Donald Trump's Political Rhetoric

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Abstract

With an uncompromising strategy, simple language and distinctive communication via social media, Donald Trump has managed to motivate people who feel like they are the losers of globalization to give him their vote and to contribute to his victory in the 2016 presidential election. In his rhetoric, he always followed three principles: simplicity, repetition, and sensationalism. Trump's speeches are conceived primarily to attract the attention of working-class whites. His rhetorical style gives the impression that he is doing everything in the interest of the working class, when in fact he is promoting the interests of big business. Trump's topic abuse is present on a number of issues, most notably in speeches about illegal immigrants, whereby he strikes concern among the impoverished masses, expecting them to react in his favour in the election. Thereby, he is not concerned that his statements spread discord and contribute to the negative atmosphere in the country and to numerous attacks on minorities. Donald Trump's behaviour and speeches are full of contradictions. He praises togetherness, but does not believe in shared values, permanent alliances, or lessons from history.

Keywords: Donald Trump, election strategy, migration, political rhetoric, Twitter

1. Introduction

Oratory and persuasion[1] are necessary factors in politics and are its very powerful tools. In addition to language strategies, a large role in political persuasion is played by modern media, which help to influence changes in the attitudes of listeners and to convey the arguments of politicians (Moritz, 2015, p. 85). Persuasion is a form of communication in which, by rational means - arguments, information and so on, influence on the judgments, attitudes, beliefs or actions of the individual is sought. The success of persuasion depends on the characteristics of the communication; for example, the rationale of the arguments, the credibility, the source of the information, the authority and characteristics of the person persuading, as well as the characteristics of the individual being persuasive. This refers to an individual's emotional reactions to information, already existing beliefs and the like (Enciklopedija.hr, n.d.). For a persuader's performance to be successful, he or she must inform, entertain, and move the audience. However, the key point of persuasion is credibility, i.e. experiencing the persuasiveness of other people's statements. Credible speakers are competent in the field they are talking about, reliable, professional, likeable, calm and approachable. Successful persuaders believe in themselves and in what they are saying, possess empathy (think about how the interlocutor feels in the given circumstances, what could convince them to change their mind) and, of course, possess determination (persist in their request, but only to a certain extent, meaning that they are neither aggressive nor tiring). Another very important trait of a good persuader is energy, the strength they invest in what they are talking about. Finally, especially in politics, consistency is important - adherence to what is said (Fairweather, 2012).

Successful politicians need to master persuasiveness as a communication technique, so that they can change the attitudes and behaviours of potential voters. Politicians, through the media, become a part of our everyday life, because we watch and listen to them in our homes and they adapt their way of communication to this fact. Their style and tone of speech are personal, they address us, and we will keep them in our home only if we perceive them as pleasant and rounded persons (Moritz, 2015, p. 86).

[1] Persuasion (Latin persuasion = convincing) (Enciklopedija.hr, n.d.).

In the presidential elections in the United States of America (USA) in 2016, Donald Trump became the head of the world's leading superpower. He managed to motivate people who felt like the losers of globalization and transition to give him their vote. He used his rhetorical and marketing skills quite successfully by sending clear messages to potential voters in rural areas of the United States, while his opponent, Hillary Clinton, failed to gain stronger support from the Latin American and African communities, as well as from the younger urban generations, communities that significantly helped President Obama win the presidency. Trump's victory came somewhat as a surprise to Europeans, who were quietly cheering for the Democratic candidate, Clinton, as they felt she would better safeguard the transatlantic partnership and be more inclined to working with Europe. Europe was fearing the geostrategic strengthening and positioning of Russia, whose leader the US president spoke about in superlatives during the campaign (Srzić, 9 November 2016). Trump, known for his sudden change of disposition, which is part of his identity, was seen on the "Old Continent" as an entrepreneur, for whom business is more important than moral principles, who considers himself the world's best negotiator and whose imagined style of governing is more autocratic than democratic (Comey, 2018, pp. 204, 231, 243; Knigge, 2019). The paper was motivated by the impression that the persuasiveness of Donald Trump's political rhetoric in the media and literature is perceived dubiously, despite the fact that he won the 45th US presidential election.

