

Trump, Neo-Fascism and Pre-Emptive Fascism: the barbarism of intensified oligarchic Western capitalism

Trump, el neofascismo y el fascismo preventivo: la barbarie del capitalismo oligárquico occidental intensificado

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Abstract

Donald Trump and Elon Musk are, par excellence, “class warriors,” representatives of the oligarchy of the capitalist class. They have made a massive attack on the US working class, attempting to summarily lay-off/ dismiss hundreds of thousands of federal workers, close-down numerous government national and international agencies. They have shredded welfare programmes at home, and aid programmes globally. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is one such agency that bites the dust.

Keywords: Capitalism, Donald Trump, Economics, Elon Musk, Liberalism, Market Economy, Politics, United States of America, Working class.

Resumen

Donald Trump y Elon Musk son, por excelencia, “guerreros de clase”, representantes de la oligarquía de la clase capitalista. Han realizado un ataque masivo contra la clase trabajadora de Estados Unidos, intentando despedir sumariamente a cientos de miles de trabajadores federales y cerrando numerosas agencias gubernamentales nacionales e internacionales. Han destruido los programas de bienestar social a nivel nacional y los programas de ayuda a nivel mundial. La Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional (USAID) es una de esas agencias que muerde el polvo.

Palabras clave: Capitalismo, Donald Trump, Economía, Elon Musk, Liberalismo, Economía de Mercado, Política, Estados Unidos de América, Clase Obrera.

Resumo

Donald Trump e Elon Musk são, por excelência, “guerreiros de classe”, representantes da oligarquia da classe capitalista. Lançaram um ataque maciço à classe trabalhadora americana, tentando despedir sumariamente centenas de milhares de funcionários federais e encerrando inúmeras agências governamentais nacionais e internacionais. Destruíram os programas de bem-estar social a nível nacional e os programas de ajuda a nível global. A Agência dos Estados Unidos para o Desenvolvimento Internacional (USAID) é uma dessas agências que mordem o pó.

Palavras-chave: Capitalismo, Donald Trump, Economia, Elon Musk, Liberalismo, Economia de Mercado, Política, Estados Unidos da América, Classe Operária.

Introduction. Class War, Trump, Late Western Capitalism

The USA federal workforce of over two million are threatened. The welfare and social programs in danger of being slashed -including Medicaid, food stamps and public education- are lifelines for millions: “The government is targeting nurses, scientists, teachers, daycare providers, judges, veterans, air traffic controllers, and nuclear safety inspectors. What welfare programmes are in the firing line? The food stamps program, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are next” (Corbett, 2025).

What Trump is doing is new but is also *not* new. What is new -the novelty- is the absolute openness of oligarchic, plutocratic control of the USA government with this war on workers and on the social wage-welfare agencies that supplement the incomes of the poor. What is novel is the transparency, the openness of intensified oligarchic capitalist barbarism.

The intensification of capitalist exploitation, the increased levels of exploitation and super-exploitation of the labour power of workers in this current stage of Late Western Capitalism promotes at national levels:

- (1) vastly increasing inequalities of wealth
- (2) reducing incomes of workers, decline in ‘real value’ of wages and salaries, the repression and suppression of wages, the impoverishment and pauperisation of millions of Americans
- (3) decline in social wage – the gutting of the welfare and social wage, services and jobs
- (4) deregulation of protections such as environmental, health, social, labour, and judicial regulations and workers’ and trade union rights
- (5) mass dismissals and threats to jobs. Employment contracts are being voided, due process rights

trampled, and workers fired the former Musk/Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) actions threatening the largest single mass firing in US history.

