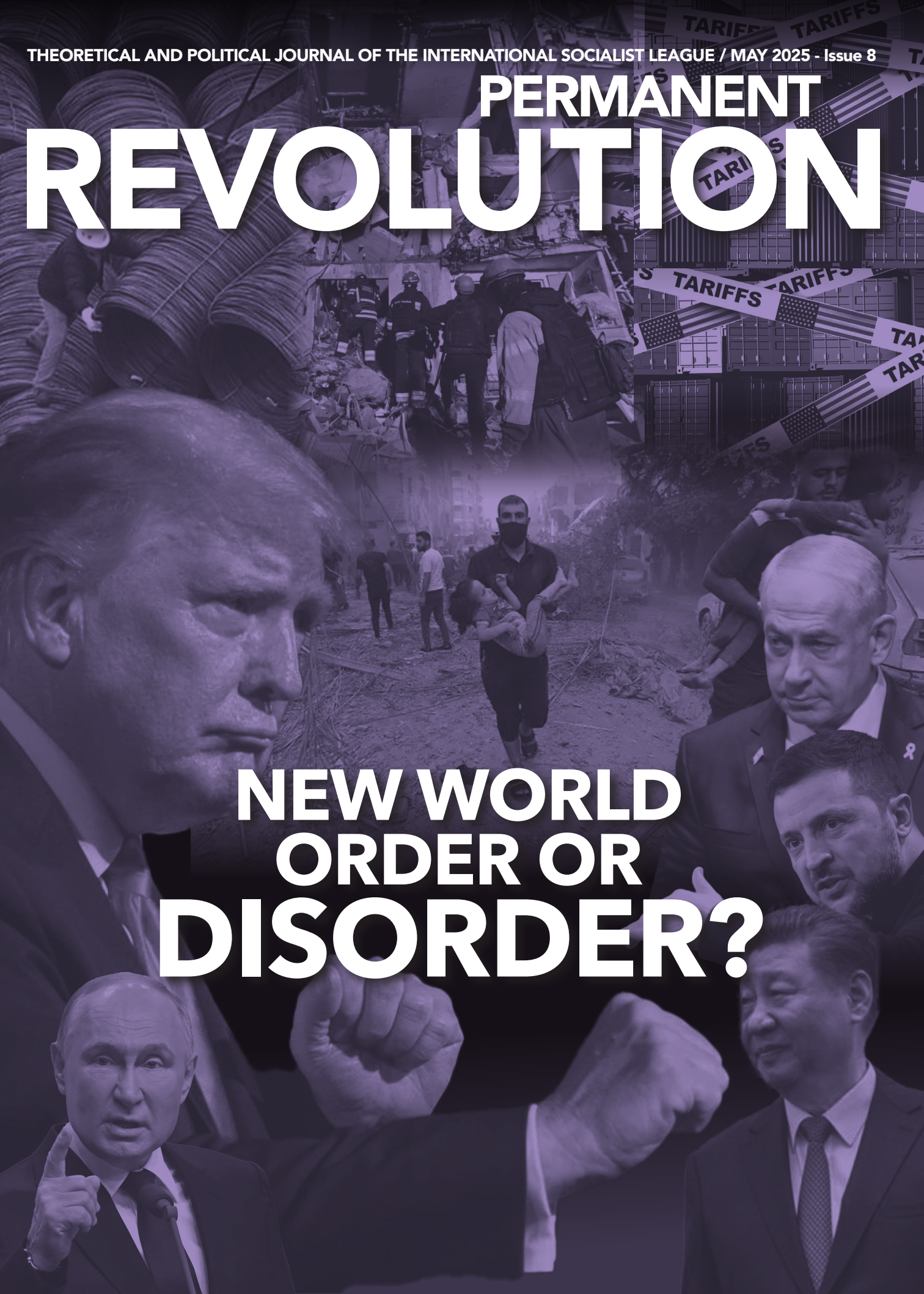


PERMANENT REVOLUTION

NEW WORLD
ORDER OR
DISORDER?



PERMANENT REVOLUTION

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This issue of *PERMANENT REVOLUTION* is dedicated to the memory of our dear comrade Pablo Vasco.





New World Order OR DISORDER?

BY ALEJANDRO BODART

Trump has decided to kick over the table on which the entire global imperialist configuration was arranged—with all its institutions, alliances, trade agreements, and delicate balances of power. Aiming to restore the faltering hegemonic role of the United States, he has provoked a political earthquake that is bringing down what remained of the old post-WWII world order and the pillars of the neoliberal globalization of the 1990s. Meanwhile, the systemic crisis that erupted in 2008 continues to deepen, accompanied by the rise of the far right and growing social polarization—making the alternative of socialism or barbarism more urgent than ever.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disappearance of the *unrecognizably* workers' states over 30 years ago, nothing has gone the

way U.S. imperialism had hoped—despite having emerged victorious from the Cold War. The fall of the Stalinist bureaucracy also meant losing the most useful counterrevolutionary partner U.S. imperialism had in controlling, confronting, and defeating the working class in its constant struggle for emancipation. Since then, the U.S. has had to absorb the costs and blows of the international class struggle on its own, and it gradually began to weaken. It failed to transform the main countries where capitalism was restored into dependent semi-colonies. Instead, these countries emerged as competitors, and China has risen to the status of a global imperialist power. The unipolar world the U.S. thought it had conquered steadily eroded, turning instead into a battlefield for imperialist supremacy. The decline of U.S. global power is now undeniable, and the crisis that began with the turn of the millennium has proven impossible to overcome.

A SYSTEMIC CRISIS

The root cause behind the current trajectory of events lies in the structural crisis of capitalism, which took a qualitative leap in 2008 and has not been reversed. Given the scale of the inter-imperialist rivalries and the speculative, overproductive nature of the global economic crisis, overcoming it would require a destruction of productive forces on a scale only achievable through a new world war. However, none of the major powers currently in dispute feel confident enough to embark on such an endeavor. Moreover, the capitalists are well aware that a world war between the main powers might end with no winners at all—and could trigger a nuclear holocaust.



For now, each imperialist camp is trying to manage the crisis by escalating a new cold war and trade wars they are embroiled in, while pushing for an enormous leap in exploitation—to a level that the global working class has thus far not allowed.

To implement this counterrevolutionary offensive, the bourgeoisie can no longer rely on liberal democracy or afford even minimal concessions. They need Bonapartist governments and authoritarian regimes capable of crushing all resistance through repression. This is why growing sections of the ruling class are backing the global rise of the far right and shifting the bourgeois political spectrum as a whole toward authoritarianism. They've had some success, thanks to the betrayals of reformist and progressive leaderships that have paved the way for far-right forces by confusing and demoralizing the most combative sectors of the mass movement.

While we are not yet facing fascist regimes, the seed of fascism is sprouting. Whether it matures or not will depend on the strength of the working class and youth in struggle, and on how much progress we make in regrouping revolutionary forces around a common strategy to defeat the monster before it evolves.

TRUMP'S PLAN

Trump's new government is a key component of the global rise of the far-right, and his victory strengthens and emboldens similar forces around the world. Unlike in his first term, this time he has the direct backing of a sector of the bourgeoisie—especially big tech, the wealthiest people on the planet—and the active or passive support of the bulk of the U.S. ruling class.

This support stems from a common general conclusion that the U.S. ruling class has been reaching—that the post-WWII order and the globalization strategy that followed the collapse of the USSR no longer serve their interests. Since the beginning of the XXI century, U.S. dominance has been in retreat, and regional competitors—as well as China on a global scale—have grown stronger. The U.S. ruling class is convinced that a change is needed. They may not all agree with the course Trump proposes, but, since no other strategy is on the table, they are willing to see if this one delivers. If it falters, new tensions will emerge and alternative proposals may arise—but the old status quo is gone for good.

Trump's project aims to impose a structural transformation of the U.S. political and economic regime and of the global imperialist order. It seeks to boost profits for the U.S. bourgeoisie both in absolute terms—by intensifying exploitation and surplus value extraction—and in relative terms, by snatching a larger share of global surplus value at the expense of rival powers. From the resulting position of renewed strength, the U.S. would seek to reassert its role as global policeman and stabilize the crisis-ridden capitalist system.

WITHIN THE UNITED STATES

Since taking office, Trump's administration has unleashed a wave of policies to dismantle what remains of the social functions of the

state—from pausing all foreign aid to dismantling the Department of Education and gutting public health programs. Thousands of layoffs are underway. Led by Elon Musk, the administration aims to slash a third of the federal budget. This unprecedented austerity drive, supposedly meant to lower the monstrous deficit, will sharply worsen living standards for the U.S. working class.

Trump has intensified the persecution and criminalization of immigrants, spreading fear among some of the most vulnerable sectors of society—deepening their superexploitation and using them as leverage to push down wages across the board.

His government is eroding basic democratic rights and ramping up repression. Political persecution, arrests, and deportations of pro-Palestinian activists are the clearest signs of this tendency.

The current authoritarian turn is necessary to push through the administration's austerity agenda, but it is also part of Trump's broader "culture war" aimed at consolidating a reactionary social base within the working class and petty bourgeoisie. The administration's openly racist, xenophobic, misogynist, homophobic, and nationalist positions, along with its attacks on the rights of all oppressed sectors, are designed to serve this purpose. This emboldens the many fascist groups that exist across the United States, which must be confronted with organized self-defense.

TARIFF WAR

Trump's protectionist nationalism and the tariffs he has imposed on imports from China—as well as from longtime allies and trade partners like Europe, Canada, and Mexico—are meant to give domestic companies an edge in the U.S. market. Some of these measures hurt U.S. multinationals that have much of their production abroad. They hope this will force them to bring operations back home, boosting domestic production and job creation.

These tariffs are also meant to strong-arm other countries into making major concessions in exchange for easing or lifting the measures.

But these policies are severely inflationary and recessionary. They are triggering a new leap in the global economic crisis. Talk of recession is growing and the specter of stagflation is back.

AN UNCERTAIN GLOBAL SCENARIO

The global shift in the imperialist geopolitical configuration that Trump is driving is still in its early stages and its full scope remains uncertain.

He is breaking with the main imperialist allies the U.S. has relied on for over 70 years. He aims to dismantle most of the multilateral institutions that U.S. imperialist power was built around—seeing them as obsolete burdens that have held the U.S. back in its competition with rival powers.

He wants to replace them with a new order based on the law of the jungle—raw, violent capitalism. Trump is seeking to negotiate a new distribution of the world with the main military and economic powers—at the expense of all others—and ensure a deal in which the U.S. maintains a clear superiority.



His negotiations with Putin—leader of the world's second-largest military—exemplify this orientation. And Russia's close ties to China raise different possibilities. One is that Trump's outreach to Putin is part of a broader effort to strike a global deal that includes China, and that his aggressive tariff policy is meant to force China to the negotiating table. But another is that he seeks to divide the emerging powers and isolate China—the main competitor for hegemony, if it continues to develop.

This global strategy also involves subordinating as many semi-colonial countries as possible and tightening control over longtime allies like Europe, Canada, and Japan. Using the methods of the mob, Trump is trying to impose lopsided trade relations on them and undermine their

sovereignty to seize the territory, zones of influence, and strategic resources that he considers necessary to better position the U.S. in relation to emerging powers.

The clearest example of how they want to run the world is the ongoing Trump–Putin negotiations to carve up Ukraine—its territory and resources—behind the backs of both the Ukrainian people and the EU, although the Ukrainian resistance is disrupting both of their plans.

Trump’s intervention to bring an end to the “visible” war in Palestine—while enabling the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and proposing to establish a U.S. colony in Gaza—follows the same logic. So do his plans to colonize Greenland, seize control of the Panama Canal, and his threats to annex Canada by force.



How much of this project Trump will be able to implement remains to be seen. But a structural change in the configuration of global imperialism is already underway. Though the aim is to create a new order that can save capitalism from its systemic crisis, the most likely outcome is a far more unstable and conflict-ridden world—a disorder greater than anything we have seen. By upending the prevailing power relations, alliances, and arrangements that once offered a semblance of stability, Trump’s policies are re-opening disputes over borders, sovereignties, and spheres of influence around the globe. The process of reconfiguring this new order will generate greater inequality, more conflicts, regional wars, and—if the crisis continues to deepen—the persistent threat of a new world war.

This is especially evident—and alarming—in Europe. Abandoned by its American protector and pressured by an emboldened Russia, the European bourgeoisie is eager to re-enter the race to become an imperialist power in its own right. The EU states and the UK have launched a frantic militarization drive—doubling or tripling their military budgets, converting their steel, automotive, and tech industries to arms production, and reviving or expanding their nuclear weapons programs.

This global rearmament campaign not only brings the world closer to war, but also entails austerity measures and attacks on living standards that European workers haven’t faced in decades. This will take place in a context that has, on the one hand, the rise of the far right, the shift to the right of all political forces and the advance of anti-migratory, authoritarian and reactionary policies that will deepen with militarization and austerity; and on the other hand, the recent years’ rise in the class struggle that indicates that the bourgeoisie’s plans will provoke a strong resistance.

At a global level, the advance of climate change denial that all far-right forces promote will accelerate extractivist policies, species extinction, and environmental disasters.

THE TASKS OF REVOLUTIONARIES

This new imperialist offensive will intensify political and social polarization among workers, young people and the middle classes. There will be no calm—in spite of the skeptics’ predictions and the reformists’ desires, class struggle will sharpen.

The reactionary measures being implemented—and the many more that will come—will be met with mass mobilizations, strikes, uprisings, and all forms of resistance.

The first large demonstrations that are already taking place in numerous U.S. cities against Trump, his attacks, and his denialist rhetoric show that people are willing to fight back. The general strikes and millions-strong mobilizations against the far-right Milei administration in Argentina are another powerful sign of the real mood in the mass movement. Millions are taking to the streets against the far right in Germany. Struggles have reignited in Greece. And worldwide solidarity with the Palestinian people



against Israel's genocide refuses to be silenced. These are just some of the early signs of a world reaching boiling point.

An escalation of class struggle and reaction against authoritarianism, combined with the deepening crisis of reformism, can help clear away elements of ideological confusion and open a new space for revolutionary socialism. The resurgence of Die Linke in Germany may reflect such a development, albeit in distorted form.

The world's leading imperialist power has abandoned its democratic disguise, burying Western imperialism as the embodiment of the liberal democracy and humanitarian capitalism fable. Revolutionaries will once again be the only defenders of freedom, democracy and the self-determination of peoples, the only consistent defenders of all the rights that are under attack.

The ongoing negotiation on Ukraine unmasks both NATO and Russia, revealing the purely imperialist interests of both. It also reveals that the only true friends of the Ukrainian working people are the revolutionaries and peoples of the world who supported their right to determine their own future from the start, while also denouncing Western imperialism's attempt to plunder the country.

Israel's genocide against the Palestinian people has unmasked the complicity of traditional bourgeois political parties and the cowardice of reformists—demonstrating that only the revolutionary left stands firmly with the Palestinian people as they are being massacred.

The problem we face is not any lack of willingness to fight on the part of workers and the oppressed. Our biggest obstacle is the absence of

a strong revolutionary socialist leadership on an international scale. This, above all, is what has prevented decisive victories that could initiate a socialist transformation of society.

Revolutionaries must analyze the profound changes that are currently underway in order to determine the most effective tactics for intervention. In the current situation, the broadest possible unity in action—without any sectarianism—is essential to build the strongest possible mobilizations. This includes promoting a united front and challenging the reformist and bureaucratic leaderships against the growing authoritarian and repressive threat. All of this must be done without ever relinquishing our political independence or our right to voice critical views of any temporary allies we may find along the way.

But our central focus must be on developing the national and international regroupment of revolutionaries to build parties and a new strong revolutionary International. Advancing in this objective is the only possibility to fight and defeat the barbarism that capitalism is leading us into.

