

Trump spews racism and anti-Muslim bigotry

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Billionaire Donald Trump has increased his lead in the polls among likely voters in Republican caucuses and primaries by making appeals to fears of terrorism and advocating a police-state crackdown on Muslim immigrants in the United States.

In the wake of the November 13 terrorist attacks in Paris, Trump has made a series of increasingly unhinged and reactionary verbal assaults on Muslims. This began with a November 17 interview with Yahoo News, where he declared that as a result of the attacks, “We’re going to have to do things that we never did before. And some people are going to be upset about it, but I think that now everybody is feeling that security is going to rule.”

If elected, he said, he would deport all Syrian refugees allowed to enter the United States by the Obama administration. “They’re going to be gone. They will go back,” he said. “You look at the migration, it’s young, strong men.” Actually, half of all Syrian refugees are children, and another quarter of those admitted to the US are elderly.

He went to tell Yahoo News that he supported registering all US Muslims in a database or, as the news service described it, “giving them a form of special identification that noted their religion.” The resemblance to the six-sided stars that the Nazis compelled Jews to wear in Germany was so striking that Trump was asked about this comparison repeatedly in the following days, but he brushed it aside.

Trump later confirmed to NBC News that he favored creation of a national database of Muslims. “I would certainly implement that, absolutely,” he said. “It would stop people from coming in illegally.”

At a rally November 22 in Birmingham, Alabama, Trump declared he would as president order surveillance of “certain mosques” as part of anti-terrorism efforts, praising the actions of the New York Police Department in that respect. He then claimed that

in Muslim neighborhoods of Jersey City, New Jersey, “thousands and thousands of people were cheering” after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 brought down the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

This assertion, backed by the claim that Trump had seen the video on television and that the pro-terrorism demonstrations had been “well covered in the media” after 9/11, dominated the Republican presidential campaign for the next week. Trump’s poll numbers among likely Republican voters actually rose, to 32 percent in a Washington Post/ABC News poll, compared to 22 percent for retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson and 11 percent for Senator Marco Rubio of Florida. Senator Ted Cruz of Texas was at 8 percent, former Florida Governor Jeb Bush at 6 percent, and none of the remaining nine Republicans above 4 percent.

On Sunday, November 23, Trump appeared on the ABC News interview program “This Week,” and reiterated his false claims about seeing televised reports on Muslim celebrations in Jersey City after the 9/11 attacks. When interviewer George Stephanopoulos pointed out that there was no video and that local police said such celebrations never happened, Trump simply reiterated his claims.

He went on to express his support for waterboarding and other forms of torture against suspected terrorists, declaring, “Believe me, it works. And you know what? If it doesn’t work, they deserve it anyway, for what they’re doing.” He repeated his call for a database of all Muslims living in the United States, saying, “We have to really be vigilant with respect to the Muslim population.”

Trump’s semi-fascist views are not a surprise, since he launched his campaign with a racist diatribe against immigrants from Mexico, and has made a police-state crackdown on immigrants the axis of his candidacy.

More significant is the response from the political establishment and the corporate-controlled media, which continue to treat his campaign as legitimate and within the officially recognized “mainstream” of American capitalist politics.

Trump’s rivals have made only the most tepid criticisms of some of his remarks, particularly the proposed Muslim database, while joining with Trump in portraying Syrian refugees as a major terrorist threat to the American people.

Ben Carson, running second in the polls, compared Syrian refugees to “a rabid dog running around your neighborhood.” New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who was named US Attorney for northern New Jersey shortly after 9/11, claimed he did not remember any pro-terrorist demonstrations in Jersey City at the time, but added, “I think if it had happened, I would remember it, but, you know, there could be things I forget, too.” Christie also declared his opposition to admitting Syrian refugees, even “orphans under the age of five.”

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Jeb Bush and Ted Cruz both opposed registering US Muslims, but backed a religious test for refugees, admitting Christian Syrians without question but barring or restricting refugees who are Muslims. Cruz declared, “I’m a big fan of Donald Trump’s, but I’m not a fan of government registries.” He went on to say, “I recognize that the media would love to get me and other candidates to attack Donald Trump. There may be other candidates who want to do that. I ain’t gonna do it.”

As for the Democrats, they have seen Trump’s promotion of bigotry as an opportunity to posture as sympathetic to immigrants and other minorities, despite the appalling record of the Obama administration, which has deported more immigrants than any other administration in US history, built up the surveillance state well beyond the level established by Bush, and waged ferocious war against the population of the Middle East.

After a week of racist ranting from the Republican frontrunner, the two leading daily newspapers in the United States, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, finally summoned up the will to publish editorials criticizing his language.

The *Times*, typically, dismissed the significance of

the Trump campaign, writing, “This phenomenon is in fact nothing new. Politicians targeting minorities, foreigners or women have always existed in the culture. And every generation or so, at least one demagogue surfaces to fan those flames.”

The *Post* urged the Republican Party to “stand up to Trump’s bullying,” appealing to the other Republican presidential candidates, as well as “the speaker of the House and majority leader of the Senate, for example, and former president George W. Bush. The more reticent such leaders are, the more successfully Mr. Trump can brand their party and, to a disturbing extent, the nation with his demagoguery.”

Only a handful of commentators, including the *Seattle Times*, used the word that most accurately describes the politics peddled by the billionaire demagogue: fascist.



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