I repeat, what Trump is doing is *not* new. It is “shrinking the state”, depleting all social spending, letting the poor perish, forcing workers to work harder and more insecurely. It is the cruel and anti-human, anti-empathy, anti-kindness, anti-community, ultra-individualism philosophy of Ayn Rand through the voices of Elon Musk, Donald Trump and their neo-con and neo-Nazi promoters and supporters. We are seeing ‘ever-quickenings intensification of the exploitation of the labour power of workers and the intensification of inequality- of wealth, income, housing, health, childhood, education, life, death’ (Hill, 2022; Hill and Zhao, 2024).

This is “class war from above,” with a vengeance. Since the economic crisis of the mid-1970s (“the oil crisis”), the capitalist class has been exponentially wresting back from the working class a greater and greater share of public wealth, of the share of national income and wealth, across much of the capitalist world (Picketty, 2014). It is not just Trumpian USA. It was Biden’s and Obama’s USA and to a greater or lesser degrees, true of Late Western Capitalist economies globally.

Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, the China mix of capitalism and state / collective control, is different (Hill and Zhao, 2024). None of the five above characteristics are evident in China. In fact, millions of Chinese are pulled out of poverty, not pushed into it. But in Late *Western* Capitalism the assaults on both the social wage (state provided benefits such as unemployment, health, retirement, disability, family and children’s support benefits) and on individual wage of workers has been deliberate and longstanding. Assaults on the actual wage for labour provided -the suppression and repression of the worker’s wage- has been pronounced, stark, and disastrous for millions.

The contrast between “Wall Street” and “Main Street” is so extreme that it is now obvious, *contra* the 45-year-old message, “TINA”, that “There Is No Alternative” to austerity, that “there is not a magic money tree”. What is now clear is that when capitalism is threatened, there *is* indeed a forest of magic money trees to bail out businesses! (Hill, 2022). In the financial crash period after 2008 and in the years after the Covid crash of 2020, billions of dollars, of pounds, were plucked off the magic money tree in subsidies to the wealthy, to the capitalist class. And, alongside the forest, of magic money trees, there is a graveyard, a graveyard of hopes and lives and scarcely recalled memories of a more civil, a more social democratic, a more equal, kinder, a more socially compassionate society. Those memories stoked by the voices of the old, and stirred by socialist, Marxist and communist organisations and movements and activists, proclaiming, “it doesn’t have to be like this (Hill, 2022).”

Class War: Macroeconomic Inequality, the Suppression of Wages, Jobs and Workers’ Rights

In the USA, the suppression of wages has been at the very centre of widening social inequality. Mishel

and Bivens (2021) note that in the USA, the “great wage deceleration for the vast majority of workers after 1979” was a deliberate policy. This is in stark contrast to the wages of the bottom 90%. Gould and Kandra (2022) note that

from 1979 to 2021, Wages for the top 1% and top 0.1% skyrocketed by 206.3% and 465.1%, respectively, while wages for the bottom 90% grew just 28.7%. On an annualized basis, bottom 90% wages grew only 0.6% per year, compared with 2.7% and 4.2% annualized wage growth for the top 1% and top 0.1%, respectively. (Haskell, 2023).

In their report for the Economic Policy Institute, and referring specifically to the USA, Bivens and Kandra (2023) report that “in 2022, CEOs were paid 344 times as much as a typical worker in contrast to 1965 when they were paid 21 times as much.” Michel and Bivens (2021) comment on the share of all wages earned, respectively, by the top 1%, and that earned by the bottom 90%:

The share of all wages earned by those in the top 1% nearly doubled from 1979 to 2019, from 7.3% to 13.2%. Correspondingly, the share of wages earned by the bottom 90% eroded throughout this time, from 69.8% in 1979 to 60.9% in 2019.

Citing Taylor and Ömer (2020) in their *Macroeconomic Inequality from Reagan to Trump*, Beams (2020) notes that:

The share of profits in national income began to increase after 1970 at the rate of 0.4 percent per year, eight percentage points over 50 years ... the reduction in the labour share of national income by 8 percentage points means that, with gross domestic product in the US now at over \$20 trillion, workers would be receiving some \$1.12 trillion more in income had the previous distribution between wages and profits applied.