That is the project of the International Socialist League: the regroupment of revolutionary forces around the world on the basis of a transitional program toward socialism and a healthy method that enables collective elaboration and the discussion of nuances and differences in a spirit of comradeship. Without any kind of childish ultra-leftism and without seeking any opportunistic shortcuts. Facing the complex global reality, not to comment on it, but to change it. Convinced that a world without exploitation or oppression is possible—and that fighting to make it a reality is worth any sacrifice. ✊

Trump and His **UNITED KINGDOM OF AMERICA** Project



BY VINCE GAYNOR

They say you can't always judge a book by its cover, but deceiving covers are the exception, not the rule. Most of the time, appearances reflect the content of things quite well. The fake TIME cover with a crowned Trump and the title "Long Live the King," which the president himself proudly shared on social media, needs no overthinking. Trump actually desires—and is meticulously planning—to install himself as dictator in the United States and try to take over the world. Elon Musk's Nazi salute was nothing more or less than a Nazi salute. He would love to lead a fascist dictatorship.

Whether they manage to pull it off is a whole other matter.

Trump back with a vengeance, determined to carry out the far-right agenda that floundered during his first term. This is not, however, a re-

play of the past: it is an upgraded version of the same project, with greater support from big business and the establishment, a more systematic program, and a more cohesive and mobilized social base. But the new administration's offensive stirs social unrest, provokes resistance and sharpens both polarization and radicalization.

PRODUCT OF THE GLOBAL CRISIS, CATALYST OF WORLD DISORDER

Trump's rise is inseparable from the global systemic crisis of capitalism that exploded in 2008 and has since reached an impasse. The global rise of the far right represents the desperation of the bourgeoisie to recover lost profitability, and their readiness to resort to war, authoritarianism, and even fascism to do so. Trump is a product of this process—and his victory strengthens it.

But that same desperation also sharpens inter-imperialist competition and intensifies con-

Domestically, it aims to impose a qualitatively greater level of exploitation. This entails launching open war on the working class at home, which in turn requires a stronger and more authoritarian repression apparatus.

When Trump won the 2016 election, much of the ruling class received him with distrust. He faced massive mobilizations and failed to implement much of his agenda. He was defeated in 2020 and punished by sectors of the establishment with multiple criminal charges. But he consolidated a radicalized social base, while the traditional parties continued to weaken.

The Democratic Biden administration that succeeded him turned out to be a catastrophic disappointment. It maintained Trump's tax cuts for the rich and inhumane migration policies. It alienated the working class by repressing their strikes and exhibited the cruelest warmongering face of imperialism.

Its unabashed complicity in the Zionist genocide in Gaza, as well as the repression of students that protested in solidarity with Palestine, shattered the illusions that figures like Bernie Sanders and the Democratic Socialists of America had previously fostered. The resulting demoralization of millions paved the way for Trump's return—this time with the direct backing of a key sector of the ruling class and the broader establishment.

The “big tech” capitalist elite has become his main support base. The rest of the U.S. bourgeoisie, though not fully convinced by Trump’s project, has lost all hope in the previous setup and is willing—for now—to see if this one works.

Unlike during his first term, the Republican Party is now firmly aligned behind the admin-



istration, and the Democrats have decided not to stand any serious opposition. Having also secured a majority in both chambers of Congress and a far-right Supreme Court, Trump came into office brimming with confidence.

With that confidence, Trump has launched a full-blown offensive against the working class. His administration's agenda aims to dismantle what little remains of the state's social functions, impose massive austerity, and give capital free rein to deepen exploitation to the maximum.

The 2025 budget proposes brutal cuts to social spending while maintaining tax breaks

for corporations and the rich, laying out the roadmap for a monstrous transfer and concentration of wealth.

Just months into his term, the administration suspended the few remaining pandemic-era aid programs and began mass layoffs within the federal workforce, aiming to eliminate entire agencies that carry out essential functions in health, education, labor regulation, the environment, and housing. The dismantling of the Department of Education is already underway, and severe cuts to Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare are being prepared—under the pretext of “cutting spending”—affecting millions who rely on these programs to survive.



At the same time, the administration has intensified its deregulation drive. In addition to scrapping environmental protections, it has lowered workplace safety standards and loosened oversight of corporations, enabling more precarious and hazardous conditions for workers.

Unions are facing a direct assault: efforts are underway to restrict their functions, limit their funding, and make it easier to fire unionized public-sector workers. Organizing drives are being met with firings, legal harassment, and bureaucratic obstacles.

Though Trump presents his trade protectionism as a defense of “American workers,” all of his policies are hammering their living standards. Tariff hikes don’t benefit U.S. industrial workers, but U.S. capitalists seeking to outcompete their rivals. The majority of working people bear the cost of these policies through inflation, which disproportionately affects the poor by driving up the price of essentials like food, clothing, appliances, and medicine.

ESCALATING OPPRESSION

Trump has reinstated and intensified his anti-immigrant policies. Deportations have surged, mass raids resumed, and the border wall with Mexico is being reinforced. The criminalization of migration, combined with militarization of the border, has led to increased deaths and arbitrary detentions.

Persistent threats to deport all undocumented immigrants aim to keep millions of workers in a state of fear and uncertainty. So too do the administration’s deportations to Bukele’s concentration camps in El Salvador, and the refusal to comply with a Supreme Court order to repatriate a man wrongfully sent there due to a bureaucratic error.

Attacks on the rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people are also central to the far right’s agenda. The Dobbs ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade* eliminated the right to abortion in several states. Far from guaranteeing access, the federal government has maintained an ambiguous position that emboldens the most reactionary forces.

Anti-trans campaigns have escalated, with laws banning access to medical treatment, participation in sports, and education on gender identity in schools. In several states, parents and doctors can be criminally prosecuted for supporting the gender transition of trans youth.

ASSAULT ON DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

Trump is also advancing the dismantling of the already limited democratic mechanisms of the bourgeois regime, targeting voting rights, freedom of the press, and the right to protest. The “election fraud” narrative—repeated since 2020—has served to justify new voting restrictions, especially targeting Black, Latino, and young voters. Voter ID laws, voter roll purges, and gerrymandering have proliferated under Republican state governments with the White House’s blessing.

Journalists and activists are being prosecuted. Laws criminalizing picket lines, road blockades, and occupations are being passed to suppress and deter all forms of resistance.

Repression of students in solidarity with Palestine has reached a new level. At universities like Harvard, Columbia, and UCLA, administrators—pressured by Republican lawmakers and billionaire donors—have banned protests, targeted activists, and dismantled student organizations. Students have been expelled, disciplined, and “ivy league” in-

stitutions like Harvard have lost funding for failing to toe the government's line.

This level of censorship is unprecedented since the McCarthy era and aims to crush the growing campus movement linking the struggle against genocide in Gaza to a broader critique of U.S. imperialism.

One particularly heinous development is the political targeting of migrant activists. Palestinian solidarity activist Rumeysa Öztürk, a student on a visa, was abducted off the street by undercover agents in retaliation for her activism. Palestinian activist Mohsen Mahdawi was lured into a fake citizenship interview and detained in an ICE ambush.

The repressive apparatus has been strengthened across the board. Police have received more funding, military training, and legal immunity, while all forms of protest are being criminalized.

AUTHORITARIAN REGIME AND REACTIONARY SOCIAL BASE

The ultimate goal of Trump's project is to significantly increase workers' exploitation and capitalists' profits through austerity, deregulation, and the elimination of labor rights.

However, because this harms the living standards of the vast majority of the population, discontent, opposition, and resistance are inevitable. That's why a key part of Trump's project is the transformation of the U.S. political regime into a more authoritarian and repressive one—capable of crushing all resistance—and the consolidation of a reactionary social base to support and defend his project from below.

The administration is advancing this authoritarian transformation of the regime, concentrating power in the executive, reducing institutional checks to a minimum, discrediting the judicial and legislative branches, and leaning on the repressive apparatus as well as violent para-state organizations. In many cases these are openly fascist white supremacist organizations in whose ranks the perpetrators of the 2020 putschist attack on Congress that Trump recently pardoned can be found.

From day one, Trump has sought to rule by executive order, surrounded by autocratic loyalists. He has filled key posts with figures from "Project 2025," the strategic blueprint of the Heritage Foundation. These operatives are spearheading a purge of the federal apparatus, the dismantling of independent agencies, the use of the Department of Justice as a partisan tool, and political control over

sectors like education, health, and the media.

This authoritarianism rests on a mobilized, nationalist, reactionary base. The "culture war" against feminism, sexual diversity, immigrants, Black people, Muslims, and the left plays a central role in inventing an internal enemy, rallying conservative support among poor and working-class whites, and justifying repression.



Trumpism functions as a proto-fascist laboratory, experimenting with new forms of social control, ideological censorship, and legitimized political violence. While it would be inaccurate to equate it with 20th-century fascism, it is clear that the already restricted bourgeois democracy we had is being replaced by a more Bonapartist regime. The outcome of this experiment, however, will be determined on the battlefields of the class struggle—and, despite the confidence they exude, Trump and Musk do not have such an easy path ahead.

INSTABILITY, POLARIZATION, AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Having promised an immediate economic miracle, Trump now speaks of "necessary pain" before recovery, while inflation rises and a new recession looms.

The tariff offensive quickly bogged down in a mess of contradictory announcements, cancellations, negotiations, and policy flip-flops, creating uncertainty that scared off investors and knocked Wall Street down. This strains the administration's fragile coalition of religious ultra-conservatives, tech billionaires, and right-wing Republican politicians. More importantly, it fuels the impa-



tience and mistrust of the broader ruling class, which—though currently supporting or tolerating Trump—is doing so more out of doubt than conviction. Especially the industrialists, who are losing millions because of the tariffs and other measures. The broad bourgeois support that any possibility of success depends on might hold if Trump can produce results soon—Otherwise, it could just as easily blow up.

Still, the administration’s biggest problem lies below. Its social base is aggressive but represents a minority—Trump won the election with just a third of the eligible vote. And however reactionary and backward it may be, much of that base is made up of workers who will soon face a decline in their living standards—inevitably creating contradictions in their ideas. On the other side of the barricade, the government’s draconian measures are provoking outrage across the working class.

The far right’s advance fuels polarization—and also sparks responses to its attacks, pushing a section of the population to the left. The recent years have seen mass movements like Black Lives Matter and the Women’s March. The labor movement is reawakening, with strike waves not seen in decades, like the UAW’s, rank and file leadership renewal in sectors like healthcare and education, and organizing breakthroughs among precarious workers at Amazon, Starbucks, and other firms.

The recent “Hands Off” protests were a first mass response to Trump’s agenda and mark the beginning of a resistance that shows every sign of growing. The course of the struggles ahead—and their political leadership—will be decisive.

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND REVOLUTIONARY TASKS

Far from coming forward as actual opposition, the Democrats have acted as accomplices

of the new administration—choosing collaboration or silence in the face of the reactionary offensive. They are not blocking right-wing legislation, not encouraging mobilization, and are channeling the “Hands Off” movement into the electoral blackmail of “lesser evilism.” This is no accident; they are the other face of the U.S. ruling class, just as capitalist and imperialist as the Republicans.

Figures like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are reappearing at mass rallies—not to fight Trump, but to pave the way to 2028 and contain discontent under the Democratic Party’s “big tent,” once again nurturing illusions of reform from within. This strategy just repeats the cycle of frustration and demobilization, steering social anger into a dead end.

What’s needed is the exact opposite: to drive mass mobilization in the streets against Trump’s reactionary offensive AND to build an independent working class political alternative.

Revolutionaries have a key role to play in these tasks. But our most fundamental task—the one on which our capacity to influence struggles and build a mass political alternative depends—is the reconstruction of a revolutionary party. There are very real possibilities to advance toward that goal today, but only through the regroupment of revolutionaries currently dispersed in various organizations, international organization, and intervention in the struggles to organize the thousands of activists who are radicalizing.

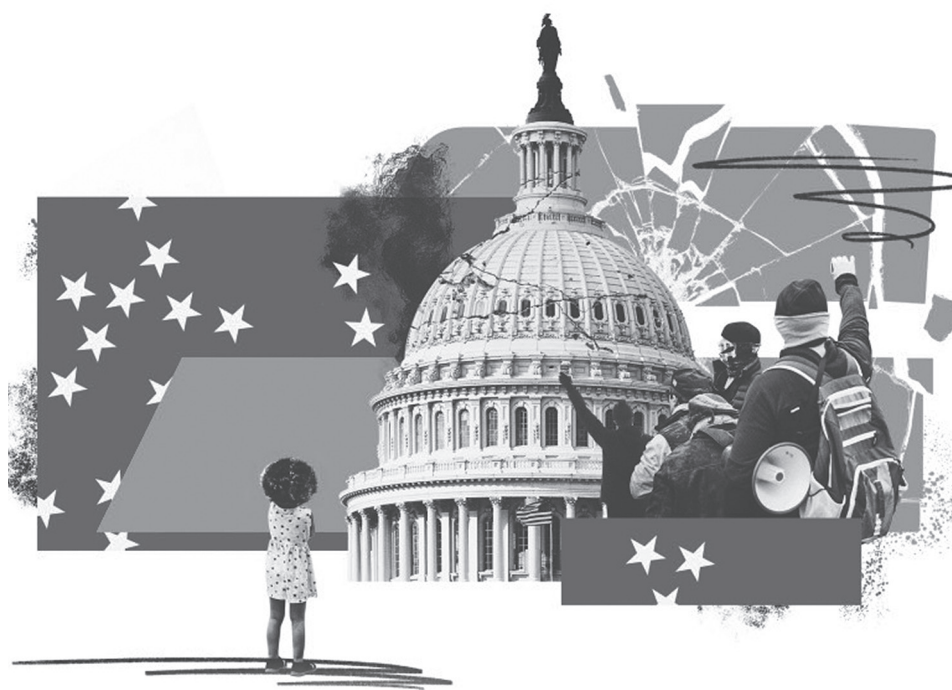
It is an immediate task, not a project for the future. The current process of polarization and radicalization presents a finite, not timeless, opportunity; the struggles of the coming months and couple of years will tip the balance of forces one way or the other. Revolutionary socialists can either seize or squander the opportunity to organize today’s radicalizing workers and youth. But the prospects for the working class are not bright if it is the reformists and neo-Stalinists instead of the revolutionaries who manage to grow in this process.

The International Socialist League is tirelessly working toward these goals, as part of a process of discussion, coordination, and regroupment with other revolutionary organizations and militants in the United States and worldwide. 🌱

The magnitude of the capitalist debacle is such that it is shrinking the margin that allows the ruling class to rule through democratic regimes. This is reflected in the bourgeois support for far-right forces like Trump's. We are seeing the effects on political regimes of the economic crisis that has gone unresolved since 2008. These imply a significant departure from the post-WWII perspective of the imperialist bourgeois policy of Western countries that developed and have preferred bourgeois democratic regimes, sustained by the super-exploitation of semicolonies by any means necessary.

Democracy in CRISIS

BY CÉSAR LATORRE



DEMOCRACY HAS LOST ITS USEFULNESS

Since the inception of capitalism, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie has taken different forms of government, resorting to “democratic” just as easily as to authoritarian regimes. In the imperialist countries, this has been obscured because the democratic regime was used as a policy at home and as political propaganda abroad. However, since 2008, the assault by imperialist capitalism—previously focused mainly on the periphery—has also intensified in their own countries. As one might expect, this was met with resistance, which the bourgeoisie has no leeway to tolerate. Consequently, economic policy has accompanied by a qualitative increase in repressive policies both domestically and abroad.

This has led to the rollback of all democratic rights that we are witnessing. It is important to note that this concept is not the same as bourgeois democracy. Democratic rights are gains won by the masses that the bourgeoisie pretends to accept when it employs bourgeois democratic dictatorship.

Fance, still under bourgeois democratic regimes, they no longer tolerated rights such as **self-determination**: the Spanish state with Catalonia in 2017; respect for the **democratic principle of the majority**: betrayal of the referendum in Greece (2015); **free speech**: banning of books in schools in the U.S. (2024); persecuting Alejandro Bodart for tweeting in defense of the Palestinian people in Argentina (2024/2025); **the right to protest**: students expelled for protesting in favor of Palestine in the U.S., Australia, etc. (2024); **the right to strike**: teachers in Germany (2018); **the right to a fair trial**: deportations in the U.S. (2025)—and the list could go on. The point is that, objectively, democratic liberties are in direct conflict with the bourgeois need to impose economic austerity.

DEMOCRACY IS A DISAPPOINTMENT

In parallel, this new reality found different political leaderships heading various countries who, despite minor differences in approach

and speed, all implemented economic austerity. This led to the political decline of both the traditional right and the reformists that had generated high expectations in the first political shift after 2008, which was to the left[1]. But it also eroded confidence in democracy itself as a regime—hence the rise, for example, of movements such as the Yellow Vests, which operated outside the institutional channels of bourgeois democracy.

