

# Top 10 Craziest Modern Dictators

By: John Waller

## 10. Nicolae Ceausescu



Nicolae Ceausescu was the General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party from 1965-1989. He made a scepter for himself (Isn't Communism Anti-Monarchy?), and called himself "The Genius Of The Carpathians". He obviously wasn't a fan of modesty. He demanded that his, nearly illiterate, wife be made part of the New York Academy of Sciences and the Royal Institute of Chemistry, and all scientists in Romania had to include her name in their research. He claimed that his son, Nicu, had published several volumes on Nuclear Physics. He built a palace so huge that today's Romanian Parliament can only use 30% of it. He met his end when he and his wife were overthrown and executed by revolutionaries.

## 9. Rafael Trujillo



Rafael Trujillo was dictator of the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1938 and again from 1942 to 1952. Trujillo was one of the many dictators that thought that he was God. He ordered that all churches put up a sign that read, "God in Heaven, Trujillo on Earth." He organized a \$30 million event called the "Fair of Peace and Fraternity of the Free World", where he appointed his daughter as Queen. He appointed his 3-Year old son as a colonel. He campaigned for his wife to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, even though she was illiterate. He made a law requiring that all license plates say "Viva Trujillo", and finally promoted his son (still very young) to General. He was finally killed in 1961, by a group of about 11 people, and his family was forced to leave the Dominican Republic.

## 8. Idi Amin

Idi Amin Dada was dictator of Uganda from 1971-1979. Amin reportedly ate dissidents to his regime, or fed them to his pet crocodiles. Some of his titles were "Conqueror of the British Empire", "President for Life", and others. He banned all Asians from Uganda because the daughter of an important Asian family refused to marry him. He also claimed to be the King of Scotland, and apparently wrote love letters to Queen Elizabeth. He fled to Libya after the demise of his regime, then to Saudi Arabia, where he died in 2003.



## 7. Muammar Qaddafi



Muammar Qaddafi is the dictator of Libya. Qaddafi took power in 1969 in a revolution, and is still ruling. After three years with the title “Prime Minister” he changed it to “Brother Leader and Guide of the Revolution”. All his bodyguards are female virgins, and he claims that Libya is run through a direct democracy. He has possibly the weirdest fashion sense of everybody here, for example when he wore a traditional Islamic dress with sunglasses. He blames Osama bin Laden and drugs for the 2011 Libyan Civil War, and once claimed that he conquered the U.S. He banned all Italians from Libya in revenge for the colonization of Libya during WWII. He once gave a speech in Italy, to only women, on why Europe should pay him 5 Billion Euros. He also despises Switzerland, and wrote a UN resolution on why Switzerland should be dissolved. Also, on his relations with the UN, he once gave a speech for two hours, during which he expressed support for Somali Pirates. He claimed that Israel was responsible for JFK’s assassination (Yeah, right), and once called Barack Obama “My Son”. He was only allowed a 10 minute speech.

## 6. Yahya Jammeh



Yahya Jammeh has been dictator of The Gambia since 1994, and has since claimed to have mystical powers. The Gambia sponsors Witch Doctors, who have abducted about 1,000 Gambians on charges of witchcraft. He intends to have a policy in The Gambia “Stricter than those in Iran”. His official title is “His Excellency Sheikh Professor Alhaji Dr. Yahya Abdul-Azziz Jemus Junkung Jammeh Naasiru Deen”. He claims to have discovered the cure to AIDS/HIV. He claims that The Gambia was formerly the largest country in Africa. In his own words, this country is one of the oldest and biggest countries in Africa that was reduced to a small snake by the British government who sold all our lands to the French.”

## 5. Francisco Macias Nguema

Francisco Macias Nguema was President of Equatorial Guinea from 1968-1979, his reign ending after being overthrown by his nephew, Teodoro Obiang Nguema, who is the current dictator of Equatorial Guinea. Nguema (The Uncle) closed down hospitals in favor of his Witch Doctor Ancestry. He banned the word “intellectual” and banned fishing. He changed the national motto to “There is no other God than Macias Nguema.” He killed the head of the national bank and hid all the money of the National Treasury in his house. On Christmas, 1975, he ordered 150 opponents executed in a football field to the tune of “Those Were The Days”. His reign of terror and insanity was finally over when he was executed by firing squad “101 times”, and was replaced by a slightly less insane, evil and strange dictator.



#### 4. Saparmurat Niyazov



Niyazov was the President for Life of Turkmenistan from 1990-2006. He is most famous for naming months after himself, his family and his books. He renamed bread after his mother, and built a huge Ice Castle in the middle of Turkmenistan, a desert country. He banned make-up, gold teeth and lip syncing at concerts. He demanded that his book be given equal status as the Quran in Mosques, and all Turkmen currency has his picture. All employees must memorize the book to keep their jobs, and you could not get a driver's license unless you memorized his book by heart. Turkmenistan is a one-party state with (of course) no opposition. As he put it, 'There are no opposition parties, so how can we grant them freedom?'