This suppression and repression of wages under Late Western Capitalism is what Fascism typically enforces. Chile, the early test - bed for neoliberalism, with the Fascist dictator Pinochet in power between 1973 and 1988, enforcing a Fascist state, laid bare impacts of what is usually typified as neoliberal capitalism, but which can, in its extremity, also be described as Fascist:

In Augusto Pinochet's Chile, the majority of workers earned less in 1989 than in 1973 (after adjusting for inflation). Labor's share of the national income declined from 52 percent in 1970 to 31 percent in 1989. The minimum wage dropped almost by half during the 1980s, and by the end of that decade, Chile's poverty rate reached 41 percent and the percentage of Chileans without adequate housing was 40 percent, up from 27 percent in 1972. One-third of the country's workforce was unemployed by 1983. (Systemic Disorder, 2015).

Similar results were in Argentina, following the Military coup and government 1976-1983. Dolack

(2020) notes,

In Argentina, the main union federation was abolished, strikes outlawed, prices raised, wages tightly controlled and social programs cut. As a result, real wages fell by 50 percent within a year. Tariffs were reduced deeply, leaving the country wide open to imports and foreign speculation, causing considerable local industry to shut. For the period 1978 to 1983, Argentina's foreign debt increased to \$43 billion from \$8 billion, while the share of wages in national income fell to 22 percent from 43 percent.

Most recently in Argentina, the Milei government, in power since December, 2023, has launched an all-out attack on workers; rights, relaxing regulations aimed at limiting informal employment, on social spending, massive cuts to social spending, a drastic currency devaluation- with the consequent depreciation of wages- the reduction of subsidies on energy and transport, and price liberalization (Erdosain, 2023). The results, detailed by International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in December (2024a) include a reduction of 22% in the purchasing power of pensions in just one year, a severe decline in the value of real wages, with the minimum wage now covering less than 30% of basic living expenses and 50% of basic food needs. "Milei's administration has not only marginalised workers but actively suppressed their right to protest. New laws impose severe penalties for organisers of social protests, including potential prison sentences of up to six years" (International Trade Union Confederation - ITUC, 2024b).

In the USA, wage suppression was enabled by anti-trade union legislation, by the weakening or shredding of workers' rights and protection, abolishing trade union negotiating rights. In the USA, Trump signed (27 March) an Executive Order abolishing numerous previously negotiated federal union contracts under the pretext of defending "the national security of the United States." (Crosse, 2025). This is simply a continuation of anti-trade union legislation and practice in the USA over decades. Gould and Kandra (2022) cite current labor law that does not adequately protect workers' right to form unions. They state,

With the possible exception of excess unemployment, declining union membership plays the single most significant role in slow and unequal wage growth. This erosion was not driven by workers' declining interest in unions, but rather by concerted employer opposition, along with state and federal policy that has made it nearly impossible for workers to form unions in the face of unwilling employers.

Organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) details attacks on trade unionists' rights, safety and lives across the globe (e.g. ITUC, 2024b). Since I wrote a report for the ILO in 2006 (Hill, 2006) the situation for workers and trade unions has markedly worsened. And globally, as the International Trade Union Confederation (2024b)

notes, “as millions of households struggle in a debilitating scenario of squeezed incomes and an entrenched cost-of-living crisis, policymakers and business leaders are actively restricting workers’ rights to collectively demand fairer wages or to legally exercise their right to strike.”

Unless successfully resisted, this is an indication of what is in store for the working class of the USA and elsewhere. The mass dismissals of federal government employees, workers, are a harbinger. And it is being emulated. In the UK the “Labour” Prime minister is promising to cull, to cut the Civil Service/Bureaucracy numbers substantially.

