



Outgoing U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley said she's seen evil in South Sudan, Syria and North Korea. But "in America, our political opponents are not evil," she said. | Mark Wilson/Getty Images

POLITICS

Haley breaks with Trump: 'In America, our political opponents are not evil'

By REBECCA MORIN | 10/19/2018 07:41 AM EDT

Outgoing U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley insisted Thursday night that "in America, our political opponents are not evil," a sharp rhetorical break from her boss, President Donald Trump, who has labeled Democrats as "evil," crime-loving and unwilling to defend the nation.

[Privacy settings](#)

Addressing the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner in New York, Haley said the "toxic political environment" has prompted both sides of the aisle to "describe their opponents as enemies or evil."

"In America, our political opponents are not evil," she said, highlighting atrocities committed against political opponents in Syria and Sudan as examples of true evil permeating the world of politics.

Haley's statement was an apparent rebuke of language used by Trump on the campaign trail in recent weeks, especially in the wake of the contentious confirmation battle over Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh.

During an address at a law enforcement conference earlier this month, Trump said sexual assault allegations brought against Kavanaugh "was a disgraceful situation, brought about by people that are evil, and he toughed it out." The president was later asked whether he should call Americans evil, to which he replied, "I know fellow Americans that are evil ... I've known some fellow Americans that are pretty evil."

And at a campaign rally last week in Iowa, Trump labeled Democrats who opposed Kavanaugh's confirmation "really evil people" who "want to destroy people." At other campaign stops, the president has often suggested Democrats are "the party of crime" and labeled the press "the enemy of the people."

The most reliable politics newsletter.

up for POLITICO Playbook and get the latest news, every morning – in your inbox.

Your email...

By signing up you agree to receive email newsletters or alerts from POLITICO. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Thursday evening, at a rally in Montana, Trump praised GOP Rep. Greg Gianforte for assaulting Guardian journalist Ben Jacobs last year. The president jokingly warned to "never wrestle" Gianforte and told the crowd that "any guy who can do a body slam is my kind of guy."

But Haley, in her Thursday night speech, said she has seen "true evil" during her time as U.N. ambassador.

"In South Sudan, where rape is routinely used as a weapon of war, that is evil," she said. "In Syria, where the dictator uses chemicals weapons to murder innocent children, that is evil. In North Korea, where American student Otto Warmbier was tortured to death, that was evil."

Privacy settings

Trump has spoken warmly in recent months of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, with whom he has begun denuclearization talks. Kim's regime has been accused of massive human rights violations, including operating concentration camps for political prisoners and severe repression of human rights.

[About Us](#)

[Advertising](#)

[Breaking News Alerts](#)

[Careers](#)

[Credit Card Payments](#)

[Digital Edition](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Feedback](#)

[Headlines](#)

[Photos](#)

[POWERJobs](#)

[Press](#)

[Print Subscriptions](#)

[RSS](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Terms of Service](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

© 2018 POLITICO LLC

[Privacy settings](#)