#### 3. Francois Duvalier



President For Life Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier was dictator of Haiti from 1957-1971. He once had a heart attack, and chose Clement Barbot, leader of the Tonton Macoutes, a paramilitary group, to become acting president while he recovered. When he was fully recovered, he accused Barbot of trying to take power from him. When Barbot tried to overthrow Duvalier in a coup, Francois issued a massive search for Barbot. When the police couldn't find him, Duvalier believed he had turned into a black dog. He then ordered the death of all black dogs in Haiti. Eventually, when Barbot was caught and executed, Duvalier kept his head for Voodoo. In 1961, he ordered elections. He received 100% of the vote. He made Haitians recite a prayer every day, which went like this: "Our Doc, who art in the National Palace for life, hallowed by Thy name by present and future generations. They will be done in Port-au-Prince as it is in the provinces. Give us this day our new Haiti and forgive not the trespasses of those anti-patriots who daily spit upon our country...". He once said that he controlled Lee Harvey Oswald to shoot JFK with voodoo. He finally died in 1971, and was succeeded by his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, who was known as "Baby Doc".

#### 2. Mobutu Sese Seko

Mobutu was the President of Zaire (Now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). Zaire means "River". He made a law saying that TV in Zaire cannot mention anybody but him by name. He banned all leopard print hats from Zaire, except for his own. He commanded that all evening news begin with a scene of him descending from the heavens. He chose many names for himself, including one that translates in English to "the all-powerful warrior who, because of his endurance and will to win, will go from contest to contest leaving fire in his wake." He jailed anyone who did not have an African name. He was overthrown on May 16, 1997 and died on September 7, 1997, of Prostate Cancer, in Morocco. Good riddance.



## 1. Kim Jong-Il



And finally, we come to Kim Jong-Il, of North Korea. He took power in 1998 when his father, Kim Il-Sung, died. Kim travels with his “Pleasure Squad”, a group of beautiful women. Kim is praised as the “Creator of the Universe”, along with his father. Kim is praised as having had a supernatural birth, and claims that North Korea is the most democratic, free, and respected nation on earth. He claims that he invented the hamburger, and that he is the greatest golfer in history. He built a city right on the border of North and South Korea, just to trick South Koreans into defecting. He attempted to rid Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, of short people, because he was angry about his height. Schoolchildren are taught that he never defecates. And, finally, his grand jewel of insanity, he had two South Korean directors kidnapped to kick-start North Korea’s film industry by forcing them to make a remake of Godzilla, only Communist. He claims that North Korea is a paradise, where nobody ever experienced poverty, and where everybody leads a happy life. In real life, people are regularly tortured, and nearly all of them work in collective farms.

# Another 10 Crazy Modern Dictators

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## 10. Hugo Chavez

Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías is the repressive leftist tyrant of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. A self-proclaimed socialist and collectivist, his disastrous economic policies have led to food shortages, quotas, and rationing in his oil-rich country, causing thousands to flee. Chávez assumed power as President in 1999 and pledged to aid Venezuela's poor majority. Fraudulent elections were held in 2000 and in 2006, allowing Chavez to retain his authoritarian power. As such it would be accurate to describe him as a dictator. For almost five years, Chavez has enjoyed near total control of Venezuela's National Assembly thanks to a strategic blunder by his foes, who boycotted 2005 elections. Known for criticizing the USA, he has called George W. Bush the Devil, and said that the Haiti Earthquake was caused by the US. He said that Israel is “doing what Hitler did to the Jews,” and that the US is “like Count Dracula – always in search of blood and petrol”. Chavez died on March 5, 2013.



## 9. Benito Mussolini



Mussolini, ruled the country as Prime Minister from 1922 until his ousting in 1943. Hitler’s Ally/Sidekick during WWII was one of the vainest dictators ever. He was commonly called “Il Duce”, which translates to “The Leader”. His administrative building was a huge structure with a giant picture of his head. He said that he would return Italy to it’s greatness during the Roman Empire. However, this proved to be untrue – Il Duce was hanged by rebels in 1945, who proceeded to declare war on Nazi Germany.

## 8. Ferdinand Marcos



Ferdinand Marcos served as President of the Philippines from 1965 to 1986. His wife, Imelda Marcos, had 2,700-3,000 pairs of shoes, the money with which she bought them with was stolen from the country. President Marcos started out as a democratic president, but then turned into a dictator. Eventually, he was overthrown and escaped to Hawaii – but not without 24 bars of gold. He is one of the most corrupt politicians ever, having embezzled billions of dollars from public funds.