Fascism and Neo-Fascism

The term ‘Fascist’ is used widely and loosely. We can analyse:

1. The actual nature of Fascism, the Fascist state, its government, governance, what it does, its policies
2. There is also a debate about the causes of Fascism itself -the social and economic and political conditions necessary for and leading to its growth and taking of power. It is here that I go on to introduce the concept of “Pre-Emptive Fascism” as an addition to the classic Trotskyist analysis
3. The personality/ beliefs, actions and attempted actions of a Leader (such as Trump, Erdogan, Orban, Modi, Milei). There is debate about whether Trump is Fascist or not, his beliefs, his rhetoric, his behaviour.

Díez-Gutiérrez *et al* (2024) define what they term current “neo-Fascism of the 21st century.” They note: In recent years, we have witnessed a resurgence of the far right around the world. The term ‘neo-fascism’ is more appropriate to describe the forces currently occupying the far-right space. Their programme does not so much refer to the classic fascism of the 1930s, but rather to the aim of accelerating and deepening the neoliberal model, with an increasingly ‘deconstructed’ State... except for the military and police spheres to accelerate the ‘freedom’ of capital’s power to reactivate expanded accumulation...

The neo-fascism of the 21st century with a discourse based on class, ethnic, and gender hatred, appeals to fear and resentment to wage the ‘cultural battle’ for ideological hegemony. It seeks to set the media and political agenda through strategies of constant provocation. It dominates propaganda, populist messages, and fake news on social networks. They re-appropriate the instruments of action used by social movements seizing public spaces. Also, they redefine the language of the defence of the commons (freedom, democracy, social justice...) in an individualist and libertarian key to attack everything that implies solidarity,

collective rights, and the struggle for the common good. Their way out of the crisis and their political programme as a whole show a clear commitment to neoliberalism... which distinguishes them from the flirtation with social aspects that the fascisms of the 20th century initially had.

Paradoxically, this neo-fascism has been nourished by popular discontent originating in the social effects of the capitalism managed by social democracy, even if it is disguised under different euphemisms -‘with a human face’ or ‘third way’-. The increase in inequality, pauperisation, individualisation of the working class, has generated a breeding ground that has fueled their messages of rejection of migration and distrust of institutions. Their response to the effects of neoliberalism and capitalism has been more neoliberalism and capitalism.

Classical 20th century Fascism

To quote Trotsky himself,

German fascism, like Italian fascism, raised itself to power on the backs of the petty bourgeoisie, which it turned into a battering ram against the organizations of the working class and the institutions of democracy. But fascism in power is least of all the rule of the petty bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it is the most ruthless dictatorship of monopoly capital. (Trotsky, 1933).

For Woods (2025), the principal theorist of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) in the UK, Fascism is a “totalitarian state in which the bourgeoisie hands state power over to a fascist bureaucracy”, its chief characteristic being “extreme centralisation and absolute state power, in which the banks and big monopolies are protected, but subjected to strong central control by a large and powerful fascist bureaucracy.”

Outside Marxist circles, it is little remembered that it was, and is, working class organisations -parties, trade unions and their leading cadres-, who are often the initial and primary targets of killings and imprisonment under fascist and Nazi regimes. That is, those organisations and local/national leaders of the working class, those who directly threaten Capital, who are the first to be incarcerated, tortured, killed. This was true of Hitler’s Nazi Germany, Mussolini’s Fascist Italy, Horthy’s Hungary, the Iron Guard in Rumania, Salazar’s Portugal, Franco’s Spain, Pinochet’s Chile, the Argentinian and Brazilian and many other fascist/far-right, military dictatorships. When fascists seize power, they routinely vilify and scapegoat various ethnic and religious minorities such as Jews, Muslims, immigrants. This has been obvious with the Far-Right riots and attacks on Asylum Seekers’ hotels in England in July 2024, with for example, a Far-Right mob trying to burn down an Asylum Seekers hotel in Rotherham.