2. Donald Trump's social position and his election strategy

Donald Trump is primarily a real estate agent and reality star (Woodward, 2018, p. 2; Dnevnik.hr, 22 February 2017). He is an outsider among American presidents (Dw.com, 20 January 2019), a person with no previous experience in politics (Lednicki, 2018, p. 32), who won over voters with his simple language and unique campaign approach. His victory was largely influenced by his distinctive communication on social media, through which he addressed the public directly on a daily basis and thus put political communication in

a new framework. With this approach, he diminished the significance of the media (which he constantly calls dishonest and false - fake news). Trump made Twitter a key channel of political communication, and made his Twitter profile the most famous in the world (Trkanjec, 2019, p. 18).

During the 2016 election campaign, he often stood out with his vulgar, destructive personality that attracted the nation's attention. His performances were real media spectacles, where he entertained his supporters. He managed to defeat 16 other potential candidates and to receive the Republican nomination (Woodward, 2018, p. 9). After the election campaign, and before the most controversial election in American history, Donald Trump, under the direction of his strategist, Steve Bannon, was preparing to face Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton.

On Bannon's advice, he decided to compare himself to Clinton during the confrontation, to point out the differences between them, and to keep repeating them, persistently. For example, she is the leader of the corrupt and incompetent status quo elite, who do not mind oversee the fall of the country, while he is the leader of the forgotten working class who want to make America great again ("America First")[2]. He focused on three major topics, in fact accusations, which are difficult to defend against:

1. Clinton is part of a policy that has opened borders, and Trump wants to stop mass illegal immigration in order to restore state sovereignty.

2. Clinton is part of a policy that has negotiated bad trade agreements and allowed jobs to go to China, and Trump wants to bring production jobs back to the country.

3. Clinton has supported every war, and Trump wants to withdraw from unnecessary wars abroad. (Woodward, 2018, pp. 15-16).

However, when compared to what is said with generally available data, it seems that Trump is not always right and does not always tell the truth. Namely, Clinton is a member of the elite, and she may also be socially insensitive (in her book Living History, she brags about the fact that, during her husband's administrations, social contributions in the US

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[2] "America First" is a US foreign policy with an emphasis on American nationalism, i.e. the rejection of internationalist policies. Trump follows this policy. Both Republicans and Democrats used it as a slogan.

were reduced by 60%) (Cooch, 23 April 2015), but Trump also is a member of that elite (though not of the establishment). He is also a man who has been avoiding paying taxes in his own country for 18 years (Pavlović, 4 October 2018). Therefore, the commitment of both rivals to greater economic equality is difficult to take seriously.

As for the allegations against Clinton, highlighted by their comparison, it can be said that:

1. Clinton did not open the borders of the United States, although she advocated immigration reform and easier acquisition of American citizenship (Trkanjec, 7 November 2016).

Trump accused her of encouraging immigration because he recognized that the problem of immigrants could turn into a much broader topic, for example, about the supremacy of one social group over another. In his speeches, he channeled a number of cultural problems and racial anxieties through the issue of immigration. He detected "fertile ground" and aggressively attacked it through unambiguous images appropriate for a picture book, images such as building a wall, labeling all Mexicans as rapists and thieves, state separation of children from families for immigrants, ban on flights from Muslim countries, stance that torture should be reintroduced as a method of interrogating prisoners etc. He even "proudly" threatened to block the entire government if he did not obtain the money to build a wall on the border with Mexico (Knigge, 26 January 2019).

Deciding on this topic and this approach, Trump went where the ruling establishment does not go, i.e. in the "spaces and cracks", potent and neglected areas where populism is generated (Pavić, 27 May 2019; Jutarnji.hr, 26 January 2017).

His promise to expel illegal migrants and build a wall along the US border with Mexico has become one of the key pillars of his election campaign. The wall on the border was the introduction to a whole series of his nationalist and populist gestures and actions (Jutarnji.hr, 10 January 2017). By calling out immigrants, Trump sent messages to anxious groups in American society: that they were not forgotten, that they would not be drowned by the dominant liberal and globalist agenda, that building a wall and raising tariffs would stop profound changes such as digitalization and robotization of the economy and deeper

global interconnection. as well as the growing rights of women and minorities. He kept repeating this theme, until, in a whirlwind of frustration, he exploded in the mainstream media (Pavić, 27 May 2019).