At the same time, as mentioned above, the champions of a more radical democracy ended up trampling on democratic rights: Syriza betrayed the Greek people's vote (Varoufakis, who at that time resigned as Minister of Economy "to facilitate the negotiations" of the very proposal that the Greeks had just voted to reject, now serves capital as a pseudo-Marxist theorist of class conciliation). Podemos did not support the Catalan right to self-determination, and Chávez's "21st-century socialism" degenerated into a dictatorship, etc.

These events are also part of the reason why broad social sectors have rallied behind far-right options, which then seize that opportunity to undermine democratic rights.

DEMOCRACY'S CONGENITAL FLAW

When Aristotle coined the concept of democracy, it was based on a slaveholding system; in reality, it was a euphemism that the ruling class used according to its needs. This is also why the meaning of democracy remains somewhat elastic and confusing.

In the transition from feudalism to capitalism, "democracy" was a weapon for the bourgeoisie against the nobility, but in the early days of capitalism, the democratic republic regime was reserved only for "civilized" countries. In truth, the flourishing tree of democracy stood and was nourished by the dark roots of colonialism, racism, slavery, and the most brutal repression across the rest of the world.

It is also important to highlight that the Paris Commune and, above all, the Russian Revolution in its early stages fostered a form of genuine democracy never before seen, where political participation and decision-making were vested in the mobilized masses. This provided empirical evidence of the unbreakable link between the mode of production and democracy as government by the majority.

DEMOCRACY AS BOURGEOIS POLICY

On the one hand, "**bourgeois democracy**" has played an undeniable role in politically containing the working class and integrating it into the capitalist state in a subordinate manner. In this sense, the supposed, formal equality of having the right to vote and choose representatives legitimized governments subservient to the exploitative minority, resting upon economic and social inequalities. Moreover, the "most stable democracies" in imperialist countries were only sustainable while subjugating the rest of the world. Trotsky himself, analyzing this phenomenon, went so far as to say that "[bourgeois] democracy is the most aristocratic FORM of government; only those countries in the world that have slaves are capable of preserving democracy." [2]

On the other hand, these same countries that Trotsky referred to became nations that, in order to conquer and then maintain their imperial role, turned democracy into a political value. First against fascism and Nazism. Then against Stalinist authoritarianism during the Cold War. Later, against religious fanaticism and terrorism. Until very recently, the U.S. even used democracy as a rallying call against Russia, China, North Korea, etc. Indeed, Genocide Joe even had the audacity to invoke it to justify the massacre in Palestine, asserting that it was a duty to defend "the only democracy in the Middle East".

In short, the very idea of democracy as government by the majority is incompatible with capitalism, which is nothing more than an oligarchy exploiting and oppressing the vast majority.

IDEOLOGICAL REVERSAL AND CONTRADICTIONS

The Enlightenment theory of democracy, which once served the bourgeoisie as a tool against the aristocracy, now clashes with the current needs of the ruling class. Therefore, the ideology of the far-right must demolish even the smallest vestiges of democratic rights that the bourgeoisie once tolerated within the framework of the bourgeois democratic regime.

For these reasons, their theorists question the very foundations of the Enlightenment and argue that liberty is incompatible with democracy. They promote all sorts of reactionary ideologies, claiming to be the antithesis of the Enlightenment, as the title of Nick Land essay "The Dark Enlightenment" shows.

Nevertheless, it will not be so easy to discard eighty years of policy as though it never existed. Destroying the independence of the branches of government, jailing opposition leaders, deporting people without trial, banning criticism—these actions will encounter resistance not only from middle sectors that defend these values but also from those most exploited, who immediately suffer the economic consequences.

The only way to stabilize such a situation is if there are real, concrete improvements for large majorities over time—yet given the economic crisis, that does not initially appear to be the most likely scenario.

Additionally, Western imperialism faces another political problem if a more direct conflict with regional imperialisms were to arise. Unlike what happened from World War II onward, they would no longer have a political axis with enough appeal to rally populations behind them.

DICTATORSHIP OF MONOPOLIES OR SINGLE-PARTY REGIMES?

These are the proposed alternatives the imperialist blocs are offering us.

One thing that differs from the previous period is that the primary imperialist nations seek to rid themselves of the limited existing democratic rights. And there is another deep-seated cause worth noting: since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the guiding principle for state capitalist bureaucracies and their allies has been that the best way to stay in power is to repress—to repress more harshly and more frequently. The Chinese Communist Party tested this successfully in Tiananmen, which practically became a model worthy of emulation. Putin, Maduro, Correa, Lukashenko, Kazakhstan, among others, successfully enforced the one-party model with fierce repression, thereby strengthening this policy. It is important to note, however, that they achieved this largely because there was no revolutionary leadership with sufficient influence to play a role.

On the other hand, the richest capitalists in the world—who are genuine gangsters of “capitalist competition” and stern dictators in their own companies—have risen to represent the successful Western model and now seek to transfer their corporate organizational structure to the State and the world at large.

This has led us to witness the bourgeois democratic model losing any real point of reference, leaving the defense of democratic rights practically in the hands of revolutionaries alone.

WORKERS' DEMOCRACY OR CAPITALIST FASCISM

The old dichotomy of socialism or barbarism could find its counterpart in the subtitle of this section. The current crisis is sharply intensifying its contradictions.

The bourgeoisie is running out of space for its democratic dictatorship. One of the possible ways out of the crisis is to physically defeat the working class and its resistance. To achieve that, they need a thoroughly repressive regime, because it becomes essential to drive the entire working class into a system of exploitation bordering on slavery, akin to the Nazi concentration camps with forced labor or the Chinese model of “hot-bedding.”

Meanwhile, as we write this article, there are massive demonstrations for democratic rights in the U.S.—and in other countries—against Donald Trump and Elon Musk under the slogan “hands off”. Alongside these, we see videos of people filming themselves destroying Tesla cars, suggesting that this will not be an easy feat to accomplish.

Furthermore, a return to the economic welfare state and political democracy, as the defeated and accommodationist left proposes, is unfeasible and therefore utopian. Those who promise—or claim to fight for—a more radical form of democracy lead us into a dead-end.

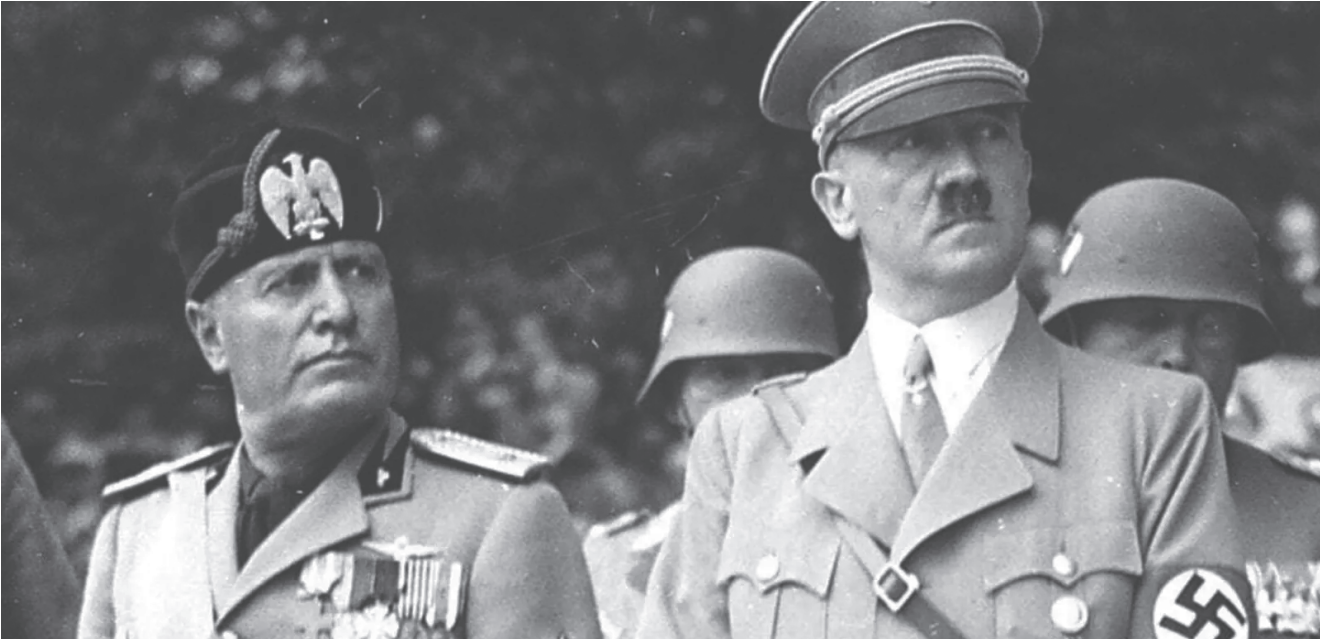
The only real alternative to imperialist policies is a revolutionary outcome that destroys this State and its illusory democracy. The only form of genuine democracy is linked to social equality in control over the means of production, which is only possible under a workers' government where true participation in decision-making and in shaping economic and political direction is determined by the majority.

Let us take up the defense of democratic rights in our own hands because, in a world where the rich wish to eliminate them, these rights will be a powerful lever for the proletarian revolution. ✊

[1] For further detail, see “*The Rise of the Far Right and the tasks of the revolutionaries*” in *Permanent Revolution* Issue 6.

[2] Trotsky, L. (2022). *Así nació la IV Internacional*. La Montaña: Ediciones Socialistas.

A HISTORICAL and POLITICAL OVERVIEW of the IDEOLOGY of BARBARISM



BY CELE FIERRO AND VIKI CALDERA

We live in an era where post-truth, fake news, and AI creations merge with reality. Therefore, now more than ever, it is essential to take up Marxist analyses of historical phenomena, in order to understand, explain, and act upon this reality.

The far right links Nazism to socialism — based on Hitler's party name — or claims that Mussolini was a socialist because of his brief membership in the PSI. In doing so, it attempts to deny that they themselves are the sole heirs of the twentieth-century fascists, and that the only political sector that consistently confronts and can defeat them is internationalist socialism.

Let's talk about how fascism emerged and developed during the last century.

CHRONOLOGY OF HORROR

The term “fascist” was first used in Italy, starting with the creation of the “Fasci di Combattimento”^[1] in 1919. In 1921, they became the National Fascist Party, the only legal party during Mussolini's dictatorship from 1922 to 1943.

In Germany, in 1919, the German Workers' Party was founded. It was a far-right, nationalist, and racist party led by Hitler. In 1920, it changed its name to the National Socialist Workers' Party^[2]. The “Brownshirts” or SA, along with the SS, were the Nazi Party's assault troops. The Nazi Party became the only legal party after Hitler seized power in 1933.

In 1923, Primo de Rivera staged a coup in Spain that lasted until 1930. According to Trotsky, this was not a fascist regime, as it did not rely on the reaction of the petty-bourgeois masses^[3]. However, after his fall and due to the Communist Party's inability to offer a revolutionary

solution, fascist organizations soon emerged and fused in 1934 to form the Spanish Falange party. The Falange, led by Franco during the Civil War, became the only legal party after he seized power in 1939.

THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The overlapping of these phenomena is not accidental, but rather the result of the objective conditions of the world at the beginning of the last century. We can find the cause of the emergence of fascism on a global scale in the consequences provoked by the I World War.

THE GREAT WAR

According to Lenin, the First World War was “*in a triple sense, a war between slave-owners to fortify slavery.*”^[4] He referred to the fact that the great world powers engaged in warfare to achieve three goals: a new division of colonies, reinforcing the oppression of other nations, and crushing the workers’ movement.

The economic crisis made life unbearable for vast numbers of people worldwide, particularly in key countries exhausted by war, and even more so in Germany, where the harsh conditions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles plunged it into misery.

However, the contradictions leading to war were not solved. England won but could no longer maintain its hegemonic position. Meanwhile, the United States came out strengthened: the “*Roaring Twenties*” were a period of prosperity and extravagance, but only for the most privileged sectors of U.S. society. Yet the 1929 crash exposed the reality that economic and social crisis and the inter-imperialist disputes were still present. The subsequent Great Depression plunged large masses into misery for a decade.

THE WORKERS’ AND POPULAR RESPONSE

Lenin, in his work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), stated that we had entered a new epoch of capitalism (its monopolist phase) that would be marked by **crises, wars, and revolutions**. As seen above, he was entirely right about the crises and wars. And, as we will now see, he was also right about revolutions. During the war itself and the following years,

there were major revolutionary uprisings^[5]. However, the defeat of the Italian and German revolutions, the Stalinist betrayal of the German process and of the Spanish Civil War, combined with the aforementioned crisis, explain the rise of fascism and paved the way to a new world war.

THE OUTCOME

We can therefore say that fascism was the instrument used by capitalists to prevent the discontent of workers and popular sectors, caused by war and crisis, from heading toward socialism. But fascism was not their first option: they first attempted with reformist parties and bought off union leaders, but when that was proved insufficient, they turned to direct confrontation. That is, they institutionalized the persecution and annihilation of workers and their organizations, through anti-democratic, authoritarian regimes with no liberties, as a means to solve the crisis of imperialist capitalism.



From left to right, the bodies of Nicola Bombacci, Benito Mussolini, Claretta Petacci, Alessandro Pavolini y Achille Starace exhibited at the Loreto Plaza in Milan in 1945.

In Trotsky’s words: “*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 (...). Its tasks are assigned by monopoly capital. The compulsory concentration of all forces and resources of the people in the interests of imperialism.*”^[6]

IT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

The victory of fascism was not inevitable; it was the result of the combination of all the above-mentioned factors, along with the disastrous policy of the leadership of the Third International and the USSR, both in the hands of Stalin and his henchmen.

In 1938, Trotsky wrote: “*You may ask me how it can be explained that the Soviet government which issued from the October Revolution suppresses the revolutionary movement in Spain? The answer is simple: a new privileged bureaucratic caste, very conservative, greedy, and tyrannical has succeeded in raising itself over the Soviets. This bureaucracy does not trust the masses but fears them.*”^[7] There lies the fundamental explanation for why the Third International failed to

defeat fascism, despite having determined a policy to do so since the 1920s.

Under Bolshevik leadership along with strong parties in Western Europe, the Communist International began to analyze the new phenomenon of fascism in the early 1920s to develop lines of action to confront it, well before fascists seized power in several countries. These analyses were embodied in the 1922 Congress. “Its document “On the Tactics of the Comintern” which stated: “*One of the most important tasks of the Communist parties is to organise resistance against international fascism. They must go at the head of the entire working class in struggle against the fascist gangs and energetically utilise, in this arena as well, the tactic of united front.*”^[8]

This tactic consisted of unity of all workers’ forces in the struggle, participating in and promoting united actions with reformist parties while maintaining the political independence of the revolutionaries, in order to win over the workers’ movement from those leaderships.

After Lenin’s death and Trotsky’s persecution, Stalinism took over the leadership of both the USSR and the International, which in 1928 adopted a completely mistaken policy known as the “Third Period,” consisting of an absurdly sectarian turn.^[9]

From that historical crime came not only the victory of fascism but also the Second World War. After this disaster, Stalinism took another sharp turn, this time pushing for Popular Fronts, that is, political alliances with reformist and bourgeois forces.^[10]

TRAGEDY AND FARCE

Marx said that reality repeats itself, first as *tragedy* and then as *farce*. We feel free to paraphrase him in this article to put forward a hypothesis: today’s far right is an attempt to repeat the fascist tragedy we just described. And although their regimes are not yet fascist, they are clearly moving in that direction. We can see what the ultimate goal is if we look at Netanyahu’s regime.

WHAT ARE THEY?

To support this hypothesis, it is useful to revisit the definitions^[11] made by Clara Zetkin, who presented a remarkably accurate analysis of fascism in 1923. In her report, she defined fascism not as a bourgeois reaction to the working-class rise, but as the consequence of that rise not extending further from the Russian revolution. She also explained that its social composition is what distinguishes it from other counterrevolutionary forms: it is not a small, exclusive caste, but broad masses and that can even include segments of the proletariat.