But it is the working class and the representatives and organisations of the working class who Fascists and Nazis go for once they are in power. It is the working-class organisations and cadres who they seek to destroy. Fascists and Nazis and their parties had a mass base, and street armies that murdered, brutalised and terrorised working-class activists and attacked their organisations, their trade unions and political parties and Press.

Classical Trotskyist Explanations of The Conditions for the Growth of Fascism

Regarding the social/economic/ political conditions for the growth of Fascism, the classic Trotskyist analysis (Trotsky 1944/1993) is, summarised by Silverman (2025): Fascism means the voluntary surrender of direct political power by the capitalist class to an agency of brute force in conditions of crisis and deadlock in the class struggle. He contrasts this with today's right-wing authoritarian rulers. He continues, because society today has become so grotesquely polarised; wealth so monstrously concentrated; the capitalist class so grossly monopolised, that it feels it can dispense with the need to assign its collective interests to a specialised political agency: it now wants to rule directly in its own name. Naked personal power is to be exercised by the owners of capital themselves. This is almost unprecedented.

Trotsky's classic definition (1944/1993) is very specific, referring to regimes such as those of Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, installed with the support of the national capitalist class following years of open class warfare and working-class strength (unions, strikes, occupations, political parties). Working class strength -numbers, organisation, actions- terrified the capitalist class. Actions such as the clearest, most powerful and most threatening forms of direct action -threatening the ruling class and their profits and, indeed, their control and ownership- are strike action, occupations. Strikes, manifestly, can be of a handful of workers or a mass strike such as a national strike by a union, or a general strike of all or most trade unions. Direct action includes direct takeovers of factories (such as the *biennio rosso*, the two red years of factory occupations in Turin, 1919-1921) and in the farmworkers' takeovers -led by the Communist Party- of the *latifundia*, the landed estates, in the Alentejo southern region of Portugal, during the Portuguese anti-Fascist revolution of 25 April 1974, that I covered as a young post-revolution photo-journalist in the late 1970s (Hill, 1983).

Pre-Emptive Fascism

The balance of class and political forces, the relative numerical and organisational and action-oriented/ activism of the two great classes of society, are manifestly different now than that analysed about twentieth century fascism by Trotsky (and, subsequently, as classical Trotskyists such as Silverman and Woods). The working class in Western Late Capitalism is currently weak politically and largely demobilised organisationally. As working-class resistance and class consciousness rise, the levels of repression and immiseration will rise into mass struggle. Mass struggle is happening in

Spring 2025 in Greece and in Turkey. Then, when working class power explodes on the streets, in strikes, in occupations, then Trump and his think-alikes and acolytes may well, then, impose, or seek to impose, Fascist rule. They give every rhetorical and some legislative indication of doing so. In other words, at this current juncture, their neo-Fascism, quasi-Fascism, proto-Fascism is Pre-Emptive. To Pre-Empt, to forestall, to nip in the bud, working class resistance.

Trump/Musk as neo-/quasi-/ proto-Fascist Pre-Emptive Fascist

Do we typify, categorise Trump (and Musk, and Milei and Bolsonaro and Orban) as Fascist or Pre-Emptive Fascist, neo-Fascist, quasi-Fascist, proto-Fascist or what? (Foster, 2025).

Woods (2025) decries name-calling, analysing, that depict Trump as a Fascist, pointing out that the USA “remains a bourgeois democracy.” As far as individual characteristics go, the characteristics of individuals such as Trump and Musk and Hegseth can be seen as Fascist. But the US state is not Fascist.

Trump is remodelled neo-Fascist/quasi-Fascist/proto-Fascist. He is not (yet) accompanied by a jackbooted street militia, and has not yet installed dictatorial one-party government (Foster, 2025). Though these are in the wings. And much commented upon, with his attempts to control the judiciary, with the “snatching off the streets” undocumented (and sometime documented) immigrants by ICE (Immigration, Customs and Enforcement), his financial penalties against universities he deems unpatriotic, or antisemitic or left-wing.