2.   Trump accused Clinton of being to blame for the collapse of the US economy, which is also not entirely true. She advocated investing in modern technologies, renewable energy and small business (Trkanjec, 7 November 2016), while Trump announced the withdrawal of the United States from the multilateral NAFTA agreement (North American Free Trade Agreement) and the Paris Climate Agreement3 (the international fight against global warming) and by refusing to ratify the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement with Europe), turned America into an advocate of protectionism and a country that, through administrative and political barriers, prevents foreign competition in the US and global market. He provoked a fierce trade war with China and even imposed tariffs on European allies, thus ignoring the EU as a partner (Kovačević, 21 October 2017).

3.   It is true that Clinton has a reputation as an advocate of war. She provided strong support to her husband in the decision to bomb Yugoslavia in 1999 by NATO. Because of her support for the war in Iraq, the Liberal Democrats refused to support her in the 2007 US presidential race. On issues related to Afghanistan, Libya and Bin Laden, she took an even more aggressive approach than that advocated by conservatives. While at the helm of the Obama administration, she approved numerous illegal drone strikes, and supported and strengthened the US connection to attested dictatorships (Cooch, 23 April 2015).

However, it should also be mentioned that Clinton was the US Secretary of State (one of the most important people alongside the President), at a time when Obama managed to reach a historic agreement with Iran on limiting Iran's nuclear programme through silent diplomacy, important for the prevention of wars in the Middle East (Nacional.hr, 15 July 2015).

[3] The Paris Climate Agreement reached in 2015 was signed by 195 countries (Woodward, 2018, p. 189).

On the other hand, Trump also encourages new conflicts. For example, in 2017, he recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel4, despite warnings from the US's Western and Arab allies, Pope Francis and the Iranian Ayatollah not to do so, as the move could lead to violence and undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Turkey announced that it could even sever diplomatic relations with Israel if the United States relocates its embassy to Jerusalem, and that the act could push the region into a "fire whose end is nowhere in sight".

Two years later, in 2019, President Trump also signed a decision recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, thus opposing other world powers.5 His administration is fuelling conflicts in the Middle East, openly helping rebel forces in Syria and insisting on the departure of al-Assad, the legitimately elected President of Syria and commander of the Syrian army, which is fighting international terrorists who have occupied much of the country. Trump annulled the agreement between Iran and six world powers by which Iran pledged to halt its progress toward developing nuclear weapons in exchange for a substantial lifting of economic sanctions and is "rattling weapons" at that country (Takahashi, 2017, p. 76). The decision to withdraw from the agreement with Iran has strained not only relations with Tehran, but also with many European allies. Trump even called the NATO alliance redundant (Dw.com, 17 February 2017).

The US administration has not ruled out military intervention in Venezuela, if the events in that independent country develop contrary to American interests (Brumec, 24 January 2019). Trump is occasionally enthusiastic about North Korea (Novilist.hr, 9 February 2019), but mostly threatens it with harsh rhetoric ("things will happen to them that they never thought were possible", "any threat from Pyongyang will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen") (Večernji.hr, 10 August 2017), etc.

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[4] In 1980, Israel declared Jerusalem its capital, and West Jerusalem is the seat of the President, Prime Minister, parliament (Knesset), and almost all ministries. However, UN Security Council Resolution 478 stipulates that the decision by Israel is null and void, and calls on all countries to keep their embassies in Tel Aviv (Jutarnji.hr, 16 December 2017).

[5] Israel occupied the Golan Heights in the war with Syria in 1967, however, the international community never recognized this annexation (Novilist.hr, 23 April 2019).

In general, it can be said that, since coming to the Oval Office, President Trump's rhetoric has become increasingly sharp. He gave free rein to his aides – "his generals", as he called them - to plan and conduct military operations in a number of combat zones, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Somalia and Yemen (Klare, 19 July 2017).

3. Donald Trump's target audience

Trump is primarily addressing the American worker, the production base, the forgotten man. Trump's speeches are prepared primarily to attract the attention of working-class whites. They are extremely angry with reason because they have been rejected and left to fend for themselves (Dw.com, 18 May 2016). Although he did not run a traditional political campaign, huge crowds attended Trump's rallies because people felt they were part of what Trump was talking about - for example, that well-paid physical labour jobs had disappeared and former industrial centers were devastated (Kovačević, 5 February 2017). They believed that Trump, as president, would work harder to create new jobs and strengthen the manufacturing sector, and that he would do more for them than Hillary Clinton, because he is a businessman (Lalić, 2016, p. 25).