Regarding its origins, she argued that, on one hand, fascism expresses the disintegration and economic decay of capitalism and the symptom of the dissolution of the bourgeois state. On the other hand, it is a consequence of the delay of the world revolution, itself a result of the betrayals of reformist leaders, who disappointed the broad masses and made them lose faith not only

in those leaders but also in socialism and in their own class. Fascism manages to capture the attention of these masses by demagogically presenting a solution that addresses and understands their demands. Once in power, it fulfills none of its social promises and deals heavy blows to the people’s needs.

Using these definitions, we can evaluate the current far-right forces. Let’s first look at their origin: if Trump, Meloni, Milei, Orban, among others exist in the world today, it is because the bourgeoisie have thus far failed to solve the deep systemic crisis of imperialist capitalism that has plagued us since 2008. At the beginning of this crisis, it was the traditional parties and their regimes that played the role of upholding the system. This triggered a massive social questioning of the system and a search for alternatives, which initially leaned to the left. But what people found were reformist forces that, at best, implemented only partial measures and, in general, carried out the brutal austerity plans required by imperialism, betraying popular command. This disappointment, combined with the failure of the old political structures, triggered a new search, now leaning to the right. Once again, as in the 1920s, the combination of crisis, misery, and mass disappointment allowed for the possibility of an upsurge of fascism.

Zetkin’s definitions about its origin are just as accurate when it comes to social composition. These forces do not represent small elites; they reach broader sectors of society with demagogic responses that promise to solve what the old politics could not. Once again, they manage to charm a sector of society that has grown disappointed with everything else.

These far-right forces were not the imperialist capitalist system’s first option either. Initially, the system tried to fulfill its plan of deepening global worker’s exploitation through traditional political forces, reformist organizations, and bought off unions. However, as those have failed, the system now adopts the far right as its main project. Trump’s case is very clear: in 2016, he was an outsider that was not even supported by his own party. Now he has broad political and financial support from the establishment.

As for the regimes, it is true that these far-right forces have initially remained within the margins of liberal democracy. But today, liberal democracy is increasingly under attack. There are actual

advances toward more authoritarian regimes that curtail basic democratic liberties, with increased repression and persecution of workers' organizations and the left. However, unlike the previous century, their social base of support has not yet turned to organized violence.

Finally, there is a key element for understanding these phenomena: the inter-imperialist struggle for global hegemony, which is becoming increasingly fierce and bloody due to Trump's foreign policy, which turned the legal and institutional framework built after the Second World War on its head. Although we are not currently on the brink of a Third World War, it remains one of the possible outcomes to solve this historically tense balance of power.

HOW TO CONFRONT THEM

This effort to reach the most accurate and comprehensive definition of today's far-right forces is not an academic exercise. It is an urgent necessity for determining how to confront and defeat them. Learning from historical mistakes is essential. Faced with the rise of fascism, Stalinism was first sectarian and then opportunist, shifting from "no agreements with reformists" — in terms of united struggle — to the Popular Fronts, seeking to govern alongside them. We have already seen how the working class paid for that disaster.

We believe that, in the current period, unity in action for struggle, with complete independence to elaborate on our own ideas, is essential. The Workers' United Front and unity in action in the streets are tactics that must be promoted and developed. This is a necessary condition to confront the far right and defeat it *before* it turns into fascism. The only effective ground for doing this is in the streets. We will not be able to weaken the beast through parliamentary means; the most important blows are struck through mass mobilization, as seen in Argentina on March 24, in the U.S. *Hands Off* marches, in Germany's anti-Nazi protests, etc. In the streets, we must strike as one, without holding back any of our criticisms or political positions. This is not only the way to strengthen the struggle, but also to expose those who, while claiming to intend to defeat the far right, fail to do what is necessary. This is why the ultra-left policy of the Trotskyist Fraction-FI is so flawed.

Unity in the streets cannot have a political counterpart, since in that field the question is *what project will overcome the far right*. That project cannot be a repetition of the frustrations that opened the door to them in the first place. The way forward is not the construction of Popular Fronts. On the contrary, it must be the construction of an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and socialist political alternative. Trotsky said, "*If the Communist Party is the party of revolutionary hope, then fascism, as a mass movement, is the party of counter-revolutionary despair.*"^[12] Today, more than ever, to build that revolutionary hope is the task of revolutionaries around the world — a political alternative that is the only one capable of truly opposing the far right and fulfilling the historic role demanded by our time: preventing the triumph of fascism and advancing the international socialist revolution. 🌐



[1] Armed group led by Mussolini, with an ultra-nationalist, anti-neutrality program and expansionist goals. Their activity consisted of the systematic assault and persecution of workers' and leftist premises, activists, and leaders.

[2] In 1923, they attempted a failed coup and Hitler was sentenced to five years in prison, although he only served eight months. The trial, in which he was given unlimited time to speak in his defense, served as a platform to spread his ideas nationwide.

[3] Trotsky, L. 1930. *The Problems of the Spanish Revolution from Day to Day*.

[4] Lenin, V. I. 1915. *Socialism and War*.

[5] It marked the first time in history that a socialist revolution triumphed in Russia (1917). There were also revolutionary attempts in Germany (1918 and 1923), in Italy (between 1919 and 1920), and later in Spain (1936).

[6] Trotsky, L. 1933. What is National Socialism?

[7] Trotsky, L. 1938. Fight Imperialism to Fight Fascism.

[8] 1922, *On the Tactics of the Comintern*.

[9] All united-front tactics with reformism were rejected as reformism was seen as the other side of the same coin as fascism. This led to ultra-leftist actions that isolated revolutionaries from the working masses while pushing these masses towards social democracy in the absence of a truly revolutionary policy.

[10] This was the case in France in 1935. Also in Spain, where the role of Stalinism was key in ensuring that the Civil War against Franco ended in a harsh defeat for the working class and resulted in the imposition of a fascist dictatorship that lasted decades.

[11] Report at the Third Enlarged Plenary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) in June 1923

[12] Trotsky, L. 1930. The Turn in the Communist International and the German Situation.

THE MARXIST VISION of Capitalist Innovation

BY MARTÍN FUENTES



Recently, new right-wing forces have strengthened their relationship with big capital linked to new technologies. The inclusion of Elon Musk in Trump's cabinet was undoubtedly a paradigmatic event. The reactionary vision regarding the use of technology in contemporary capitalism is stirring intense debates among activists and intellectuals. Marxism, by considering the social dimension of the phenomenon, helps clarify certain points in the discussion.

The 2020 pandemic disrupted the world. Since then, the combination of the economic crisis and social polarization has made uncertainty the new normal. For millions of young people, hopes for a better future were dashed as they saw how the deepening crisis prevented access to the most basic rights.

Generational discontent propelled the crisis and weakened traditional political structures. The frustration caused by reformist political leadership paved the way for the new right, which took advantage of the opportunity both in politics and on social media. Where the causes of the Arab Spring activists or the feminist wave once thrived, xenophobic, sexist, and hateful rhetoric proliferated later on, due to the new context.

IN DOGE WE TRUST

Support from big tech for the far right is concerning, given that their CEOs are the wealthiest men in the world, meaning they represent the most powerful sector of the bourgeoisie today. A thorough study would be necessary to determine whether that support is homogeneous, but at least we can highlight

some cases in which major figures of technological capitalism have embraced a reactionary stance, abandoning their former positions.

The Forbes list of billionaires is currently headed by three entrepreneurs who converged in changing their ideologies and chose to support Trump in his last campaign. Elon Musk, the wealthiest of them, backed the current Republican president with more than 250 million dollars for the elections, followed by Mark Zuckerberg with one million dollars, and Jeff Bezos, who also donated the same amount.

Elon Musk is undoubtedly the leading voice in this business-political convergence. From DOGE, he pushes a 2.0 neoliberal agenda that entails budget cuts and large-scale layoffs, replicating the anti-worker tyranny that governs his companies.¹ Yet at another time, the owner of OpenAI had declared himself “politically moderate.” Similarly, Zuckerberg and Bezos have regressed toward more reactionary and conservative positions (Frenkel e Isaac, 2025).



However, journalists are asking how long his relationship with Trump can last, given the president’s unpredictable policies. A first alarm went off in the business sector with the rise in tariffs, which caused massive losses for the three entrepreneurs. Musk, for his part, stirred controversy by requesting the removal of tariffs on Europe.

Beyond these differences, it is worth asking: Where does the affinity between tech entrepreneurs and conservative politicians come from? What motivated their change of opinion?

AN ANTECEDENT: THE CALIFORNIAN IDEOLOGY

Economist Cedric Durand refers to the “Californian Ideology” as a precursor to the right-wing political vision adopted by sectors

linked to new technologies. This ideology would result from combining the hippie counterculture of the 1960s with free trade principles. By the 1990s, the critical ideas that had spread among young people eventually ended up fueling conservative thought. One paradigmatic moment was the “Cyberspace and the American Dream” conference held in 1994, organized by the Progress & Freedom Foundation (PFF). From it emerged a manifesto entitled *A Carta Magna for the Knowledge Age*, which set out the core principles of the Californian Ideology and its views on new technologies, economics, culture, and politics.

The ideas laid out in “the charter” echo many of today’s far-right positions. The replacement of agriculture and industry in the information age is envisioned through a transition in which the new era “unleashes its promises,” leaving behind past attitudes. The basis of this proposal rests on the withdrawal of the State, intensification of competition, and a grand entrepreneurial rally that will deliver technological solutions to humanity’s pressing problems and, more immediately, to the difficulties faced by the United States.

Without a doubt, Musk & Co. found inspiration in many of these aspects. However, the particularities of the present demand an update of analyses and characterizations. Even so, Durand, along with a group of intellectuals worried about new technological phenomena, offer some striking conceptualizations that ultimately lead to confusion and misunderstandings—such as “techno-feudalism.”

INTERPRETING WITHOUT TRANSFORMING

According to Morozov, “The techno-feudal thesis is not the product of advances in contemporary Marxist theory, but rather of its apparent inability to grasp the significance of the digital economy.” We can say that the lack of a theory adapted to the current situation has led a segment of reformist intellectuals to suggest that traditional capitalism has been replaced by a new mode of production. The supposed displacement of the bourgeoisie by a new ruling class gives rise to new theories of class conciliation. What is their argument?

For Durand, CEOs have diversified the ways they obtain rent, which ends up replacing profit in today’s capitalism, and all investments are focused on “predatory forces” (control structures that limit individual freedoms), thereby calling into question the continuity of capitalism today. But what Morozov questions is that multiplying categories ultimately leads to “seeing rentiers everywhere (...) but not a single capitalist.”

One need only revisit Marx’s own arguments to understand that automated companies are as capitalist as those full of wage-earning workers, says Morozov. Those segments of the bourgeoisie that control the more “automated” sectors of production benefit from the surplus value extracted in the parts of the production chain where there is a heavier presence of human labor.

Moreover, the emphasis on “predatory forces” contradicts the very techno-feudal thesis regarding the displacement of the state as a means of dominating the masses. Silicon Valley’s relationships with Washington go back a long way, and today we are witnessing a new chapter in that history, starring Elon Musk, in which the ties between the state bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie are being strengthened. Big tech has grown and continues to grow at the expense of (and not despite) the state.

The reformist camp’s skeptical view is the flip side of the far right’s rise. Examples such as Varoufakis, with his class conciliation proposals, demonstrate that those responsible for yesterday’s frustrations are often the same people who today offer justifications.

Having clarified the debate on the bourgeois and capitalist nature of big tech, the remaining task is to explain the “right-wing turn” of tech entrepreneurs.

INNOVATION AND EXPLOITATION

The problem with innovation in capitalism is that each technological advance aims to increase business profits through the exploitation of the working class. It is profit that drives innovation in capitalism, not the other way around. Rejecting neoclassical views that ignore the social character of technological change, Marxism understands innovation in terms of two factors: capital and labor, “the two poles of the dominant social relationship under capitalism” (Katz, 1996, p. 5).

In other words, the valorization of capital through labor is what compels capitalists to introduce new technologies. Surplus value—taken from the worker—when the subsistence minimum cannot be reduced further, can only be increased through higher productivity, made possible by introducing more sophisticated tools. But it is human labor that gives goods their value, not the tools themselves. Therefore, the “replacement” of the workforce is nothing but a reactionary utopia dreamed up by Musk and the big bourgeoisie.

In this regard, the technological changes of each historical period are determined by shifts in that period’s laws of accumulation. Today, the far right is betting on technological change as a path to “efficiency,” which is nothing more than the pursuit of greater productivity and surplus value. At the same time, social control mechanisms are being strengthened through cybersecurity to counter the discontent of the working class.

For Marxism, there is no indissoluble link between capitalism and innovation. On the contrary, the bourgeoisie stands as an obstacle to development by placing profit ahead of technological improvements that would benefit all humanity. From this perspective, the futurism of Musk, Zuckerberg, and Bezos inevitably leads to a system of barbarism in which the wealth is concentrated in the richest 1% of society. To achieve this, they require political expressions willing to crush the voices

of resistance. Liberal democracy and traditional parties seem to have reached their limit in fulfilling the bourgeois mandate, which is why the far right has displaced traditional political expressions today.

Technology in the hands of capitalists becomes an instrument of social oppression, leading to increased labor exploitation and unemployment, the spread of hate-filled rhetoric, and scientific knowledge bound to the interests of extractivism and the military industry.

But the problem is not the technology itself; it is capitalism. Instead of “replacing” workers, it is possible to redistribute work hours so that everyone can work and work less, combat the irrationality of production under the bourgeoisie by producing only what is necessary, and distribute it all. Yet this is only possible with a revolutionary workers’ government. That is why we need to strengthen a socialist alternative that can fight to fully democratize science and technology for the benefit of the popular sectors. 🐞

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1. The controversial mass layoffs at Tesla and X/Twitter, in line with Musk’s anti-union statements, reflect the inherently despotic nature of capitalists.



UKRAINE

The IMPERIALIST ALLIANCE Between Trump and Putin

Of course, Donald Trump wants to go down in history. For a politician in the twilight of his life, this is a fairly reasonable desire. All that remains is to choose the optimal means of achieving that goal. And it seems Trump has already made his choice...

BY OLEG VERNYK

To plunge the world into a state of total chaos and destroy everything that has constituted the foundations of the global world order for many decades since the end of World War II.

Naturally, that past world order was far from ideal or just. It was based on the rules of global capitalist globalization, in which Western imperialism as a whole (the so-called “axis of good”) concealed its economic interests behind the liberal veil of “defending human rights” and the “struggle for democracy.” Expansionist foreign policy under the liberal doctrine required the U.S. to make significant investments to bribe governments and influential politicians across the world.

This, in turn, encouraged the outsourcing of major segments of economic production and

capital from the “golden billion” countries to developing nations with corrupt bureaucratic regimes, tax havens facilitating tax evasion, and cheap labor that drastically reduced production costs. Products manufactured abroad were then deliberately directed to the U.S. market, generating huge profits for the same American owners of transnational corporations, while simultaneously driving up the U.S. trade deficit—which, as of January 2025, had already reached \$130 billion. As of March 24, 2025, the U.S. national debt stood at \$36.64 trillion, which amounts to approximately \$107,000 per U.S. citizen.

Maintaining a global clientele has clearly become an extremely costly affair for the U.S. The massive structure of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), under the liberal sponsorship of the Democratic Party, had become largely self-sustaining, and it was increasingly difficult to determine whether it truly executed U.S. interests or simply “managed” (read: looted) the U.S. budget.

For years, USAID’s work in Ukraine was based on those same principles of bribery and corrup-

tion targeting senior officials and politicians, as well as the creation of U.S.-funded “civil society” organizations. During Trump’s first term, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky tried to balance the interests of both Trump’s Republicans and Biden’s Democrats. He even initiated several criminal investigations into the Ukrainian company Burisma, where Hunter Biden—Joe Biden’s son—had worked. It’s clear that employment was directly tied to his family connections and the opportunities that came with them.

However, after Joe Biden’s electoral victory in November 2020, Zelensky was forced to change his stance, quickly shutting down all criminal cases related to Burisma and Hunter Biden. Since then, the Ukrainian president has remained under the tight grip of the liberal-globalist bloc led by the U.S. Democratic Party—something Trump is well aware of and which has directly influenced his attitude toward Zelensky and, consequently, the Russia-Ukraine war.