Trump, and his co-thinkers promise to remove, destroy, “the unhuman,” those who, in the eyes of key Trumpists have lost the right to live. In *Unhumans: The Secret History of Communist Revolutions (and How to Crush Them)* (Posobiec & Lisec, 2024, a book endorsed by Trump’s Vice-President JD Vance and with a Foreword by Steve Bannon) the authors praise murderous Fascists such as Pinochet in Chile and Franco in Spain, and argue that leftists, communists, socialists, and “woke” liberals, do not deserve the status of human beings. Socialist journalist Nathan J. Robinson (2024) was sufficiently appalled to write “It is perhaps the most paranoid, hateful, and terrifying book I have ever picked up.” Anita Waters (2024) describes the book as a “fascist rewriting of history”.

Trump’s policies are an ideological complement to the hugely influential far right governmental policy plan set out in Project 2025 (also known as the 2025 Presidential Transition Project), the authoritarian political initiative published by the Heritage Foundation, seeking to impose an ultraconservative social vision. It is “a playbook for an authoritarian administration” (Ragland and Radosovich, 2024). Its proposals are wide-ranging and would ‘eliminate fundamental personal freedoms while cutting the take-home pay of millions of Americans’... its policies would ... “increase taxes on the middle class, allow corporations to stop paying workers overtime, implement a national abortion ban and raise the

retirement age for Social Security” (Ragland and Radosovich, 2024).

Trump and Musk are not there yet, not yet heading a fascist state, while they do give many rhetorical and policy indications of personally being Fascists. Which is not the same as a Fascist state.

My poem ‘Fish and Fascism’ (Hill, 2019), referring to, among others, Bolsonaro in Brazil, Milei in Argentina and Trump in USA, suggests (about these leaders, rather than the state they head):

If it looks like a fascist,

If it sounds like a fascist,

If it acts like a fascist,

If it smells like a fascist,

Then it is a fascist.

Even if the label on the box says democratic.

Capitalism, Liberal/ Bourgeois Democracy, Defenestration and Death

Key components of what a Trump Administration is doing are *not* new. USA has a corporate tyranny. The Republican-Democrat duopoly crushes criticism (for example over Israel’s genocide in Gaza), dismisses and hounds critics of the Israeli government genocide in Gaza, and vilifies terrifies and deports immigrants -in chains. This mass deportation was and is true under Democrat Presidents Obama and Biden as well as now, under Republican President, Trump. All three are bourgeois politicians and ultimately represent the same class interests. But that does not preclude the possibility of sharp differences emerging between different layers and fractions of the same class.

Of course, there are some differences between Democrats and Republicans. Trump is more clearly a racist and misogynistic white man’s warrior, opposed to people of colour, women, anti-sexism, anti-racism, LGBT, and harking back to nineteenth century geographically expansionary genocidal imperialism. This social ultra-conservatism is identical in nature and vilification classic to both Nazi and conservative authoritarian positions, against the relative “wokeness” and social liberalism and identity politics of the Democrats. While they contest “culture wars,” they are at one on “economic wars,” on class warfare on behalf of the capitalist class. Both Democrats and Republicans “screw the workers,” both drive down wages, both enrich the plutocrats, the oligarchs, the new “Masters of the Universe” with their centi-billions and their social pathologies, the plain cruelty of their actions.

Marxist critique of “liberal democracy/bourgeois/democracy/parliamentary democracy” sees such parliamentary -or presidential- elections as a sham, as giving an illusory choice between “Tweedledum and Tweedledee,” between political parties and programs which operate within strict limits set by national and global capitalism. Actual or symbolic death and defenestration await those leaders and parties -and sometimes hundreds of thousands of party members and supporters, as in Indonesia in 1965-1966- who challenge the discourse, and the practice of social class based oligarchic capitalist rule legitimised by bourgeois democracy, and USA capitalist hegemony (Sachs, 2025). Examples of capitalist -and hegemonic- imperialist USA limitation on democracy are the actual deaths of the elected Marxist President Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973, of Patrice Lumumba in 1960 and the “Jakarta Method” of mass murder of Communists and other Leftists and community leaders resisting or in the way of “American interests/foreign policy”, addressed in this article below.

