

Comparing Trump to Hitler

A few weeks ago the Washington Post published a guest column by Harvard professor Danielle Allen. Here's how it began:

"Like any number of us raised in the late 20th century, I have spent my life perplexed about exactly how Hitler could have come to power in Germany. Watching Donald Trump's rise, I now understand. Leave aside whether a direct comparison of Trump to Hitler is accurate. That is not my point. My point rather is about how a demagogic opportunist can exploit a divided country."

When Ms. Allen says, any "direct comparison" between Hitler and Trump "is not my point" she means, "That is *precisely* my point." Imagine if a conservative had written, "Leave aside whether a direct comparison of Barack Obama and Adolf Hitler is accurate. That is not my point. My point rather is that both were democratically elected and then tried to fundamentally change their respective countries, issuing edicts along the way. And, of course, both were gifted speakers and opportunists." Then imagine if the conservative said, "Of course I'm not making any direct comparisons between the two."

Here's some advice to the professor from Harvard: You didn't get your job by being a dunce. So don't act like one. Don't make comparisons – even indirect ones – between anybody and Hitler and then claim you didn't mean it that way at all. You planted the seed right at the top of your column. You knew what you were doing.

While Ms. Allen supposedly is a serious person, no one is accusing the cast at Saturday Night Live of being a bunch of scholars, a cast that picked up – in the name of comedy, of course – where the professor left off. There was Darrell Hammond playing Donald Trump at the podium after his big

victories on Super Tuesday.

“What a great, great night. I really am running the best campaign, aren’t I? The media is saying they haven’t seen anything like this, not since Germany in the 1930s.”

And now we have Louis C.K. – that well-know comedian and political philosopher – who has just weighed in on the Trump is Hitler routine – except he didn’t beat around the bush. He flat out said it. In an email to his fans, he wrote: “Please stop it with voting for Trump. It was funny for a little while. But the guy is Hitler. ... Hitler was just some hilarious and refreshing dude with a weird comb over who would say anything at all.”

And it’s not only liberals who are making the Hitler comparison, directly or otherwise. Glenn Beck has done it and so has David Brooks, the New York Times columnist who is not reliably liberal but not quite conservative either.

As any regular reader of my columns knows, I have not been a fan of Donald Trump – not of his demeanor, which I consider un-presidential, and not of some of his policies. But this Hitler nonsense has to stop.

There is a well-established rule among serious people: If you compare anybody to Hitler, you lose the argument. Comparing Trump to a man who systemically slaughtered six million Jews and millions of others he also thought were sub-human, is hate speech – the very hate speech that liberals who are now making Hitler comparisons routinely decry. Building a wall to keep illegals out is not the same as rounding up Jews and sending them to the gas chamber. Promising to temporarily ban all Muslims from entering our country is wrong-headed, but it is not the same as putting into place an efficient, cold-blooded apparatus to create a master race by eliminating anyone and everyone who doesn’t fit the description.

And please, don’t tell us to lighten up, that you are only

joking. Comparing Donald Trump to Hitler isn't funny.