In any case, we are already witnessing how Trump’s declared trade war has caused massive collapses across almost every major global stock market. Strong predictions are already being made that this chaos spells the end of the “American century.” The U.S. is abandoning not only its role as the defender of liberal values but also its leadership as the central economy of the so-called “free market.”

The “free market” was always a fictitious category, far removed from the real economic and trade relations of the imperialist era. Protectionism, quotas, and restrictive tariffs have always accompanied global trade, and “free market” rhetoric merely concealed the economic interests of the main global players. But it seems Trump has grown tired of this hypocritical disguise. He has already announced a potential U.S. withdrawal from the World Trade Organization (WTO) and recently blocked the appointment of new judges to its adjudicatory bodies, effectively paralyzing the WTO’s ability to issue rulings. Furthermore, in March 2025, the U.S. suspended its financial contributions for both 2024 and 2025.

THE PREMISES OF AN IMPERIALIST PACT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND RUSSIA

Today, analysts are racking their brains trying to explain why Trump has pivoted toward Putin. *The New York Times*—the flagship outlet

of the liberal U.S. bourgeoisie—recently published: “Trump’s Pivot Toward Putin’s Russia Upends Generations of U.S. Policy.”

Among the quoted reasons is Trump’s intention to weaken Western Europe, now a competitor to U.S. imperialism. *Politico* quoted a European diplomat who said, “We now have an alliance between a Russian president who wants to destroy Europe and an American president who also wants to destroy Europe.” Indeed, Trump has dismantled the very idea of “transatlantic cooperation” in mere months, effectively dissolving the NATO imperialist bloc.

Also at play is Trump’s desire to break the solid military and economic alliance between the emerging imperialisms of China and Russia. He has announced a 125% tariff hike on Chinese imports, while Russia and its satellite Belarus were conspicuously excluded from the list of affected countries. The administration’s explanation—that those countries “don’t trade with the U.S.”—reeks more of cynicism than naivety. Even uninhabited islands full of penguins have been sanctioned.

While war-torn Ukraine, victim of Russian imperialist aggression, has been slapped with a 10% tariff, its aggressor faces none. It’s easy to predict that this zero-tariff policy will attract foreign investment into the Russian and Belarusian economies, ruled by the authoritarian regimes of Putin and Lukashenko. Trump expects this unprecedented gesture will be well received by Putin and provoke a rupture in the economic, political, and military ties between Russia and China—the real target of Trump’s sanctions.

BACKGROUND OF THE IMPERIALIST PACT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND RUSSIA

We’ve already pointed out that the collaboration between U.S. and Russian imperialisms—that is, the close alignment between Trump and Putin—had an immediate effect in the rapprochement between the U.S. and Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko. Trump’s team announced that a new “agreement” will soon be signed, through which economic and personal sanctions against Belarus and Lukashenko will be lifted in exchange for the latter granting amnesty to certain political prisoners.

In this global context, few were surprised



Neville Chamberlain and Adolf Hitler at the Munich Agreements

when the U.S. withdrew from the group tasked with investigating Russian war crimes in Ukraine. *The New York Times*, citing its own sources, stated that this decision is a sign that the Trump administration is walking away from Biden's commitment to personally hold Putin accountable for crimes committed against Ukrainians.

Another key aspect of this imperialist pact is Trump's view of the world order established at the 1945 Yalta agreements, which he sees as disadvantageous to U.S. imperialism. Trump views those agreements as shackles that prevented the U.S. from outpacing its competitors—shackles he believes the U.S. must now break free from in order to maintain global hegemony.

Putin's armed aggression against Ukraine gave Trump a perfect example of how to openly disregard international law and its basic principles, such as the inviolability of borders and the condemnation of wars of conquest. This is why legitimizing Putin's actions and rehabilitating him as an acceptable political figure in the West has become a key strategic goal of Trump's foreign policy. This would also serve to justify and legitimize future imperialist aggressions by the U.S. against any country or people that stand in its way.

Trump is stripping U.S. imperialism of all its masks of "defending democracy and human

rights," reverting it to its original form—the "law of the jungle" of savage capitalism. This aggressive imperialism no longer needs "allies" or "partners." His threats of territorial annexation against NATO members such as Denmark and Canada confirm this. The only exception appears to be Israel, considered an imperialist enclave in the Middle East and a tool for pressuring Arab regimes that produce oil and gas.

Trump feels deep respect—and even envy—for Putin. His authoritarian, anti-democratic personality already clashes with the democratic principles of the U.S. bourgeois constitution, such as the ban on serving more than two presidential terms. Since his re-election, Trump has hinted at the possibility of running for a third term. Putin's five authoritarian terms are a "pink dream" for him—a model he would like to imitate, even if he's still bound by the trappings of a democracy he's ready to toss into the "dustbin of history."

A CONSPIRACY BEHIND UKRAINE'S BACK: THE REINCARNATION OF THE MUNICH AGREEMENTS^[1]

Let's recall the timeline of recent events. On February 12, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump posted on Truth Social about a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

This post literally rocked global media and hit like a bombshell in the international community. Trump claimed he had a “long and productive phone call with Putin” and expressed a desire for U.S.-Russia cooperation to benefit “both countries.” With this, the U.S. and Russia agreed to begin negotiations to end the war in Ukraine—without even informing Ukraine of the start of these separatist negotiations between imperialist powers, carried out behind its back.



Interestingly, in the later negotiations in Saudi Arabia—structured as a U.S.-Russia format—participants included U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, CIA Director John Ratcliffe, National Security Advisor Mike Waltz, and Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff. Clearly, Trump tailored the delegation to meet all of Putin’s demands. At Putin’s request, Trump excluded from the delegation Keith Kellogg, the U.S. President’s Special Representative for Ukraine, who until recently had still publicly referenced Ukraine’s interests.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky waited until the last moment for a “Trump peace plan” to be presented at the Munich Security Conference, which he attended. However, Trump and Putin ignored not only Zelensky but also the so-called “European partners of the U.S.,” who traditionally insisted on

being part of any negotiations to end the war between Russia and Ukraine.

On February 15, 2025, during his speech at the Munich Security Conference, Zelensky flatly rejected Trump’s policy of holding separate negotiations with Russia, suggesting Trump had betrayed Ukraine’s interests. In his address, Zelensky appealed to the major European Union countries for military and financial support, realizing he could no longer count on the Trump administration. But it’s clear that the EU’s joint military assistance to Ukraine will be very limited and cannot match in scale or potential what the U.S. used to provide—assistance that now appears to have ended.

At present, it’s important to note that this mythical “Trump peace plan” has yet to be officially announced or made public. But its broad strokes are already evident to all. In an effort to appease Putin, Trump has completely excluded from the current negotiations any mention of the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia between 2014 and 2022 (Crimea and parts of Donbas), and a ceasefire and freeze of the conflict along the current front line is on the table. Simultaneously, most U.S. economic and personal sanctions against Russia would be lifted. This option clearly satisfies Putin, as Russia is in a weakened position due to Ukraine’s heroic resistance and the lack of significant advances on the front.

Trump and his team repeatedly point to Zelensky’s highly corrupt regime, his low approval ratings, and the fact that Ukraine must finally hold presidential and parliamentary elections. One of the Trump team’s most serious threats against Zelensky was the possibility of a full financial audit of U.S. military aid to Ukraine. Journalist Tucker Carlson, a close Trump ally, even openly accused Zelensky of allowing U.S.-supplied weapons to end up in the hands of Mexican drug cartels. Carlson presented no evidence, but apparently none was needed—these accusations were primarily meant to exert total control over Zelensky ahead of the Trump-Putin “deal.”

Realizing the weakness of his position, Volodymyr Zelensky offered Trump exclusive rights for U.S. development of Ukraine’s rare earth minerals. Zelensky hoped Trump, as a businessman, would be drawn to the proposal

and continue supplying weapons to Ukraine. But he fell into Trump's trap. Trump happily accepted the offer—not to continue weapons shipments, but as a pretext to demand repayment for weapons already delivered.

Naturally, when Zelensky realized his mistake, he tried to reverse the “deal” or at least obtain some promise of future U.S. support from Trump. However, it's worth remembering that—even though Zelensky has erased political opponents from the public sphere—Ukrainian society reacted very negatively to the idea of selling off the country's natural resources to the Americans. According to Ukraine's Constitution, its natural resources belong to the Ukrainian people, and President Zelensky has no right to dispose of them unilaterally.

The scandal on February 28, 2025, in the Oval Office between Zelensky and Trump made it clear to the world that Trump couldn't care less about “security guarantees for Ukraine.” But he is deeply interested in the colonial exploitation of Ukraine's rare earth minerals. The subsequent suspension of arms shipments and intelligence sharing from the U.S. left Zelensky literally on his knees before Donald Trump. The U.S. then drafted and proposed an even more predatory agreement on rare earth minerals that hands total control of Ukraine's extractive sector to the U.S.

It must also be noted that Trump's promises to quickly end the war are now running up against Putin's diplomatic games, as the Russian leader delays peace negotiations while preparing for a broader offensive. It is unlikely Trump will impose new sanctions on Russia, even if this stalling becomes obvious to him. But on the other hand, the Russian economy is already plunging into recession, and the chaotic trade wars launched by Trump have already triggered a drop in oil prices—on which Russia depends to sustain its long-term war effort.

SOCIALIST POLITICS AS A WAY OUT OF GLOBAL TURMOIL

It's increasingly evident that Trump's frantic and largely chaotic attempts to reshape the internal structure and pecking order of global imperialism only accelerate its systemic crisis and highlight its utter inability to solve the problems of global order.

The camaraderie among imperialists only revives, in the collective consciousness of humanity, the terrible specters of the two world wars of the past. And the heroic resistance of Ukraine to Russian imperialism—along with its betrayal by the U.S.—once again makes clear that oppressed peoples must never tie their fate to one imperialist camp against another. The imperialist predators may fight or reconcile. But they always do so behind the backs of workers in their own countries and the peoples they oppress.



The liberal varnish on Trump's imperialism has been fully discarded as unnecessary. The liberal bourgeoisie—though not yet completely defeated—has suffered a crushing blow at the hands of the far right, from which it's unlikely to recover anytime soon. Even the anti-Trump protests in the U.S. must now be organized by left reformists like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, while the main sectors of the U.S. liberal bourgeoisie remain in a state of shock.

In this situation, revolutionary socialists are once again called upon to be the only real defenders of freedom, democracy, and the right to self-determination of the world's peoples. The fight for freedom and democracy cannot be separated from the global anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed and the working class. 🌱

[1] Munich Agreements: Signed on September 30, 1938, by the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany. At Göring's initiative and with Mussolini's mediation, they agreed—without the participation of Czechoslovakia—that the Sudetenland, a Czechoslovak territory, would become part of Germany.

CAMPIST CONCEPTIONS in the Trump Era: WHAT NOW?

BY GUILLERMO PACAGNINI



Trump has flipped the table and aims for a structural change in how global imperialism is configured. He wants to impose a new order to try to overcome the capitalist crisis, but he is creating a scenario of greater instability and uncertainty. This historic shift also “disrupts” certain conceptions and policies, such as campism and those who yield to it within the Trotskyist left.

Since the fall of the worldwide Stalinist apparatus, U.S. imperialism has retreated noticeably. A dispute for global hegemony has been developing with emerging imperialisms such as China, Russia, and their regional and global partners.

Within this framework, whenever a regional conflict arises, the old theory of “progressive bourgeois camps” has gotten new impetus—a theory with a Menshevik genetic makeup that Stalin elevated to a global scale, founded on a conception of

revolution in stages and collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie against a “common enemy.” From there emerged the ruinous policy of uniting all “democratic” and “progressive” forces, popular fronts, and their history of betrayals.

It has also been the battleground of bourgeois nationalist leaderships and, more recently, of neo-reformist, Stalinist, and progressive sectors of all kinds, aligning themselves more or less directly with China and Russia, as if these powers played a progressive role against the great power of the North rather than pursuing a global imperialist hegemony of their own.

Trump’s rapprochement with Putin challenges campist characterizations and their resulting class-collaborationist politics. For the revolutionary left—those of us who are fighting for a policy independent of the contending imperialist blocs—his actions help clarify debates in the activist vanguard.

We will see what balancing acts campist leaderships will perform to explain the flips already emerging from Trump's strategy. Surely, opportunists of every variety will have to sharpen their arguments to justify the alleged progressive traits of Russia and China or their "lesser evil" role.

But we want to focus on what how the revolutionary left is adapting to these changes. We have been debating with currents such as the Trotskyist Fraction-FI (the Argentine PTS's international current) who have been giving ground to campist positions, resulting in a policy that ultimately capitulates to the emerging powers in the face of major developments that divided camps, like the war in Ukraine.

SEMICAMPIST POLICIES IN THE TROTSKYIST LEFT

The TF-FI/PTS and the Partido Obrero (PO)—their associate in the FITU (Workers Left Front Unity) in Argentina—are advancing semi-campist theories regarding emerging imperialisms and the war in Ukraine. Since the war began, they have underscored a one-sided view in which the "main enemy" is a "belligerent escalation by the U.S. and NATO," leading them to capitulate to Russian imperialism. (1)

The PO, with its catastrophism predicting an imminent third world war, has a position clearly linked to campism. Not only does it hold that capitalism has not been restored in Russia, it also interprets every conflict as a prelude or component of a supposed third world war. With regard to Ukraine, it advocates revolutionary defeatism, omitting the Ukrainian people's right to national self-determination, and identifying the invaded country's government instead of the invading imperialist government as the "main enemy". Obviously, this cedes ground to Putin, who bombs, deploys tanks, and pursues an annexation strategy. Their erroneous reasoning is clearly influenced by how they characterize Russia and its government.

Meanwhile, the TF-FI lays things out in more elaborate style and with some nuances, but ends up with conclusions and policies quite similar to the PO's. Let's take a look.

How the TF-FI *Characterizes Russia and China*. The TF-FI does not go so far as to claim we are on the verge of a third world war, but they do acknowledge a bipolar dispute. They still do not define Russia and China as imperialist powers, which,

if a confrontation were to occur, would potentially lead them to capitulate to these emerging powers. This is a key debate we have been carrying out for quite some time. In terms of Russia, there is legitimate discussion on whether it already functions as a fully developed imperialist or as a sub-imperialist power, or whether we should focus on how its distinctively military aspect makes it imperialist. But in the case of China, there should no longer be any doubt at this stage, since it has been leading a battle for global hegemony with the U.S. in economic, commercial, financial, military, political, and technological spheres. Of course, development in each of those areas may be uneven. But the TF-FI schematic approach focuses on a single element of reality (China's backwardness or partial underdevelopment relative to the U.S.) and turns it into the determining factor to justify not aligning with Lenin's and Trotsky's positions, concluding that China is only an "ascending power." (2)

Denial of the Ukrainian People's Right to Self-Determination. This has been at the core of our debate since the war started. While the TF-FI criticizes those who say we are entering a dynamic of a third world war, they behave as if this were the case, putting NATO and Russian imperialism's role as regional gendarme at the same level and denying the war's character as a national liberation struggle for Ukraine. Consequently, they deny solidarity with the Ukrainian people and withdraw support for their right to self-determination. The TF-FI abandoned this revolutionary tenet championed by Lenin and Trotsky, which applies when an imperialist country invades an oppressed or semicolonial nation. They have consistently refused to see that two processes intertwine in Ukraine: an inter-imperialist conflict alongside a just national liberation struggle. Hence, an independent, revolutionary policy calls us to defend that right to self-determination while denouncing the invader as well as NATO and U.S. intervention. Instead, the TF-FI bluntly affirms that the right to national self-determination is growing less relevant, overshadowed by how the war is, in their view, purely an inter-imperialist confrontation. Therefore, they propose a "bilateral defeatism." The outcome is that they bow to Russian imperialism and abandon the people of Ukraine. Accordingly, they offer only generic statements against both powers, talking about a socialist Ukraine, without practically lifting a finger for the Ukrainian people or their resistance. (3)

TWO METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND POLITICS

This one-sided view of reality and the gravely flawed policy that follows from it have their roots in a method and a conception that are at odds with the approach revolutionaries must have—the scientific Marxist method.

