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Trump comes off as bully in chief

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President Donald Trump is still in campaign mode and tweeting about the irrelevant. Instead of gradually mainstreaming his policies to represent all Americans, Trump anchors his national security policies in his extreme, divisive campaign rhetoric swamp.

The executive order severely restricting travel from seven Muslim-majority countries is politically pandering to the fringe in our country. It is not about national security.

Cato Institute research concluded that the likelihood of being killed by a foreign terrorist in the United States is 1 in 3.6 million and by a refugee turned terrorist is 1 in 3.64 billion. More telling is that, of the terror attacks committed in our country since 9/11, none of the perpetrators was a national of the seven countries affected by the ban.

Nationals of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and United Arab Emirates were involved in 9/11. The San Bernardino, Calif., attacker was an American of Pakistani decent, and his wife was Pakistani. Pakistan is not on the list. Remember that Osama bin Laden lived in hiding in Pakistan for a decade. These four countries are not on the travel order because including them would cause an international financial disaster.

Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates purchased approximately 40 billion dollars' worth of American goods in 2015. Saudi Arabia owns \$117 billion of U.S. debt and U.S. officials estimate that Saudi investments in the U.S. are roughly \$750 billion.

Figures from the Institute of International Education found there are about 130,000 foreign students from Muslim-majority nations, with Saudi student figures well above any other nation at 61,000 students in 2015. These foreign students enrolled in American universities are generating billions of dollars in tuition and economic activity here in the U.S.

This is just a sliver of the economic interests America has with the Muslim world -- a population estimated at 1.6 billion. Campaign rhetoric rarely if ever translates into sound and reasoned policy. Rhetoric as policy will have disastrous effects on the national security of our country and will undermine the core American values that drive the engine of America forward.

There are an estimated 6 million Muslims who call America home. Arab and Islamic culture is enriching America and contributing to the unprecedented intercultural fertilization that has produced this great cultural mosaic and immigrant experiment called America.

Arab and Muslim immigrants and refugees who have already come to the United States have done well in America. So will the immigrants coming today. American Muslims hold the second-highest level of education among major U.S. religious groups. They have higher incomes than median income in the United States.

Trump's Muslim ban is consistent with the alt-right clash of civilization ideology espoused by Trump's chief strategist, Stephen Bannon. "We are starting now in the 21st century, which, I believe strongly, is a crisis of our church, a crisis of our faith, a crisis of the West, and a crisis of capitalism," warned Bannon. "We are at the very beginning stages of a very brutal and bloody conflict ... to fight for our beliefs against this new barbarity that's starting that will literally eradicate everything that we have been bequeathed over the last 2,000 to 2,500 years."

Apparently, this "barbarity" is Islam. Islam is the enemy.

This recklessness is dangerous to our national security and the security of the world. Let us not forget after 9/11, even though no Iraqi was involved in the 9/11 attacks, the militant interventionist neoconservatives convinced President George W. Bush to invade Iraq in 2003 on the false pretext of weapons of mass destruction. The devastating consequences of our misguided invasion of Iraq destabilized the entire region and gave birth to the Islamic State.

I am reminded today of George Washington's farewell address, on Sept. 19, 1796: "The Nation which indulges towards another a habitual hatred or a habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest."

The "habitual hatred" and alarming Islamophobia that Trump has been fueling -- with a willingness to utilize fear and hate to mobilize voters and to marginalize fellow Americans -- are leading us astray from our national security, global interests and from our core values and ideals that made this country great.

Trump is simply a bully. Bullying works in business. Trump bullied his creditors to compromise his debts or be embroiled in expensive litigation. Bullies only pick on the weak and vulnerable. The travel ban is a case in point. You defeat a bully by fighting back. Evidenced by the demonstrations popping up all over America, the American people have zero tolerance for bullies.