Political Defenestration UK style -the Case of Corbyn

And deaths can be symbolic. As with the political defenestration of Jeremy Corbyn, the left social democrat leader of the UK Labour Party in the years 2015 to 2019. Corbyn was not even a Marxist, simply a Nordic/Scandinavian style left social democrat wishing to redistribute some income, nationalise former (privatised) public utilities, and, historically, to detach the UK from the pro-Israeli and war-mongering/ permanent war policy and embrace of the USA.

It is interesting to see some of the main points of this left social democratic manifesto, the 2017 Manifesto of the Labour Party in the UK. Among other policies it proposed to

- Scrap student tuition fees.
- Nationalise England's nine (privatised) water companies.
- Re-introduce the 50p rate of tax on the highest earners (above £123,000).
- Income tax rate 45p on £80,000 and above.
- More free childcare, expanding free provisions for two, three and four year olds.
- End to zero hours contracts.
- Moves to charge companies a levy on salaries above £330,000 (BBC, 2017).

Even worse, for neoliberals within the Conservative and Labour Party, Corbyn almost won the 2017 general election. The left programme was very popular. Corbyn's Labour Party won 40% of the vote, its highest share of the vote in 16 years. Indeed, in the previous 50 years, Labour had only won a

higher share of the vote in England and Wales once, in 1997 (Smith, 2021). Labour's relatively left-wing policies were popular! To the shock and horror of the capitalist class, capitalist mass media, Conservative Party and to the right-wing of the Labour Party.

So Corbyn had to go. And the Labour Party made safe, once again, for Capital and for Capitalist pro-USA imperialism. For that he was politically defenestrated, and expelled from the Labour Party. And replaced as Leader in 2019 by Keir Starmer (Booth, 2025) whose "Labour" government is deepening austerity -taking away social and welfare benefits- after 15 years of Conservative (and Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government) austerity. With Starmer it is "guns before butter," militarism the expense of welfare and wages. As it is in Germany, with negligible differences between the former Social Democrat Party (SPD) government of Olaf Scholtz replaced by the Friedrich Mertz conservative Christian Democrat Party (CDU). Tweedledum and Tweedledee. And in numerous other European states.

US Foreign Policy: USAID-Soft Power, Slaughter and Regime Change

Of course, states such as USA, UK, France, China use the "soft power" of humanitarian aid and cultural and other relations to promote what they see as the interests of their own states' economic and political interests globally.

But USAID is of a different order. Other than distributing life-saving aid to millions, to millions, I would add, impoverished by neo-colonialist capitalism and by American wars, USAID is a verified murderous branch of the CIA, working to destroy and uproot those governments and organisations regarded by successive -Democrat and Republican- USA governments as threats to US imperialism, hegemonic capitalist interests.

Beyond its carefully cultivated image, as a humanitarian agency "USAID has long functioned as an instrument of US foreign policy, actively engaged in political interference, media influence, and the dissemination of strategically curated narratives" (Lee, 2025). Lee continues:

its extensive financial relationships with NGOs, media organizations and research institutions facilitated a sophisticated apparatus for shaping global narratives aligned with Washington's strategic imperatives.

Among the most prominent beneficiaries of these allocations have been the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), both of which have been instrumental in disseminating reports that portray China in a consistently negative light. The BBC has published numerous politically-loaded articles and videos on China topics, including Xinjiang and Hong Kong, often relying on unverifiable claims and

sources of questionable credibility or biased individuals and organizations, which have significantly influenced public opinion in the West.