Revolutionaries interpret reality using a non-dogmatic dialectical materialism, free of preconceived formulas and static schemas. We analyze general tendencies as well as the concrete situation, weighing all elements of reality and how they come together and relate, formulating a characterization, and on that basis developing policy, program, and slogans.

We are not simply providing a journalistic account of reality, but interpreting it so we can work out a correct policy. Thus, from a Marxist standpoint, our analysis must take place in context, from the general to the specific, evaluating all objective and subjective factors, starting with the former—so that we act on reality rather than forcing reality to fit preconceived schemas.

The TF-FI uses a non-Marxist analytical method, isolating only one aspect of reality and drawing broader conclusions from it that lead to mistaken policies.

This line of reasoning is shared by both sectarians and opportunists, as Trotsky points out in his debates with the POUM during the Spanish Civil War:

“Marxist thought is concrete, that is, it looks upon all the decisive or important factors in any given question, not only from the point of view of their reciprocal relations, but also from that of their development. It never dissolves the momentary situation within the general perspective, but by means of the general perspective makes possible an analysis of the momentary situation in all its peculiarities. Politics has its point of departure in precisely this sort of concrete analysis. Opportunist thought and sectarian thought have this feature in common: they extract from the complexity of circumstances and forces one or two factors that appear to them to be the most important (and sometimes are, to be sure), isolate them from the complex reality, and attribute to them unlimited and unrestricted powers.” (4)

Using that approach, the TF-FI highlights real but partial facts—such as periods of uneven development in the emerging imperialisms—to deny their imperialist status. For example, Russia might be behind in finance or commerce, yet it boasts significant military might, acts as a regional

enforcer, and pursues annexations, which clearly makes it imperialist. As for China, whose imperial characteristics are arguably more comprehensively developed, the TF-FI focuses on its lag in certain areas relative to the U.S. From these analyses rise mistaken characterizations and very misguided politics that lead to capitulation.

This analytical approach also results in a priori arguments to justify preconceived notions, generating inconsistencies and incoherence—especially in explaining why they are forsaking the struggle for self-determination, which they constantly treat as a secondary issue, effectively canceling it out in practice.

It mirrors the same method of the campists, who subordinate the working class to a supposedly “more progressive” bourgeois camp by generalizing ad absurdum a single fact: that there are indeed differences among various bourgeois sectors.

Trotsky again shows that sectarians and opportunists are two sides of the same coin:

“For the long epoch preceding the world war, reformism made use of the very important but temporary factors of that time, such as the powerful development of capitalism, the rise in the standard of living of the proletariat, and the stability of democracy. Today sectarianism makes use of these most important factors and tendencies: the decline of capitalism, the falling standard of living of the masses, the decomposition of democracy, etc. But like reformism in the preceding epoch, sectarianism transforms historic tendencies into omnipotent and absolute factors. The “ultralefts” conclude their analysis just where it should really begin. They counterpose a ready-made schema to reality. But since the masses live in the sphere of reality, the sectarian schema does not make the slightest impression on the mentality of the workers. By its very essence, sectarianism is doomed to sterility” (5)

The TF-FI and its parties apply the same reasoning in analyzing events in the countries where they operate, implementing sectarian policies that become opportunist when they give up fighting bourgeois leaderships and the union bureaucracy. Here are two examples:

In France, the CCR (the TF-FI French section) broke away from the NPA (New Anticapitalist Party) in the midst of a major political dispute, relinquishing any chance to strengthen the left-wing faction battling the reformist policies of the Mandelist sector, which capitulated to La France Insoumise, among others. (6)

In Argentina, the PTS recently turned its back

on a historic mass event: a unified rally of human rights organizations. They downplayed the significance of the far right under Milei, failed to grasp how the Peronist crisis has deepened, and obstructed the strategy of united action—necessary to intervene and bolster the momentum. Their errors meant not only ceding the initiative (opportunism) but also remaining absent from the space where thousands were mobilizing (sectarianism). As a result, they impeded the FITU from standing out as the driving force behind a unified demonstration. This is the opposite of what the MST/ISL did when we recognized the new stage Milei opened, its links with the rise of the far right worldwide, its regimen changes, Peronism's crisis, and how all that reverberated in the human rights movement. Building on that analysis, we pursued a correct policy of united action (unity and differentiation) that allowed us to align with the majority of organizations in the Encuentro Memoria Verdad y Justicia (broad left coalition of human rights organizations) and achieve that historic day of protest. The PTS and the PO, on the other hand, held a separate rally separated from the main demonstration, limiting themselves to a marginal action. (7)

IN LIGHT OF GLOBAL CHANGES: MORE OF THE SAME?

How will the TF-FI approach the global changes prompted by Trump's moves? Will it continue giving ground to campism, or will it pivot toward an independent policy? Once Trump took office, his relationship with Vladimir Putin went beyond mutual praise to form one of the linchpins of the shift that the "America First" architect intends to bring about in the world. He formally announced a suspension of military aid to Ukraine, and there are ongoing negotiations to partition Ukraine's territory and resources between Russia and the United States, behind the backs of the Ukrainian people. (8)

The first responses from the TF-FI again highlight inconsistencies and contradictions in their analysis.

In an article by Philippe Alcoy (editor of France's *Révolution Permanente*), he remarks: "*Announcements of a rapprochement between Trump and Putin, or even the formation of a new 'alliance,' are simplistic interpretations (...) A great deal of mistrust has grown between the two countries. From a geopolitical perspective, although*

the United States does not consider Ukraine a central aspect of its strategy, the rivalry with Moscow remains significant in various regions worldwide. The ideological similarities between the two presidents are real, but this is far from sufficient to justify a rapprochement of the two states' strategic interests, let alone an alliance." (9)

Claudia Cinatti, of the PTS, writes in *Ideas de Izquierda*: "*The Copernican shift the United States has undergone under Trump regarding the war in Ukraine—from being an ally of Zelensky to negotiating peace with Putin—has opened what can be called a 'strategic juncture,' in which short-term events coincide with the structural aspects of this new stage ushered in by the exhaustion of the liberal order led from Washington, and its heightened neoliberal version after the Cold War, which has prevailed for the last eight decades.*" (10)

This inconsistency in the TF-FI is nothing new. It follows from the analytical flaws addressed above. Most importantly, none of it implies any alteration in their policy on the war in Ukraine. Even though this new backroom deal mainly harms the Ukrainian people, there is not one word about their right to self-determination or about support for the resistance in that semicolonial country, which two imperialist powers—one the invader and the other negotiating a peace of graveyards and annexations—now plan to carve up.

For all these reasons, it is necessary to build a new International with the policies and methods we advocate in the ISL. 🐞

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(3) García, S. (2024, May). *Polemic with the Trotskyist Fraction and the PTS*. Permanent Revolution, no.7.

(4) Trotsky, L. (1937). *Ultralefts in General and Incurable Ultralefts in Particular*.

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The EUROPEAN UNION'S ARMS RACE and the LIES of Imperialist “Europeanism”



BY MARCO FERRANDO

The change in world relations presents European imperialism with a new challenge. If US imperialism opens up to Russian imperialism, breaking the traditional transatlantic axis, Europe must reinvent new ways to satisfy its military needs. This is the meaning of the call for “rearmament” that the President of the EU Commission solemnly utters.

The expression “rearmament” is ridiculous in itself since the European imperialism have never been unarmed. The times of disinvestment in military expenditures after the fall of the Berlin Wall are things of the past. The military budgets of European states have been increasing for

at least a decade. The threshold of 2% of GDP for “defense” spending was determined, for some time, by US imperialism, as a minimum goal for all NATO countries. And all NATO countries, under every government, have moved in this direction. The Russian war in Ukraine, as of 2022, constituted an accelerating factor.

TRUMP'S TURN CREATES NEW TEST GROUNDS FOR EUROPEAN IMPERIALISTS

However, Trump's turn imposes the requirement of a qualitative leap forward. It is not a question of replenishing military arsenals to compensate for the “help” that was given to Zelensky. It is about responding to the announcement of the American withdrawal from

the European front. It is an announcement that is still undetermined in the scale of its consequences, in its strategic implications for the internal relations of NATO, in the perspective of the state of the Atlantic Alliance.

And yet, the new direction is very clear. Donald Trump declared that US imperialism wants to resize its presence in Europe to focus on its strategic confrontation with China. This is why he warms up to Russian imperialism. For the same reason, he seeks to separate Russia from China, offering in return, not only Ukraine, but a global role in the division of the world. Exactly the role that Putin aspires to.

European imperialists had considered the possibility that a new Trump administration would create problems in Europe's relations. But they did not expect such a radical and rapid turn. For a long time, European capitalism has been marginalized from its role in the political and market competition between the old American power and the new Chinese power. But American military coverage was taken for granted. To ensure the continuity of this coverage, European imperialists maintained their discipline to NATO and its American leadership in all substantive measures, sometimes beyond their own specific interests, or were forced to join so-called "humanitarian" wars of invasion (Afghanistan, Iraq), in military budgets, in the substantive political positions on all world stages. As a counterpart to their participation in the second line of the imperialist politics of the West, they gained a geostrategic position in the relationship of forces with the new imperialist powers (China, Russia).

PANIC IN EUROPE'S FOREIGN OFFICES

Now everything seems to be rushing in a dramatic acceleration. This generates a reaction of panic in the European chanceries and their frantic rush towards "rearmament". This is not the European Union deciding to precipitate the "Third World War", as silly analysts who support Putin and/or Trump and their respective propaganda say. It is about European imperialism building a "military deterrence" for the new stage of world militarism.

Imperialist relations are based on relations of strength. And these are not only economic and financial, but also military. The military

strength of European imperialism on a global scale was, until now, guaranteed by NATO.

Only for NATO? No. Each of the EU's imperialist national states has its own specific weight in relation to its military strength, its experience and tradition, its experience at the front. The nuclear endowment of France and Great Britain, for example, serves to measure their status in international politics, within the old continent. And it is no coincidence that each European imperialism, with Italy at the head, are disputing their respective areas of influence (the Balkans, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East) as well as reinforcing their own military technologies. However, belonging to NATO and having American protection was, ultimately, the guarantee of European imperialism. So, what now? If the US withdraws, what will be the fate of the Baltic? Will the announced division of Ukraine between the US and Russia generate a domino effect toward a broader division of Eastern Europe? These are some of the concerns of the upper echelons of the European bourgeoisie and its staffs.

"CARNIVORES AND VEGETARIANS," AMBITIONS AND LIMITS OF IMPERIALIST EUROPEANISM

"In a world of carnivores, we cannot be vegetarians," Mario Draghi said several times. From the imperialist point of view it is a well-founded consideration. If the big powers are racing to divide up the world based on their military strength, there is no future for European imperialism without the reconstruction of their military power. And an armed power, in turn, suggests the unification of Europe.

"The only true response to Trump's turn is the development of the European Union in the direction of a federal state," the thousands of voices of bourgeois Europeanism are saying in unison at this moment. However, there is one unfortunate detail: the federal solution is incompatible with the national nature of the various European imperialisms, due to their diverse roots, traditions, areas of influence, and their own interests. Their own military apparatuses are furiously disputing markets, armed against each other. France is pro-European only if it is a Europe that follows it (and its nuclear policy). Germany does not want to subordinate itself to France and is aiming, ever more openly, at its own military relaunch. Italy is sharpening the darlings of its own war industry (Leonardo Francatieri) often in line with Great Britain. It is competing with Germany for hegemony in the Balkans and wants to capitalize on the crumbling of France in Africa (Piano Mattei).

How can these conflicting interests be configured under one roof?

800 BILLION IN WEAPONS. WHO PAYS AND WHO COLLECTS. THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT NATIONAL INTERESTS.

Von Der Leyen's "rearmament" projects reflect on the divergences of different national interests. Germany opposed Europe taking new debt to finance military expenditures. The (outrageous) 800 billion in weapons mentioned are largely subject to the various national budgets (for the figure of 650 billion in 4 years). It is true that national spending on arms is not linked to the Stability Pact (unlike spending on Health and Education), and can be increased up to 1.5% of GDP. But, *"there is a risk of increasing the differences between the member countries that have room to maneuver and those that are already heavily indebted,"* observes *Confindustria* (5 January), concerned about Italy also falling behind its European competitors on arms, or having to carry more debt on its back, with the risk that entails in the financial market. To compensate, Von Der Leyen guarantees EU governments the possibility of converting "European Social Cohesion Funds" intended for disadvantaged and deferred areas of the continent into military expenditures. It's like saying that the South of Italy will pay for the Meloni/Crosetto government's new spending on weapons.

The truth is that within the capitalist framework "European unification will be either impossible or reactionary". This is how Lenin saw it in 1915, during the Great War. And he was right. The current European scenario is emblematic. On the one hand, the various imperialisms of the EU cannot create a pan-European federal state because they have developed with insurmountable national contradictions, even more so taking into account the rise of the (worst) sovereignist forces among them.

On the other hand, all the Europeanist projects, under the current capitalist bases, entail the development of imperialist militarism, at the expense of the workers, of all the exploited.

THE LIES OF LIBERAL EUROPEANISM. THE SUBORDINATION OF THE REFORMIST LEFT.

The idea of a Europe "autonomous from the US" and therefore "peace power" is recurrent in the "progressive" rhetoric of the reformist left. But this is a reality seen from its own ideological point of view. An capitalist Europe autonomous of the US can only be an armed power. Not less armed, more armed. A "carnivorous" power among "carnivorous" powers. A power that fights against others for the division of the planet.

The multipolar world as a guarantee of peace is a naive illusion or a conscious lie. It is precisely the multiplication of the imperialist poles in struggle for the division of the world that pushes towards war. The "rearmament" of Europe in response

to Trump's withdrawal shows a further strengthening of this international trend. It is meant to secure another seat at the table of the subdivision of the planet.

The "secret projects" of military reconversion of the Italian automotive industry, revealed by the *Corriere della Sera* (1 March), are eloquent in illustrating the current European trend in this area. *"Germany is reconverting in armaments, preparing to spend 200 billion, Italy must adapt so as not to lose its industry"* declares the banking newspaper *Intesa Verbatim*. Producing tanks instead of cars surely responds to the triumph in the stock market of the war sector stocks. But it is not exactly a conversion of "peace". It is the participation in the race towards a historical perspective of war.

Fortunately, these "rearmament" projects have a problem: the distrust, if not open hostility, of a segment of European public opinion. This trend is particularly strong in the working masses, already affected by the reduction of wages and social cuts in the name of "progress", and now being called on to pay out of pocket for the arms race in the name of the "defense of the homeland" be it national or European. Today as always, in the exclusive interest of capitalists and their profits.

FOR A SOCIALIST EUROPE, THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE FOR PEACE

This is why we fight against all imperialist, national, European, world "rearmament". Against the whole of NATO, old or new, against every war economy. Against any increase in military spending, and even for its elimination for the benefit of Health and Education, as a priority. For the nationalization without compensation of the entire war industry under workers' control.

The struggle for peace is the struggle against all imperialism, starting from one's own, or it is not? The problem is not to arm Europe but to disarm the European bourgeoisie. This can only be achieved with a social revolution.

The only possible peaceful Europe is one in which workers rule. A socialist Europe. The only one that can unify Europe on a progressive basis. The only one who can take a side in favor of all oppressed peoples and their rights of resistance, without predatory intent. The only one that can foment the rebellion of the working masses of North America, Russia, China, against their own imperialisms, their wars and their colonial policies. 🌍✊

New government, **NEW GENERAL ATTACK**

BY MARTIN SUCHANEK

The Merz coalition prepares a general attack against workers and the oppressed: rearmament, austerity and racism. While the right grows, the Left Party channels some of the discontent. Revolutinoaries must organize the resistance and raise a socialist solution.



Friedrich Merz

“We want to put Germany back on top.” – This is how Friedrich Merz summarises the coalition agreement between the CDU/CSU, the two conservative parties, and the social democratic SPD. Although the new “grand coalition” still has to be voted in by parliament at the beginning of May, its formation is a done deal.

With Friedrich Merz, a long-standing representative of the neo-liberal, socially conservative and US-oriented wing of the CDU will head the next government. It is not without a certain irony that he will have to lead German imperialism in a period of open rivalry with the USA. At the same time, no one should be under any illusions about the new German government’s determination to take on the challenges of Trumpism in the struggle for the redivision of the world.