As early as the 1950s, the eminent American economist and diplomat John Kenneth Galbraith wrote about "private opulence and public squalor" in the United States, which is even more pronounced today. Private wealth in some narrow sectors has pushed all the highest boundaries, and public squalor is visible at almost every turn. Citizens are dissatisfied that their children are burdened with a huge debt for schooling, that they lack opportunities for success. It is easiest to blame foreigners, immigrants, for all of the frustrations, who are worse off than American workers. And this is what Trump does - those are his usual statements, his standard misdirection (Chomsky 2018, p. 165). Trump's claims (that "everyone thinks so" and that "it is obviously true") permeate the listeners, who do not even manage to question them, because he continues speaking. The consequence is that this draws all present into a silent circle of approval (Comey, 2018, p. 264). Workers' attention is focused on their own individual situation, which is usually precarious. Workers have no security, cannot plan anything and, as such, find it difficult

to organize and participate in a functioning democratic society. This is certainly good for concentrated power, because the elite does not want a functional democratic society, but rather a society in which people are frightened, inactive, in fear for the next paycheck (Chomsky, 2018, p. 179).

Trump has a rhetorical style that gives the impression that he is doing everything in the interest of the working class, although this is not always the case. Proposing the abolition of the so-called Obamacare, he wants to take away from the workers what little health care they have. His state budget proposal is catastrophically devastating for employees - investments in the military are rising significantly, while taxation of the rich is diminishing. All this has resulted in the hitherto unseen wealth becoming even more concentrated and very visible (Chomsky, 2018, p. 158).

4. Trump seemingly attacking the elites whose representative he is

Trump is attacking the elites, to whom (although an outsider in politics) he belongs entirely, as well as his government full of billionaires. So Trump is part of the existing elite, though not the political elite in the narrow sense (although he has appointed more federal judges than any American president so far and thus secured a conservative majority in the highest judicial body for the next few generations). Dominance in the Supreme Court in favour of Republicans will provide them an advantage in legal battles over key issues such as the right to abortion, migration, and Trump's attempts to ban transgender individuals from serving in the US military (Voxfeminae.net, 23 April 2019).

It should be said that, during the presidential campaign, Trump also put forward some excellent initiatives, for example, the reconstruction of infrastructure in the United States. Unfortunately, Trump launched this idea in the context of a fiscal policy that envisages tax cuts for the rich and corporations and subsidizing private corporations with taxpayers' money to rebuild the infrastructure that the rich will own and bring them new earnings (charging of tolls and the like). Thus, the most ruthless marginal groups of the Republican Party are pursuing a policy aimed at enriching their true electorate - private power and wealth, "the masters of humanity". So such an infrastructure renewal suits the

Republicans, especially Trump, private powerful individuals and profit. Members of the financial elite are extremely pleased with this, as Trump is doing just the opposite of what he announced in his campaign, i.e. he is protecting the very core of the financial elite he was attacking. The mentioning of benefits for ordinary people is empty rhetoric. Populist rhetoric is used to attract people, but at the same time, it deceives them (Chomsky, 2018, pp. 176-177, 184-185).

Although Trump is considered a populist, he does not fit the generally accepted definition of populism (Takahashi, Skoko, Pavić, 2018, p. 98). A populist leader does not have to be particularly charismatic himself, but he must provide a sense of direct connection with the "substance" of the people, he must "embody" the people, which is not the case with Trump (Müller, 2017, p. 42). Otherwise, populists have nothing against the elite as long as they are that elite leading the people (Müller, 2017, p. 37).

5. Hidden attitude towards the topic ("topic abuse")

Topic abuse by Trump is most visible in the approach to the issue of illegal entry into the country. When Trump talks about immigration, it is not just about the complex political and technical issues of illegal immigration, which, after all, both Democrats and Republicans have fought against. The point lies not in what he says, but in the consequence that the utterance provokes.

Thus, on the eve of the congressional elections at the end of 2018, a series of explosive postal packages were sent to opponents of the American President, which shook and disturbed the entire country. A deadly attack ensued on a synagogue in Pennsylvania, where a man shot and killed 11 worshipers during a service. These developments have raised growing questions about the extent to which Donald Trump's rhetoric encourages violence.