## 7. Enver Hoxha

Comrade-Chairman-Prime Minister-Foreign-Minister-Minister of War-Commander-in-Chief of the People's Army Enver Hoxha, was the dictator of Albania from 1944 until his death in 1985. He got that title because he rewarded all cabinet positions to himself. He banned beards, typewriters and color TVs. He built 750,000 bunkers in the nation for a population of 3 Million, out of fear of a Yugoslavian invasion. Each Bunker was big enough to hold 1 person. Hoxha had a close personal relationship with Josef Stalin.



## 6. Ne Win



Ne Win was dictator of Burma from 1962-1982. He was very superstitious. He changed the currency to 15,30,45, and 90 – his lucky numbers. The entire Burmese nation lost their savings. He did this because he thought that he would live 90 years if he did this. He crossed bridges backwards, and once changed the nation's roads from left-way to right, because he was worried that his communist regime was leaning too far left. He apparently bathed in dolphin blood.

## 5. Saddam Hussein

Saddam Hussein Abd al-Majid al-Tikriti was the fifth President of Iraq, serving in this capacity from 16 July 1979 until 9 April 2003. Hussein considered himself the incarnation of Nebuchadnezzar II. His face could be seen on office buildings, schools, airports, shops. All Iraqi currency had his picture. Hussein wrote a book, called Zabibah and the King. In the novel, "Arab" becomes king of Tikrit, the town Mr. Hussein was born in. He represents Saddam Hussein. He falls in love with Zabibah, a peasant woman representing the people of Iraq. Zabibah's husband, representing the USA, rapes Zabibah. The other antagonists are: Hezkel, an Emir, representing Israel, Shamil, representing Jews, and Nuri Chalabi, representing Ahmed Chalabi, an enemy of Saddam.



## 4. Kim Il-Sung



Kim Il-Sung was the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, commonly referred to as North Korea, from its establishment in 1948 until his death in 1994. Kim Jong-Il's predecessor, and father, was also insane. He forced everybody in North Korea to wear a badge of himself. He said that he could turn sand into rice, claimed that he could cross rivers on leaves, and erected 30,000 monuments to himself. Kim (The Father) also established Juche, or self-reliance, which cut off trade, travel and cultural exchange with the west almost completely. This turned North Korea into a failing state.

## 3. Teodoro Obiang Nguema

Francisco Macias Nguema was succeeded by his nephew, Teodoro Obiang Nguema. Mbasogo has been President of Equatorial Guinea since 1979. He rules Equatorial Guinea with an iron fist. He is reported to be a cannibal, and apparently eats dissidents testicles to gain "power". He executed his uncle "101 Times". He continues to try to have a UN Science Prize named after him. Nguema's henchmen abducted four nationals living in exile in Benin in January 2010, held them in secret detention, tortured them, and then forced them to confess to an alleged coup attempt, all before executing them, in August, following a kangaroo court military trial.



## 2. Gnassingbe Eyadema



Gnassingbe Eyadema, was the President of Togo from 1967 until his death in 2005. He participated in two successful military coups, in January 1963 and January 1967, and became President on April 14, 1967. Eyadema thought of himself as a superhero so, he made a comic book starring himself as a superhero. Every store in Togo had his picture, and \$20 wristwatches with his image that disappeared every 15 seconds. The day of his failed assassination attempt was called “the Feast of Victory over Forces of Evil”. He surrounded himself with more than 1,000 beautiful women to sing his praises. He died in 2005, and was replaced by his son.

## 2. Jean-Bedel Bokassa

Jean-Bedel Bokassa was dictator of the Central African Republic from 1976-1979. In his 75 years of life, Bokassa had 17 wives and 50 children. Ironically, Bokassa outlawed polygamy. In 1979, children protested over being forced to buy costly school uniforms from one of Bokassa’s wife’s factories. In revenge, he had 180 children arrested. He visited the prison, where he and the prison guards clubbed the children. He personally smashed five children’s skulls with his cane. He had himself crowned as emperor, and he spent one-third of the national budget on his initiation ceremony. No foreign leaders attended. He reportedly ate human babies. When Alexandre Banza tried to stage a coup and was caught, Bokassa personally beat him nearly to death. This dictator was not wacky, hilarious or even mildly funny: He was simply evil, cruel and insane.



### Homework Assignment:

Choose one of these dictators to research online more in depth. For your chosen dictator, you need to find an example for each of the critical attributes of totalitarianism. You will post this on the Class Chatter website, providing link/s to your sources. You then need to comment on two of your other classmates’ postings that chose a different dictator than the one you posted about.

**Postings must be completed by MIDNIGHT, Thursday night.**