In line with EU Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen, the new German government’s answer to “Make America Great Again” is “Make Europe Independent Again”. At home the programme of the Merz government amounts to an all-out attack on the working class and all the oppressed at all levels. Here are just the main points:

1. REARMAMENT AND MILITARISATION

In response to the upheaval in transatlantic relations under Trump, on March 18 the German parliament passed a gigantic rearmament programme. In 2024, the military budget was 71.75 billion euros (2.1% of GDP). Starting this year, it is to rise to 3.5% of GDP or 120–150 billion per year. On top of this, the EU wants to set aside 800 billion for the rearmament of its member states.

In addition, compulsory military service is to be reintroduced, and a separate European nuclear arsenal is to be pushed forward with France. The size of the army is to be massively increased and, albeit within the framework of NATO, the basis for future EU armies is to be laid.

2. INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FOR CAPITAL

The gigantic rearmament programme was supplemented by the CDU/CSU and SPD with a no less massive package for investment in German infrastructure. A special fund of 500 billion euros has been created outside the budget for the next 10 years.



The coalition parties never tire of presenting the investment programme as a boon for all. In reality, of course, it serves the interests of German capital and its international competitiveness – on the one hand as an economic stimulus package worth billions, and on the other as a renewal of the social capital and an increase in productive power in terms of transport, communication and IT infrastructure.

Nor is the pressure to be lifted to cut municipal and social spending, which the ‘debt brake’ – a constitutionally enshrined austerity programme entails. On the contrary: while a trillion is being freed up for war and capital, services for refugees, the unemployed, pensions, education, daycare and health are being further cut.

3. STRENGTHENING THE EU AS AN IMPERIALIST BLOC

In the struggle for the redivision of the world, the EU and Germany have fallen behind the USA and China in recent years, but as a world power they have also fallen behind Russia. Therefore, a further attempt is to be made to make the EU, as an imperialist bloc under German and French leadership, fit for global competition and to overcome its internal contradictions.

4. RACISM, DEPORTATIONS, “REGULATED MIGRATION”

In the coalition agreement, the CDU/CSU and SPD announce massive attacks on migrants and refugees. The right of asylum will be largely abolished, border controls tightened, and benefits for asylum seekers and refugees drastically reduced. In addition, migrants who have German citizenship

are also threatened with having it withdrawn if they oppose German state policy, for example in support of Israel. At the same time, highly skilled workers and cheap labour are to continue to be recruited from abroad, but under constant legal uncertainty, in order to make them even easier to exploit.

5. MASSIVE ATTACKS ON JOBS, WORKING CONDITIONS AND INCOMES TO “SAVE THE COMPETITIVENESS” OF GERMAN CAPITAL

These racist policies are not only intended to undermine the far right, but also to split the working class and thus undermine its ability to fight.

Layoffs, rationalisation and flexibilization of working conditions are on the agenda throughout big industry. In addition, weekly working hours are to be made more flexible.

Secondly, support for the long-term unemployed and poor (the so-called “citizen’s income”) is to be cut, but above all, sanctions against the unemployed are to be tightened and benefits cancelled if they do not comply with every chicanery of the authorities. The retirement age is not to be raised any further, but an “active pension” is to be introduced so that pensioners can continue to be employed as flexible workers at lower wages and tax-free.

Massive cuts and privatisation are looming in the social sector, in education, schools, health care and nursing, which will primarily affect female workers and proletarian women, LGBTIAQ people and the racially oppressed. At the same time, the new coalition is planning a series of tax breaks and subsidies for German capital. Under the label of “de-bureaucratisation”, social and ecological regulations for companies are also to be suspended.

A GENERAL ATTACK

All in all, this represents a general attack on the entire working class, on the oppressed, on ecological and social movements, which will also be supplemented by further restrictions of democratic rights. The criminalisation of Palestine solidarity and of environmental activists is unfortunately only a harbinger of further surveillance measures.

The justification for all of this is the change in the international situation and the geostrategic orientation of the USA under Trump. Now, “democratic” Germany is threatened not only by Russia and China, but also by the USA as a rival and potential enemy. The transatlantic partnership and its institutions are now at stake. And like everyone who fears that they will lose out in the realignment of the world, the German government, its allies and the EU Commission are justifying their programme of political, economic and military strengthening as an act of self-defence against evil. There is hardly a talk show, hardly an editorial, hardly a statement from the ruling centre that does not try to shake us up in this “fateful hour for our democracy”. Of course, one hears nothing about Germany’s economic and geostrategic imperialist interests.

These lies are still only being spread by the bourgeois media and parties. The trade union leaderships and the works councils in the big corporations are also joining the chorus of German defenders of the fatherland. Under their leadership, the trade unions are a mainstay of the new government. They present the investment programme as a great success on their part, they have no fundamental objections to rearmament, though for some left-wing bureaucrats it may be going a bit too far, while others hope for well-paid jobs in the arms industry. They remain silent on racism. Only on social issues and workers’ rights is there discontent, but they would rather solve this through negotiations, as in the collective bargaining rounds of recent years, than through strikes and mobilisations.

THE RIGHT

The leaderships of the trade unions and the SPD, which are closely linked to one another, therefore present the main obstacle to the defensive struggle against the armsrace, the war threat,

anti-immigrant racism and attacks on the working class’s gains. They form the bulwark of “social peace” and demobilisation.

The policies of the grand coalition and the support for them by the trade unions are accelerating the growth of the right, especially the right-wing populist AfD (Alternative for Germany). The AfD received 20.80% of the vote in the elections and is now at 24% in the polls – and rising.

In all of the eastern German states (except Berlin), it became the strongest party. What is particularly dramatic about this is that it was not only able to win over small business owners and the petty bourgeoisie, but it also did particularly well among people in a poor economic situation (39%), blue-collar workers (38%) and the unemployed (34%).

It also became the second strongest party among young voters (18 to 24 year-olds). These results are alarming. Even though the AfD is not a fascist party, but a racist, right-wing populist force, the approximately 10 million votes cast for the party are, in their vast majority, not “stray” protest votes, but a consolidated voter base that votes for the AfD not despite, but because of its racism, which it, similar to the FPÖ in Austria, sells as a reactionary answer to the social question.

THE LEFT PARTY

In contrast to the general right-wing trend in the federal elections, Die Linke was able to achieve success. As recently as mid-2024, it seemed unlikely that, due to the 5% hurdle it would be represented in the next parliament at all after catastrophic defeats in European and a number of state elections. However, a trend reversal was already visible at the end of 2024/beginning of 2025, even though no one at the time would have expected 8.77% in the elections. This development has continued ever since. It is now at 11% in the polls.

The Left did particularly well among first-time voters. Among 18- to 24-year-olds, the party became the strongest force with 24% (+17% compared to 2021), followed by the AfD with 21%, which reflects a strong left-right polarisation among young people. In particular, young women voted for the Left Party at a rate of 37%, while young men are dominated by the AfD.

The success of the Left Party is due to several

factors. Firstly, it has gained a massive number of new members since the split with Sahra Wagenknecht; over 60,000 have joined since the end of 2023. Die Linke now has more than 110,000 members. This has been accompanied by a rejuvenation of the membership.

Millions voted for Die Linke because it is perceived as the only opposition to neoliberal attacks, cuts, militarisation and racism. This also makes the left-reformist programme of the Left Party, which presents the welfare state, social redistribution, disarmament and pacifism as the solution to all problems, attractive because it also corresponds to the prevailing reformist consciousness of these voters.



Elon Musk on videoconference at the AfD electoral rally.

At the same time, the reformist, bourgeois character of these policies is evident day after day. The Left Party focuses one-sidedly on the so-called “social question”, on social reforms. Of course, the fight against rent gouging, against price increases, for social security is very important. But at the same time, it tries to avoid other central questions. For example, it presents itself as anti-racist and anti-fascist, but it does not understand the fight against racism and fascism, for equal rights for all migrants and refugees, as an integral part of the class struggle. Therefore, it focuses on popular-front-type alliances with bourgeois parties and the church, instead of a workers’ united front, and rejects the struggle for open borders, full citizenship rights and the development of self-defence structures against racist and fascist attacks.

Above all, however, Die Linke, which currently also embraces “socialism” and “class politics”, shirks international questions. It is at a loss for words regarding the reactionary Trump-Putin

deal on Ukraine. It rejects it, but its alternative to this appeasement lies in the utopian invocation of UN peacekeeping forces to secure the peace and a nebulous “European security structure”. In principle, it does not question the Bundeswehr and Germany’s “defence capability”. Even though it voted against the rearmament of the Bundeswehr in the lower chamber of the Bundestag in March, its members in the state governments of Bremen and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania voted in favour of it!

The party also remains internally divided on Palestine. For months, it refused to call the genocide a genocide. The pro-Zionist wing of the party wanted to overtake the government in moving to the right, and some of these figures finally turned their backs to the party in 2024. At the same time, the party leadership also expelled the well-known anti-Zionist Ramsis Kilani for damaging the party’s reputation. This actually shows the political inability to react appropriately to the coming attacks from within and without.

All this shows that the success of the Left Party stands on politically weak reformist feet. However, it also proves that it was politically correct to support the Left Party critically in the federal elections. Tens of thousands of new members and over four million voters represent a potential force to resist the attacks of German capital and the next government. Only by successfully mobilising them in the workplaces, in the trade unions and on the streets will it be possible to draw broader sections of the working class along with them, to change the course of the trade unions and to mobilise disaffected members and voters of the Social Democrats, the Greens and non-voters and to actively oppose their parties.

In this situation, the task of revolutionaries is to explain how resistance to the next government can be formed, to advocate a united front against the general attack, in the Left Party, in the radical left, in the trade unions and workplaces.

The fact that the leadership of the Left Party has no plan for such a struggle must not be an obstacle to active intervention by revolutionaries among the party’s members and voters. On the contrary, it opens up a field for joint struggle against the next government and for subjecting reformism to revolutionary criticism. And it opens up the possibility of bringing the discussion of building a revolutionary party and a new revolutionary International to the fore. ✊

André Pestana: “It Is Possible **TO BUILD AN ALTERNATIVE That DEFENDS WORKING PEOPLE**”

INTERVIEW BY FLOR SALGUEIRO

We interviewed André Pestana, candidate for the 2026 Presidential Elections in Portugal. For his candidacy to be officially recognized, he must first overcome significant bureaucratic hurdles. His entry would mark a milestone, as he is not a traditional politician, but an education worker—a professor and PhD in Biology—who has led key social movements. Among them: the strike against asbestos in schools and the historic educational mobilization of 2023, led by the Union of All Education Professionals (S.TO.P.), of which he is president.



What is your view on the current political crisis and the upcoming early elections on May 18?

This crisis essentially stems from what we say in Portugal: *“when gossipers get angry, it’s because the truth is coming out.”* In early February 2025, Luís Montenegro’s government submitted a revised version of the Recovery and Resilience Plan (PRR) to Brussels, significantly altering which Portuguese economic groups would benefit from the vast sums of EU funding. This triggered discontent among business sectors aligned with the previous PS (Socialist Party) government. Controlling part of media, they began pressuring the government by bringing up “suspicious” cases—many from months or even years ago—which

involved Montenegro and other right-wing ministers. Since the government lacked parliamentary majority, those cases resulted in a crisis and the government decided to “flee” by presenting a confidence motion that, as expected, would not be approved by the other parties and would mean the fall of the government and the calling of early elections.

How did your presidential candidacy come about?

I decided to run for the Presidency of the Republic because the new wave of workers’ struggles, their democracy and their fighting spirit lacks political representation. On the 50th anniversary of the April 25 Revolution, I was invited by 50 social activists to launch this campaign. These activists, many of whom are frontline worker representatives, come from diverse sectors—education, healthcare, transport, banking, dock work, call centers, and more.¹

What motivated you to take the leap into politics?

Everything we do in society—even what we don't do—is political. People often say, "I'm not into politics," but like it or not, politics shapes our daily lives: our wallets, our jobs, our schools, our hospitals, and the quality of the environment we live in. Defending public education and healthcare, an ecologically sustainable planet, the right to strike and protest, and fighting against poverty wages, precariousness, racism, sexism, LGBTQ+phobia, and the obscene inequality between the extremely-rich few—less than half a dozen—and the billions living in poverty, that's all politics. And when we remain passive in the face of injustice, we are still making a political choice. As Desmond Tutu, Peace Nobel Prize, once said, *"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."*

In a world marked by growing social inequality between those rich and millions who live in poverty, environmental devastation, rise in public services, and the rise of the far right, I cannot remain indifferent. I want to contribute to meaningful change—one that defends the majority.

What are your key proposals?

Although the candidacy is formally individual, the platform is being shaped collectively with social fighters—most of them with no formal political experience in any party. This shows the broad appeal of this campaign. Some proposals include defending the dignity of pensioners, implying a debate over setting pensions between a minimum of €1,000 and a maximum of €5,000. We are also challenging the privileges of political elites: a deputy's salary, for example, should match that of a high school teacher.

We categorically oppose those pushing us toward militarization or war. Not one more euro for NATO conflicts or the arms industry. Our struggle must be waged against poverty wages and pensions, against precariousness, inequality, corruption, and the destruction of public services and the environment.

The far right is on the rise. What would you say to those looking for an alternative but unsure where to turn?

The far right is growing because centrist governments—often backed, implicitly or explicitly, by the "left"—have failed to solve the real problems faced by working people: precarious jobs, low wages, lack of housing, and the decline of public services. And they have failed because they have governed in favor of the rich. The result is a massive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few families, while more and more people are forced into hardship or emigration.

In Portugal, the explicit support of the BE (Left Bloc) and the PCP (Portuguese Communist Party) for PS-led governments between 2015 and 2021 enabled the rise of the far right, being able to capitalize on the protest vote which led them to get one seat for the first time in 2019 to twelve in 2022. But let's be clear: the far right is backed by major economic powers,

both financially and through media platforms. It represents a faction of the ruling class that seeks to intensify inequality, exploitation, and repression.

The only way forward on behalf of the majority of humanity is for working people and youth to organize—democratically and independently—in workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods, to shape a collective future rooted in social and ecological justice.

What are the official requirements and key steps for the candidacy to be recognized?

To get on the ballot, we must overcome a major bureaucratic barrier: collecting over **7,500 validated signatures** by the end of November. Then, we must attend dozens of *Juntas de Freguesia*²—the executive boards of Portugal's smallest administrative divisions—which verify that each signatory is a citizen, resides in that locality, and is over 18 and eligible to vote—all across the country. If we succeed, it will be a significant breakthrough—an alternative to both establishment politicians and the far right.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

To those who believe it's utopian to think that workers' organization and mobilization can present a real alternative to traditional politics and the far right, I want to share a recent and personal experience. In 2022–2023, many thought it was impossible for the smallest education union—S. TO.P.—to secure victories against a PS absolute majority government while facing slander and attacks not only from the government but also from established unions led by the PCP, BE, and PSD.

What made this success possible? The fact that major decisions—including 100,000-strong demonstrations—were made not by me or the S. TO.P. leadership, but by democratically organized strike committees across hundreds of schools, regardless of union or party affiliation. This is proof that worker mobilization is not just necessary—it is entirely possible. And it is the path to real, transformative change. 🌱

1. *50 anos após o 25 de Abril, 50 ativistas sociais desafiaram André Pestana a candidatar-se à Presidência da República.* (2024, December 27). André Pestana

2. : The Juntas are executive bodies of Portugal's smallest administrative divisions in charge of confirming that each signatory is a citizen of the country, lives in the city, and is an eligible elector.



The PALESTINIAN HOLOCAUST: ETHNIC CLEANSING Driven by Trump and Netanyahu

BY VERÓNICA O'KELLY

"I did all this because I believe in the Palestinian cause. I believe this land is ours, and it has been the highest honor of my life to die defending it and serving its people. I ask you now: do not stop speaking about Gaza. Do not let the world look away. Keep fighting, keep telling our stories—until Palestine is free."

— For the last time, Hossam Shabat, from northern Gaza.¹

The colonial and racist fury of Zionism has surpassed everything conceivable, and what seemed to be a historical event that had passed has turned into a new Holocaust, this time perpetrated by Zionism against the Palestinian people. Trump's second term as President of the United States marks a new moment in the Nakba (catastrophe) that began in 1948 by strengthening the unconditional support of the U.S. for the genocidal State of Israel—particularly in absolute convergence with the ethnic cleansing policy of Netanyahu and the Zionist extreme right.