Those two incidents initiated fears of new political violence and calls for Trump to soften his rhetoric and to do more to reduce political anxiety in the country. However, he did not do so. On the contrary, he stated that there were "gang members and robbers" in the

caravan heading towards the American border, and he posted on his Twitter a Mexican who boasted that he had killed two American police officers. The tweet ended with the message: "The Democrats let him in the country" (Nacional.hr, 2 November 2018).

After all opponents of Trump's rhetoric said it was wrong to demonize an entire nation, religion, or race, Trump deliberately arrived in his target space, where he can make convincing points. Irrespective of the fact that the reaction of liberal forces came precisely because of the inflamed populist rhetoric, he used this reaction as key evidence that various leftists, globalists, liberals and others advocate minority rights over majority rights, i.e. that they want to comprehensively reshape the entire religious, national and cultural composition of the nation (Pavić, 27 May 2019).

On the subject of immigration, Trump is constantly touching the sore spot of the impoverished masses worried about their future, expecting that they will react in his favour in the next election. At the same time, he is not interested in the fact that his inflammatory statements contribute to the toxic atmosphere in the country.

6. Contradictions in Trump's rhetoric

Trump has reacted to every defeat during the election campaign with accusations that his rivals used fraud. He also had a preventive claim that the entire system was rigged, including the Republican National Convention itself (Müller, 2017, p. 40). However, Trump never presented evidence for his claims (Babić, 7 May 2019).

His speeches and behaviour are full of contradictions. He speaks out against immigration, while he is himself a child of immigrants. Even two of his wives (he married three times) are immigrants. During the election campaign, he hinted that Russia would become an ally, and after he became president, he stated that relations with Moscow were "perhaps worse than ever". He imposed sanctions on Russia and, at the same time, expressed his support for Putin. He was unwilling to criticize the Russian government, although he was often in a position to condemn Russian invasions of neighbours and repression, even the killings of its own citizens (Halimi, 15 May 2017; Comey, 2018, p. 263).

Trump is verbally on the side of the working-class population, but he does not hesitate to deprive people of their income needed for life. Namely, over 800,000 civil servants and over a million more who work on contract for the government and its institutions were without pay for 35 days as Trump blocked the federal budget because Congress did not approve funds for him to build a wall towards Mexico. It was the longest blockade of the US budget in history (Knigge, 26 January 2019).

His sexual affairs are also well known (a former member of the federal intelligence service collected material known as the "Steele File", which contained a number of unquestionable allegations about Trump), which Trump strongly denied (Comey, 2018, pp. 228-229).

Donald Trump is condemned by liberal commentators for many things, and especially for his attitude and policy towards the climate. Namely, Trump is calling for more fossil fuels, more coal-fired power plants, the lifting of restrictions and regulations set by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (Chomsky, 2018, p. 157). In his appearances, he claims that humans have no effect on global warming, even whether it is even occurring (Chomsky, 2018, p. 271).

Trump is not bound by institutional values either. His leadership of the country functions on the principle of "I scratch your back, you scratch mine" and it all comes down to personal loyalty (Comey, 2018, p. 289). So, for example, he fired FBI Director James Comey because he did not want to commit to loyalty (Comey, 2018, p. 266), nor did he promise not to investigate his close associate Michael Flynn (president's former national security adviser) for lying to the FBI about his contacts with the Russians (Comey, 2018, p. 290).

During his presidency, Donald Trump has changed a great deal, including how the United States is viewed in the world. He has a negative impact on American foreign policy, as well as on American "soft power" in the world[6].

[6] The term "soft power" means influence through cultural and other values, instead of military force.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that Trump is not without political talent. He has realized numerous wishes of big capital (whose interests he represents) - from the sale of an enormous amount of weapons (for example, to Saudi Arabia for an incredible one hundred billion dollars) to the ban on doing business in America by the Chinese telecommunications "giant" Huawei. Trump is the man who managed to move the Overton window[7] towards himself, which few have succeeded.