Özkan (2025) referring to Schellenberger, notes that USAID in particular is the largest donor to supposedly “independent media” worldwide. And it is complicit in, driver for, regime change. “USAID’s defenders say it’s about charity and development in poor nations. It’s not. It’s a \$40 billion driver of regime change abroad” (Schellenberger, quoted in Özkan, 2025).

Mateus (2025) summarises USAID’s activities as “an instrument for imposing pro-corporate economic policies, funding pro-US political movements and counterinsurgency efforts, and undermined socialist and nationalist movements across the developing world.” William Blum’s book (2003), *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions since World War II*, details crimes and murders -slaughter- committed in the name of US imperialism by USAID, directly and indirectly. Mateus concludes:

USAID’s numerous operations throughout the globe across the decades involved counterinsurgency and regime change operations in Latin America, support for African dictators and extraction of resources in the interest of American corporations, implementing economic liberalization policies after the collapse of the Soviet Union and ensuring US corporate access, as well as funding of opposition movements in the Ukraine and Eastern Europe, and the restructuring of the Middle East in the aftermath of the Iraq wars.

To return to USAID’s dual role as a humanitarian organization and tool of US foreign policy - as well as facilitating mass slaughter, USAID routinely intervenes in foreign elections. Just to take one example, in Bulgaria, from 1990 to 2007, USAID poured more than \$600 million into the country to support its political and economic development and preparing it for NATO accession in 2004 and EU accession in 2007. Parry (2025) continues, critiquing this same pattern in Eastern Europe and Latin America where, some governments claim that “USAID programs serve... not just as humanitarian assistance but also as dubious “democracy promotion” efforts that often cloak ulterior motives and result in color revolutions and regime change operations.”

I referred above to the US inspired and backed coup in Indonesia in 1965-66 where, under the US backed dictator, general Suharto, “between five hundred thousand and one million people were slaughtered, and one million more were herded into concentration camps.” (Blakeley, 2020, citing Bevins, 2020). Bevins (Blakeley, 2020) documents Washington’s virulent anti-communist crusade across several continents:

The next testing ground for the Jakarta method was Latin America, where hundreds of thousands of people would be killed or “disappeared” in the name of anti-communism over the subsequent decades... a loose network of US-backed anti-communist extermination programs

... carried out mass murder in at least twenty-two countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, East Timor, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, the Philippines, South Korea, Sudan, Taiwan, Thailand, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

Side by side with the smiling nurse inoculating a poor child from the Global South, hides sometimes in plain sight, the *contra*, setting ablaze a village and slaughtering its inhabitants. Soft power and power that is, oh, so hard.

Conclusion

Trump, surrounded by the warm embrace of his centi-billionaire and his far-right Christian and Christian Zionist adherents, is a president who is vitriolically scorning and dismantling all pretences of social reform, both at home and abroad, because American imperialism, Late Western Capitalism, is bankrupt and can no longer afford them (Piette, 2025). The ruling elite, the centi-billionaire plutocrats funding and promoting Trump and Musk (and whoever might replace them with similar depredations) are the faces of Pre-Emptive Fascism in the USA.

At a certain point, Trumpism, whether under Trump or a replacement, will begin to fracture along class lines, with workers deserting him. The ruling capitalist oligarchy will rely increasingly on brutal violence to defend its interests against the working class, in both foreign and domestic spheres. And in many different countries.

And they will be resisted.

No delirium lasts forever. No empire lasts forever. No ruling class rules forever. No economic system lasts forever. Not a slave economy. Not a wage slave economy. Not a capitalist economy and society that demeans, degrades and diminishes and subordinates and subalternises its labouring class, the working class, and, in particular, through super-exploitation, particular gendered and 'raced' and migrant groups within the working class in national and in global economies. (Hill, 2022).

In Lenin's words (1918/2002), "there are decades when nothing happens. There are weeks when decades happen"; Decades are happening now... The class nature -the class warfare nature- of capitalist society is stripped bare before our eyes, and is now understood so much more widely and nakedly than before (Hill, 2022)

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