

## Trump says, “Dictators? It’s OK. Come on in”

### News:

On the 12th of November, President Donald Trump gave a revealing speech at the Economic Club of New York. “When I meet with the leaders of countries as they come in — kings and queens and prime ministers and presidents and dictators, I meet ’em all,” he said. He made it clear that US relations are based upon his interpretation of national interest, and not the principles of freedom, when he said: “Anybody wants to come in. Dictators? It’s OK. Come on in. Whatever’s good for the United States. We want to help our people,”

### Comment:

For a president who lies so openly and so often, it is strange how brutally honest Trump can be at times, and this is one of those times. Trump has been accused of being a friend and supporter of dictators throughout his presidency, and after today’s speech, CNBC said, “The comment appeared to upend decades of American foreign policy, which has been predicated on wielding America’s outsized global influence as a force for elevating democratic governments that respect human rights and marginalizing dictators and autocrats.” What CNBC has misrepresented is that while Trump has indeed departed from the precedents of previous US presidents who gave flowery speeches about democracy and human rights, the US has for decades been a friend of tyrannical dictators.

During the Cold War, the US supported brutal dictators in Africa, Central America and South America under the pretext of fighting Communism. In 1974 Congress banned the US government from training Latin American police forces after reports of torture and murder by US trained police caused embarrassment. However, the support for repressive police states continued under the direction of the Central Intelligence Agency. Support for every kind of dictatorship throughout the world was given both overtly and covertly wherever it was considered “good for the United States.”

After the fall of Communism, or the so-called ‘evil empire’ as Ronald Reagan described it, the US found a new enemy in 2001, and launched its ‘war on terror’. Again the brutal and bloody dictators of the world stood side by side with the US, and after it became too politically sensitive for the US to openly torture the prisoners it had captured and kidnapped within US military installations, it founded secret torture centers in ‘friendly countries’ and also delivered its victims to Middle Eastern dictators to perform torture for them on foreign soil while US intelligence officers supplied the questions they wanted answers to.

US foreign policy has always been quietly centered upon Trumpian principles, and Trump has simply dropped the mask behind which his predecessors used to hide, and he has taken advantage of the ignorance of the poorest sectors of the US electorate who believed former US presidents when they pretended to be sacrificing tax-payers’ money to support freedom and human rights in other countries.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

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