7. Trump's public appearances

Rhetoric and speeches are some of the key tools of political work. In addressing the public, Trump primarily uses Twitter. He said himself: "It's my megaphone. It's the way I talk to people directly, without filters. I'm breaking through the noise. I'm breaking through the fake news. That's the only way I can communicate. I have tens of millions of followers. That's better than cable news. When I say something and CNN airs it, no one sees it, no one cares. When I tweet, it is my megaphone to the world." (Woodward, 2018, p. 205) Tweets are the central element of his term. Trump ordered that his tweets that received two hundred thousand or more likes be printed for him, so that he could study them, trying to find common themes in the most successful ones. He probably wanted to adopt a more strategic approach, to discover whether the success was related to the topic, the language, or simply the surprise about what the president had said. Usually, the most effective tweets were the most shocking ones (Woodward, 2018, pp. 206-207). Although the White House had accounts on Facebook and Instagram, Trump did not use them. He stuck to Twitter, providing the following explanation: "That's me. That's how I communicate. That's the reason I was elected. That's the reason why I am successful." (Woodward, 2018, p. 206).

[7] American lawyer Joseph Overton was the first in the 1990s to explain the mechanisms of politics. He started from the question: why are so many good ideas not taken seriously? Overton noted that politicians, if they want to win a new term, must not accept views that might seem too extreme. In order to retain power, ideas must be kept within acceptable limits. This framework, the "eligibility window", consists of schemes previously researched and approved by experts. The schemes are based on statistical calculations and have a good chance of being included in legislation. Whoever goes beyond the framework of the "Overton window" is going against the current and the media, and the fearsome guardians of that window will declare him unrealistic or unreasonable. Television, for example, offers very little time and space to express fundamentally different opinions. In the shows, the same people saying the same thing are constantly lined up. Nonetheless, the Overton window can be moved. The strategy for this is to make public shocking and subversive ideas so that, compared to them, anything less radical suddenly sounds reasonable. Simply put, in order to turn the radical into the reasonable, one only needs to stretch the boundaries of the radical. Donald Trump mastered this art to perfection and pulled the Overton window to his camp (Bregman, 2017, pp. 256-257).

Bob Woodward (considered by many to be one of the best investigative journalists today), winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, believes that there is one tragic flaw in Trump's rhetoric, in him as a man and in his term. In political skirmishes, evasions, denials, blurring, blaming on "fake news" and resentment, the US President has one problem that surpasses all others, and that is that he is not principled, that he distorts the facts, simply put - he lies, he speaks "as the wind blows" (Woodward, 2018, p. 358). For example, in the seventh month of Trump's term, hundreds of white supremacists clashed fiercely with protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, emphasizing once again the racial schism in America (Woodward, 2018, p. 238). On the occasion of this unfortunate event, Trump said: "We strongly condemn this excessive expression of hatred, intolerance and violence. From many sides. From many sides. This has been happening in our country for a long time. Not Donald Trump Not Barack Obama This has been going on for a very long time. There is no place for that in America." With the phrase "many sides", which he uttered twice in a row, Trump had in some ways equated neo-Nazis with those opposing white supremacy. There were sharp reactions to such rhetoric from all parts of the political spectrum, including the Republican Party (Woodward, 2018, p. 239). Because of fierce public criticism - that white supremacists, neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan see the President as a friend, Trump's advisers suggested that he explicitly deny the claim, sharply condemning neo-Nazis and those motivated by racial intolerance. After painstaking persuasion by his advisers that his rhetoric must unite the nation, heal the wounds and show the way forward, and thus become the main star, the redeemer, Trump agreed to give another speech again (he read it from a teleprompter). He first praised the strong economy, the high stock market values and the low unemployment rate, and then addressed the developments in Charlottesville: "To anyone who acted criminally in this weekend's racist violence, you will be held fully accountable. No matter the colour of our skin, we all live under the same laws, we all salute the same great flag and we are all made by the same almighty God. We must love each other, show affection for each other and unite together in condemnation of hatred, bigotry and violence. Racism is evil. We will defend and protect the sacred rights of all Americans." After these words, the public praised Trump for realizing his mistake and correcting it with this speech. However, he was infuriated by the suggestion that he had admitted the mistake and that he had hesitated. He was tormented by the thought that he had turned out to be a weakling (Woodward, 2018, pp. 241-243).

