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## **Making America Great Again? Hardly**

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President Trump's effort to turn the U.S. and the world upside down gathered disturbing new momentum over the past two weeks, capped by Tuesday's U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding Trump's travel ban targeting mostly Muslim populations.

That came on the heels of his announced tariffs on imports from longtime allies on national security grounds, his inhumane separation of asylum-seeking immigrants and their children, and his anti-environment executive order aimed at "growing the ocean economy" and "rolling back excessive bureaucracy.

As with his travel ban and his import tariffs on our G7 partners, he used "national security" as a justification.

The 5-4 decision on the travel ban, which reversed two lower court decisions, reflected politics at its worst in the Supreme Court. That five-person conservative majority, created after Senate Republicans refused to consider the nomination of Merrick Garland during President Obama's

Supreme Court Chief Justice Roberts, writing for the majority in the travel ban decision, said, "The proclamation is squarely within the scope of presidential authority" and that claims of religious bias against Muslims do not hold up against "a sufficient national security justification."

That justification simply doesn't exist. And it was clear, even from the text of Roberts' decision, that the ban was motivated by anti-Muslim bias. During Trump's campaign, he called for "a complete and total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States." He repeatedly called for a ban on Muslims and claimed that "Islam hates us."

Even the conservative-leaning Cato Institute warned that "a rational evaluation of national security threats is not the basis for Trump's orders, as the risk is fairly small but the cost is great. The measures taken here will have virtually no effect on improving U.S. national security."

All of Trump's sharp policy shifts have badly damaged our standing abroad. Worse, they have served to further polarize an already badly polarized country. The words "America First" may resonate with Trump's entrenched base, but it isn't what our traditional allies want to hear. And it will only serve to weaken us economically, militarily and diplomatically.

Trump's salesmanship, coupled with his skill at tapping into America's deep reserve of bigotry, has enabled him to retain virtually the same level of support he had when he was first elected. But at some point the salesmanship will give way to the reality that his policies will harm the nation: Giving tax breaks to the rich that further explode the nation's deficit. Protectionist trade policies sure to be countered by tariffs on our exports from other countries. The unraveling of environmental protections. The dismantling of even the best features of the Affordable Care Act.

Making America Great Again? Turning back the clock will only hasten our demise.