidnap her. Democrats launch blistering attacks of their own, though their presidential nominee refuses to stoop as low as others,” Romney, a Utah senator who was the 2012 Republican nominee for president, complained in the statement.

Though superficially trying to appear “fair and balanced” in the didactic sermon patronizingly delivered by the only adult in the room full of political upstarts, Romney’s perceptible bias in the polemical diatribe was hard not to be noticed.

It defies explanation if he didn’t watch the presidential debate or consciously elided over the sordid episode where the Democratic presidential nominee contemptuously sneered at his political rival with derogatory epithets such as “a clown, a racist and Putin’s puppy.”

I’m not sure if Biden was high on meth during the debate, as Trump had repeatedly been insinuating, or he lacks basic etiquette to act like a dignified statesman, but only amphetamines could make a person take leave of his senses and insolently yell at the president of the US, “Will you shut up, man,” while ironically complaining, “This is so unpresidential.”

Though a longtime Republican senator, Mitt Romney’s loyalty to the GOP was compromised due to a personal spat with Trump. In the Republican primaries of the 2016 US presidential elections, Romney severely castigated Trump, calling him “a phony and a fraud.”

After Trump was elected president, he dangled the carrot of the secretary of state

appointment to Romney, invited him to a dinner in a swanky New York restaurant, made him eat his words and fawn all over Trump like a servile toady. But later, he gave one of the most coveted appointments in the US bureaucratic hierarchy to oil executive Rex Tillerson.

Romney felt humiliated to the extent that in Trump's vulnerable moment, after impeachment proceedings were initiated against him in the Senate in February, Romney became the only US senator in the American political history who voted against his own Republican Party president.

Though lacking intellect and often ridiculed for frequent spelling errors on his Twitter timeline, such as "unpresidented" and "covfefe," implying he gets his news feed from television talk shows and rarely reads book and articles, Donald Trump is street smart and his anti-globalization agenda and down-to-earth attitude appeal to the American working classes.

Nevertheless, it's quite easy for the neuroscientists on the payroll of the national security establishment to manipulate the minds of such impressionable politicians and lead them by the nose to toe the line of the deep state, particularly on foreign policy matters. No wonder national security shills disparagingly sneer at the president as the "toddler-in-chief."

In 2017, a couple of caricatures went viral on social media. In one of those caricatures, Donald Trump was depicted as a child sitting on a chair and Vladimir Putin was shown whispering something into Trump's ears from behind. In the other, Trump was portrayed sitting in Steve Bannon's lap and the latter was shown mumbling into Trump's ears, "Who is the big boy now?" And Trump was shown replying, "I am the big boy."

The meaning conveyed by those cunningly crafted caricatures was to illustrate that Trump lacks the intelligence to think for himself and that he was being manipulated and played around by Putin and Bannon. Those caricatures must have affronted the vanity of Donald Trump to an extent that after the publication of those caricatures, he became ill-disposed toward Putin and sacked Bannon from his job as the White House Chief Strategist in August 2017, only seven months into the first year of the Trump presidency.

Bannon was the principal ideologue of the American alt-right movement. Though the alt-right agenda of the Trump presidency has been scuttled by the deep state, Trump's views regarding global politics and economics are starkly different from the establishment Democrats and Republicans pursuing neocolonial world order masqueraded as globalization and free trade.

Besides the Trump supporters in the United States, the far-right populist leaders in Europe are also exploiting popular resentment against free trade and globalization. The Brexiteers in the United Kingdom, the Yellow Vest protesters in France and the far-right movements in Germany and across Europe are a manifestation of a paradigm shift in the global economic order in which nationalist and protectionist slogans have replaced the free trade and globalization mantra of the nineties.

Donald Trump withdrawing the United States from multilateral treaties, restructuring trade agreements and initiating a trade war against China are meant to redress, at least cosmetically, the legitimate grievances of the American working classes against the wealth disparity created by laissez-faire capitalism and market fundamentalism.

Michael Crowley [reported for the New York Times](#) [1] last month that American allies and former US Officials fear Trump could seek NATO exit in a second term. According to the report,

“This summer, Mr. Trump’s former national security adviser John R. Bolton published a book that described the president as repeatedly saying he wanted to quit the NATO alliance. Last month, Mr. Bolton speculated to a Spanish newspaper that Mr. Trump might even spring an ‘October surprise’ shortly before the election by declaring his intention to leave the alliance in a second term.”