A few days later, at a media briefing, Trump spoke for the third time about Charlottesville. This time, he emphasized that the "alt-left attacked" (extreme or radical left) at the rally. "On the other side was also a very violent group. And no one wants to say that, but I will. Believe me, not all those people were neo-Nazis. Not all those people were white supremacists. Many of those people were there to protest the taking down of the statue of Robert E Lee... I wonder, is it George Washington next week? And is it Thomas Jefferson the week after? Both were slave-owners. You know, you really do have to ask yourself, where does it stop?" He then returned to his previous position: "There is blame on both sides... there are a lot of good people on both sides. In the other group, there were also a lot of bad people... that story has two sides." Thus, President Trump gave three different speeches on the same event in a short period of time. John Kelly, Chief of Staff at the White House, commented humorously: "... now everyone can choose one of them and this could go in the President's favour. It may be the best of all possible options" (Woodward, 2018, pp. 245-247).

The former leader of the Ku Klux Klan thanked the President on Twitter for his third speech - for honesty and courage; the heads of all branches of the army sharply criticized that third speech, and Stephen Colbert used black humour on CBS: "This is like D-Day. Remember D-Day, the two sides, the Allies and the Nazis? There was a lot of violence on both sides. Ruined a beautiful beach. And could have been a golf course" (Woodward, 2018, pp. 246-247).

Just as Kelly had predicted, everyone chose the speech that suited them or that they wanted to comment on, and the President escaped without a general condemnation for his statements about racial intolerance.

8. Concluding remarks

Donald Trump has long been known to the public as a successful real estate entrepreneur and a whimsical reality star. He has no prior political knowledge, which probably contributed to a number of his political decisions - separating children from parent migrants at the border with Mexico, banning all people from certain countries from entering the United States, the stance that torture should be reintroduced as a method of interrogation. threatening to use weapons against North Korea, Venezuela and Iran, a negative statement about NATO (that this transatlantic alliance is superfluous), etc. All of this shows that Trump does not believe in shared values, lasting alliances, or lessons from history. For him, everything is just a job, only a "deal" (Knigge, 26 January 2019; Jutarnji.hr, 26 January 2017; Vowfeminae.net, 19 October 2016; Dw.com, 17 February 2017). He uses the social network Twitter almost every day to announce his often unconventional and harsh views.

Trump's policies have fueled extremely large divisions in the country and numerous attacks on minorities. In his speeches, the head of the world's leading country places conspiracies about the "invasion of illegal immigrants", and this is political rhetoric that spreads discord. He does not distance himself from racial and religious tensions and is therefore considered by many to be co-responsible for the worst anti-Semitic crime committed on American soil8.

All things considered, it can be said that Trump, in his rhetoric, almost always follows three principles:

1. Simplicity: His messages are simple and short. They are difficult to take out of context so the media cannot manipulate them, but are forced to convey them in their entirety. Trump's election motto, Make America Great Again, is short and easy to remember, indicates changes and radical moves, and encourages elation and optimism.

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[8] Over 30,000 members of the Jewish community have signed an open letter in which Donald Trump is directly blamed for the anti-Semitic massacre, where an anti-Semite killed 11 members of the Pittsburgh Jewish community in October 2018 (Dw.com, 1 November 2018).

2. Repetition: During his speeches, Trump repeats his messages several times so that listeners remember them, and his election motto is regularly printed on posters, T-shirts, and hats that are distributed to the public.

3. Sensationalism: In his tweets and at press conferences, Trump always tries to say something unexpected and shocking. It is clear to him that the mainstream media will transmit such statements because the public loves unexpected, sensational and exciting news. He surprised the public by announcing the establishment of a US military space force, announcing a repeal of the amendment on citizenship of foreign children born in the United States, or the decision to send the army to the border to prevent illegal immigration.

It is also characteristic of Trump that he almost never defensive in his speeches, but responds to provocative questions with provocative answers on a similar topic - as in the association game. When asked about his extramarital affairs, he started talking about Bill Clinton's scandals. The American President likes to use jokes or make fun of people (he called Kim Jong-Un Rocket Man). This amuses the audience, but, from a distance, it does not leave a good impression. He often expresses his own opinion, which is not in line with the interests of the country, thus shocking the public.

The question arises - how then did he manage to win the presidential election? How did he persuade more than 60 million people out of about 300,000 million Americans to vote for him (CNN, 2016)? How did he win them over? The answer seems to be that he promised his voters a better and more secure future, and out of fear and aversion to immigrants, in some places, entire cities voted for Trump. After all, the following sentence is well known: "It doesn't matter what the speaker says, what matters is what the audience hears." This was the exact situation in the US in 2016, when Trump was elected President.

9. Reference List

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