

From World Can't Wait

They are all members of the ruling class and led or hope to lead this empire. That doesn't make them inherently fascist. Even while Obama said the "They are on the same team," it doesn't mean that they play the same way. "Fascism is the exercise of blatant dictatorship by the bourgeois (capitalist-imperialist) class, ruling through reliance on open terror and violence, trampling on what are supposed to be civil and legal rights, wielding the power of the state and mobilizing organized groups of fanatical thugs to commit atrocities against masses of people, particularly groups of people identified as 'enemies,' 'undesirables,' or 'dangers to society.'" (from revcom.us)

In the past 8 years, the Democrats have, among other crimes, waged wars on 8 countries, codified extrajudicial killing through drone warfare and kill lists, expanded surveillance programs, and maintained Guantánamo. We call them war criminals, we call them the leaders of a brutal and horrific empire that spreads devastation across the globe. But we never call them fascists and won't because fascism is a specific thing not to be taken lightly or used as an insult or catch-all phrase for bad governments or individuals. This is in no way discounting the crimes of empire committed under other administrations or the silencing effect of the past 8 years and the death of the so-called "anti-war" movement. But fascism is a definitive break in the works of liberal democracy, and it is a very serious thing.

What the Trump/Pence fascist regime is promising is rule through brute force, targeting whole sections of society including but not limited to Muslims, immigrants, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, women, and those with disabilities. They are promising to do away with civil and legal protections such as the right to dissent, the right to abortion and birth control, gay marriage and related legal rights, and to reinstate stop and frisk across the country and other practices that strip away the rights of people of color. This is all done in tandem with whipping up a lynch mob mentality and white supremacist movement that views Trump as their personal commander and champion. We have already seen skyrocketing hate crimes and violence against minorities since his election.

This package has a clear direction and momentum and cannot be stopped if people use the cop-out that "America has always been fascist." People can say "American was never great," and that would be true, but that doesn't mean that it has always been fascist. Slavery, for

instance, was both totally legal and totally and truly awful beyond words, yet not fascist. It isn't like there is a thermometer where, once things are really messed up, it reaches fascism. It is a program that can be dissected, understood, and most urgently fought.

As the Call to Refuse Fascism states: "Fascism foments and relies on xenophobic nationalism, racism, misogyny, and the aggressive re-institution of oppressive 'traditional values.' Fascism feeds on and encourages the threat and use of violence to build a movement and come to power. Fascism, once in power, essentially eliminates traditional democratic rights. Fascism attacks, jails, even executes its opponents, and launches violent mob attacks on 'minorities.'"

If you seek to end any of the crimes the U.S. empire commits here and around the world, you need to confront the fact that Trump and his administration seek to radically remake the world, that they are fascists and that, if they are in power, your ability to fight against anything this government does will be qualitatively diminished. Now is not the time to sit on the sidelines or criticize those who weren't out in the streets when you were. Now is the time to give everything you have to making sure that Trump/Pence do not get the keys and that they do not get to make their promises reality.