The report notes,

“In a book published this week, Michael S. Schmidt, a New York Times reporter, wrote that Mr. Trump’s former chief of staff John F. Kelly, a retired four-star Marine general, told others that ‘one of the most difficult tasks he faced with Trump was trying to stop him from pulling out of NATO.’ One person who has heard Mr. Kelly speak in private settings confirmed that he had made such remarks.”

Crowley adds,

“Donald Trump now relies on ‘a team of inexperienced bureaucrats’ and has grown more confident and assertive, as he has already sacked seasoned national security advisers, including John F. Kelly; Jim Mattis, another retired four-star Marine general and Trump’s first defense secretary; and H.R. McMaster, a retired three-star Army general and Trump’s former national security adviser.”

In fact, the Trump administration announced plans in July to withdraw 12,000 American troops from Germany and sought to cut funding for the Pentagon’s European Deterrence Initiative. About half of the troops withdrawn from Germany were re-deployed in Europe, mainly in Italy and Poland, and the rest returned to the US.

Similarly, although full withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan was originally scheduled for April next year, according to terms of peace deal reached with the Taliban on February 29, President Trump hastened the withdrawal process by making an electoral pledge this week that all troops should be “home by Christmas.” “We should have the small remaining number of our BRAVE Men and Women serving in Afghanistan home by Christmas,” he tweeted last week.

Even the arch-foes of the US in Afghanistan effusively praised President Trump’s peace overtures. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid [told CBS News](#) [2] in a phone interview last week,

“We hope he will win the election and wind up US military presence in Afghanistan.”

The militant group also expressed concern about President Trump’s bout with the

coronavirus.

“When we heard about Trump being COVID-19 positive, we got worried for his health, but it seems he is getting better,” another Taliban senior leader confided to reporter Sami Yousafzai.

Moreover, Iran-backed militias [recently announced](#) [3] “conditional” cease-fire against the US forces in Iraq on the condition that Washington present a timetable for the withdrawal of its troops. The US-led coalition has already departed from smaller bases across Iraq and promised to reduce its troop presence from 5,200 to 3,000 in the next couple of months, though Iraq’s parliament passed a resolution urging the full withdrawal of US troops in January.

There is no denying the fact that the four years of the Trump presidency have been unusually tumultuous in the American political history, but if one takes a cursory look at the list of all the Trump aides who resigned or were otherwise sacked, almost all of them were national security officials.

In fact, scores of former Republican national security officials recently made their preference public that they would vote in the upcoming US presidential elections for Democrat Joe Biden instead of Republican Donald Trump against party lines.

What does that imply? It is an incontrovertible proof that the latent conflict between the deep state and the elected representatives of the American people has come to a head during the Trump presidency.

Although far from being a vocal critic of the deep state himself, the working-class constituency that Trump represents has had enough with the global domination agenda of the national security establishment. The American electorate wants the US troops returned home, and wants to focus on national economy and redress wealth disparity instead of acting as global police waging “endless wars” thousands of miles away from the US territorial borders.

Addressing a convention of conservatives last year, Trump publicly castigated his own generals, much to the dismay of neoliberal chauvinists upholding American exceptionalism and militarism, by revealing: “I learn more sometimes from soldiers what’s going on, than I do from generals. I do. I hate to say it. I tell the generals all the time.”

At another occasion, he ruffled more feathers by telling the reporters:

“I’m not saying the military’s in love with me. The soldiers are. The top people in the Pentagon probably aren’t because they want to do nothing but fight wars so all of those wonderful companies that make the bombs and make the planes and make everything else stay happy.”

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Notes

[1] Allies and Former U.S. Officials Fear Trump Could Seek NATO Exit in a Second Term:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/03/us/politics/trump-nato-withdraw.html>

[2] The Taliban on Trump: "We hope he will win the election":

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/taliban-on-trump-we-hope-he-will-win-the-election-withdraw-us-troops/>

[3] Iran-backed militias announce 'conditional' cease-fire against U.S. in Iraq:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iran-backed-militias-announce-conditional-cess-fire-against-us-in-iraq/2020/10/11/7a64f624-0bbd-11eb-b404-8d1e675ec701_story.html

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