THE ATTEMPT OF A CEASEFIRE AND UNRESTRAINED ZIONISM

Contrary to the expectations of the architects of the massacre, barbarism did not go unnoticed.

International mobilizations in solidarity with the Palestinian people multiplied and exerted pressure around the world. Occupied universities, strikes, boycotts, and massive street protests broke through the Zionist propaganda siege and helped expose, like never before, the true character of the State of Israel: racist, colonial,



and based on an apartheid regime.

As we wrote in an International Socialist League (ISL) statement dated January 29:

“The imperialists are also aware of the erosion that Zionism has suffered in the last 15 months. The State of Israel has been unmasked and discredited among huge sections of the world’s population like we have not seen in the 76 years of its occupation. This weakens it in its role of gendarme for which it was created and was another factor in forcing Netanyahu to end the genocidal madness.”

The pressure from international mobilization was key in forcing a temporary, limited, and fragile ceasefire. Trump worked for this outcome, which intends to destroy the Palestinian people through less evident means: ethnic cleansing without Netanyahu’s bombs over Gaza. However, it was unsuccessful, and the Israeli government, in the hands of the Likud’s² extreme right, violated the ceasefire after only a few days, resuming its genocidal offensive with even more violence, seeking to eliminate all traces of Palestinian resistance and to complete the project of expulsion and

been displaced in the past two weeks, and two-thirds of the territory has been closed as banned zones. Hunger is spreading, there is less access to drinking water, and fleas infest the makeshift displacement camp, while Gaza’s health system has completely collapsed.

Trump said that “the U.S. will take over the Gaza Strip,” and turn it into real estate, “the Riviera of the Middle East, a new mecca for jobs and tourism.” He went as far as releasing an A.I. generated video showing what this “mecca” would look like—a heinous demonstration of colonialism and shameless flaunting of imperialist racism. Netanyahu, for his part, “offers” the Palestinian people the option to leave Gaza and abandon their land as the only possibility of avoiding death, and claims that Israel already controls more than 50% of the Gaza Strip’s territory.

The ethnic cleansing aimed at achieving the total occupation of Gaza is underway, as openly expressed by Zionist and imperialist leaders. The colonial strategy targets the entire Palestinian people. In the West Bank, apartheid, illegal imprisonment, and killings are daily occurrences and have increased since October 2023, alongside increasingly violent attacks by settlers emboldened by the ongoing genocide. Zionism is not only present in Palestine; its colonial objective is expansion, and therefore it will not cease its attacks on Lebanon, Syria, and the entire Middle East.

However, in this era of capitalist crisis and global disorder, no task is simple for imperialism. There are many inter-imperialist disputes, a growing battle for hegemony, and increasing social polarization. The Palestinian people in Gaza resist heroically and, despite being massacred by one of the world’s most powerful armies, they refuse to accept the “final solution” of exile. Their struggle and resistance set an example seen by the entire world, strengthening solidarity and support for Palestine and its fight for liberation from Zionist colonial oppression and apartheid.

JOURNALISTS AND EMERGENCY TEAMS AS MILITARY TARGETS

In order to achieve the objective of ethnic cleansing, the Zionist army is committed to eliminating any tool that could denounce the barbarism of the genocide and/or assist the



annihilation of an entire people, thus opening a new phase of the genocide: *ethnic cleansing*.

TRUMP AND NETANYAHU’S “FINAL SOLUTION”

The State of Israel and U.S. imperialism, now under Donald Trump’s command, have entered what they cynically call the “final solution” in Gaza. This new phase represents a change compared to their previous actions. Trump openly expresses their objective of not just eliminating the resistance, but also “cleansing” the Gaza Strip of Palestinians to carry out capitalist business ventures.

This phase is the brutal continuation of a genocide that has already left tens of thousands dead over the past year and a half, the majority of them women and children. The ground invasion, relentless bombings, total siege, and systematic destruction of hospitals, schools, and homes form a pattern that can only be described as a *planned holocaust*.

And now, the Gaza Strip is facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. According to the UN, more than 280,000 people have

The Limits of Bourgeois Islamic Fundamentalism

Ghassan Kanafani, historic Palestinian Marxist and founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, already warned in his book *“The Revolt of 1936-1939 in Palestine”* that the main threats to the Palestinian national movement comprise three enemies:

“the local, reactionary leadership; the regimes of the Arab states surrounding Palestine; and the Zionist imperialist enemy.”

Hamas’ trust in Iranian support to confront Israel has proven to be utopian. Beyond speeches and symbolic gestures, Iran has not offered substantial military aid nor has it mobilized its real power to stop the ongoing genocide. In practice, its role has been limited to sustaining the status quo and negotiating with imperialism without engaging in direct military confrontation. The Houthis of Yemen have done much more than Iran, sinking major ships, including using drones and missiles, forcing imperialism to use longer and more costly alternative routes. The so-called “Axis of Resistance,” under Iran’s command, has proven to be more a propaganda construction than an effective military alternative.

The Palestinian Authority acts as an open collaborator with the Zionist regime, maintaining order in coordination with Israel’s security services and betraying every form of Palestinian resistance. This sector is the main representative of the reactionary utopia of the Binational State or the failed and treacherous policy of the Two-State Solution, although it is not the only one.

Both Hamas—despite its heroism—Hezbollah, and the Iranian regime share a reactionary political project: the establishment of a capitalist and Islamic fundamentalist Palestinian state, similar to the Iranian theocratic model. It is a deeply authoritarian strategy that reproduces bourgeois power dynamics under religious cover. We are separated by irreconcilable differences from this political perspective. Zionism cannot be defeated, nor can a just peace be achieved in the region under the banner of fundamentalism or bourgeois nationalism.

Israeli Zionism, for its part, has the explicit or implicit complicity of powers that, despite their anti-Western rhetoric, maintain economic and diplomatic relations that support the genocide. Russia and China, emerging imperialisms, have not gone beyond ambiguous diplomatic statements while continuing their business dealings with Netanyahu. The same can be said of the majority of Arab governments, which, beyond symbolic gestures, have normalized relations with Israel or remained on the sidelines, prioritizing the stability of their own regimes over solidarity with Palestine.

“We Want to Live”: A Cry Heard in Gaza

The ruins of Gaza are not only marked by the craters of Zionist bombs but also by the desperate cry of a population that demands: *“We want to live.”* After a year and a half of brutal massacre, with more than 50,000 dead—mostly women and children—a new wave of protests has shaken the Strip. It is not only a rebellion against occupation and genocide but also a growing criticism of Hamas.

The rage accumulated over decades of blockade, hunger, death, and despair has exploded spontaneously, without the leadership of the Palestinian Authority or any traditional political force. The demonstrations emerge from below, from the depths of a society that refuses to surrender. The message is clear: Palestinians in Gaza hold Israel responsible for the devastation but also demand that Hamas act to stop the massacre.

The genocide in Gaza has left Hamas gravely weakened. The human and material cost for the Palestinian people has been brutal, but Hamas’ strategy—based on a supposed regional alliance of resistance led by Iran—has also been put to the test and failed. This leadership made the decision to attack Israel on October 8, 2023, but failed to prepare for the day after, allowing imperialism and Zionism to make significant advances.

wounded and the sick. Even UN Secretary-General, António Guterres directly accused Israel of having turned the Gaza Strip into an extermination camp.

Since October 7, 2023, at least 232 journalists and media workers have been killed in the Gaza Strip, according to data from Al Jazeera, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), and the Palestinian Journalists’ Union. This figure far surpasses the killings of journalists during any comparable period or conflict.

The attempts to silence and conceal the bar-

barism in Gaza and the apartheid in the West Bank are constant and increasing. Enjoying total impunity, a group of Israeli settlers attacked the Palestinian filmmaker who won this year’s best documentary Oscar for *No Other Land*. He was then detained and tortured by the Israeli army.

Recently, it was revealed that an Israeli attack massacred 15 emergency team workers, who were then buried in a mass grave. This is part of a generalized offensive against Gaza’s healthcare infrastructure: more than 1,400 health professionals have been killed, 34 hospitals and 240 health centers and facilities have been destroyed, and 142 ambulances have been targeted in attacks. It is estimated that the total damage to the health sec-

tor exceeds 3 billion dollars, leaving it completely incapable of responding to the urgent needs of a besieged and bombarded population.

THE ATTEMPT TO SILENCE GROWING INTERNATIONALIST ANTI-ZIONIST ACTIVISM

Zionism has systematically sought to distort and manipulate the concepts of antisemitism and anti-Zionism for political purposes. Equating legitimate criticism of the State of Israel and its colonial, racist, and apartheid regime to anti-Jewish hatred is not only a historical falsification but also a perverse strategy to delegitimize the Palestinian people's struggle and silence international solidarity. This confusion imposed by Zionist propaganda protects Israel's crimes and criminalizes those who defend the heroic Palestinian people. Exposing this ideological operation is an urgent task for all who refuse to tolerate terror hiding behind a religious identity.



In the United States, students like Mahmoud Khalil have been detained and deported for expressing their support for Palestinian resistance. Universities like Columbia and Harvard have repressed student camps, while the Zionists intimidate with blacklists and job threats. In Argentina, Alejandro Bodart, member of the national leadership of the MST-FITU³ and the ISL, is subject of a judicial persecution promoted by Zionist sectors after expressing his solidarity with Palestine. And many more cases could be mentioned.

These attacks seek to silence the growing internationalist wave that denounces apartheid and genocide. But the effect is the opposite: more voices are joining, more sectors are mobilizing. Solidarity with the Palestinian people is not a crime; it is a moral obligation in the face of horror.

REDOUBLING INTERNATIONALIST MOBILIZATION AND FIGHTING FOR A SOCIALIST PALESTINE

As stated by the General Union of Students of Lebanon, the Free Palestine Front, and the ISL, on Palestinian Land Day:

"To the free people of our nation, on Land Day, and as the Zionist

killing machine continues to besiege Gaza, we affirm that if we do not stand up for the Palestinian resistance and support it in all its forms (humanitarian, political, diplomatic, and military), then we too will be destined for destruction."

It is urgent to strengthen global mobilization against the Palestinian holocaust, break off agreements with the State of Israel, demand international sanctions, and denounce the complicity of imperialism, especially that of the United States, which continues to arm and finance the genocidal state.

We must fight for a Palestinian state and the end of Israel, the imperialist colonial enclave implanted in the region. Likewise, we must fight against the illusion promoted by some sectors, including Trotskyist sectors, that it is possible to reconcile the interests of the Arab-Palestinian and Israeli working classes. There are opposed material interests between them. The return of millions of displaced Palestinians, currently living in refugee camps or in the diaspora, would undoubtedly face the resistance of the settlers who occupy their homes and lands. A binational state is simply a fantasy that benefits the policy of Zionism and imperialism in Palestine and the region.

The mobilization in solidarity with the Palestinian people is key and must be redoubled. However, the fundamental solution will only come with a new Arab Spring that overthrows all the complicit governments and regimes and continues with a struggle against the capitalist system, uniting the peoples of the entire region around a common program that offers a real way out for the Arab masses: a socialist revolution fighting for a single, secular, democratic, and socialist Palestine, integrated into a voluntary federation of socialist republics of the Middle East.

For all these reasons, it is essential to build an independent leadership separate from the Arab bourgeoisie that does not capitulate to imperialism. The strategic task is to regroup the revolutionaries of the entire region, forge ties that allow progress in building a consciously anti-capitalist and revolutionary organization, with the goal of achieving revolution in the Middle East and connecting it with the international socialist revolution. 🌟

1. Hossam Shabat was a young Palestinian journalist murdered in Northern Gaza on May 26, 2025.

2. Likud is a right-wing Zionist political party in Israel founded in 1973, currently led by Benjamin Netanyahu.

3. Socialist Workers Movement - Workers Left Front Unity



Trump and the **NEW DIVISION** of **AFRICA**

Donald Trump's re-election and return to the White House on January 20, 2025, mark a new chapter in the contradictions of global capitalism.

While mainstream analysts concentrate on trade, security, and environmental regulations, a Marxist understanding requires an assessment of imperialism, class conflict, and the evolving dynamics of global capital, particularly in regard to Africa.

The question is not just how Trump's administration will deal with Africa, but also how African workers, farmers, and revolutionary organizations will manoeuvre and resist the deepening of imperialist oppression.

Trump's first term exemplified a foreign policy dominated by raw capitalist interests, favouring unilateral accords, corporate profiteering, and developing tensions within the global economic system. Under the guise of "America First," his administration attempted to enforce one-sided trade agreements that largely favoured US companies while exposing weaker economies to more merciless extraction of surplus value. This trend is likely to continue, if not intensify, during his second term, as his administration seeks to aggressively counter China's growing influence in Africa while adhering

BY PERMANENT REVOLUTIONARY CONGRESS - ISL
KENYA

to the long-standing US strategy of securing strategic resources, cheap labour, and new markets for capital expansion.

The recent USAID funding cuts to Africa—already being implemented under the Trump administration—have provoked alarm among liberal commentators and ruling class politicians. However, from a revolutionary Marxist standpoint, these cuts can paradoxically be seen as a positive development for the African working class. For too long, so-called development aid has served as a tool of imperialist control, allowing the United States to dictate economic priorities, influence policy, and entrench neoliberal reforms in exchange for crumbs. Much of this funding rarely reached the masses. Instead, it enriched a narrow elite of NGOs, bureaucrats, and comprador politicians who acted as intermediaries for foreign interests.

The withdrawal of USAID and similar foreign funding mechanisms can help expose the illusion of benevolent imperialism and force governments to confront the contradictions of their dependency. African states will increasingly need to finance their own social programs and development initiatives, creating potential openings for working-class

movements to demand budgets that reflect public needs rather than elite or imperialist interests. As with most NGO aid, these funds were never about African liberation—they were about stabilizing the existing capitalist order.

This moment demands a strategic pivot: away from reliance on foreign “assistance” and toward building popular power, self-reliance, and socialist planning. Rather than lamenting the loss of crumbs from the imperialist table, the masses must organize to take control of the economy.



Africa, which has long been exposed to neocolonial relations, now finds itself at the centre of inter-imperialist struggle. Over the last two decades, China, Russia, and the European Union have all increased their economic and political footprint on the continent. While the Trump administration may continue its battle with China in Africa, it is unlikely to prioritize large-scale infrastructure or economic projects. Instead, the United States will most likely concentrate on plundering crucial resources, extending military power under the pretense of counterterrorism, and strengthening reliance through debt traps and exploitative trade deals.

Trump's government has traditionally rejected multilateral accords, preferring forceful bilateral agreements that benefit US corporate hegemony. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which allows duty-free access to U.S. markets for some African commodities, may be renegotiated, potentially tightening rules to favour American corporations while reducing chances for African manufacturers. This will disproportionately hurt small-scale African enterprises, cementing Africa's status as a raw materials provider rather than an industrial powerhouse.

Regarding security, Trump's first term exhibited a greater focus on military solutions rather than developmental measures. The deployment of drone

attacks and special operations in places like Somalia did nothing to address the core causes of instability, which are economic hardship and a lack of political self-determination. A second Trump term might result in increased militarism under the pretence of battling terrorism, expanding state repression, and strengthening the dominance of comprador bourgeois governments that serve imperialist interests while suppressing working-class movements as already witnessed in Somalia's drone attack last month.

A Marxist interpretation of African agency requires looking at it through the perspective of class struggle rather than just state actors. The continent's ruling elites, whether working with Western or Eastern imperialist powers, have frequently supported Africa's continuing subjection to global capitalism.

The uprisings and coups that expelled various French backed heads of state in the Sahel in the past two years were mainly propelled by a mass rejection of French imperialism. Their victory went a long way in advancing anti-imperialist consciousness and the self-confidence of the masses. However, the new leaders who have reached power are mostly allies of Russian imperialism, and the idea that Russia's meddling in Africa will be more benevolent than Europe's is widespread. This is a mistake that will lead to sour disappointment, as Russia seeks to plunder African resources the same as Europe, China and the US do. This could become clearer soon, as Trump and Putin's agreements will likely lead to Russia advancing its interests with more confidence. Perhaps the clearest example of the current inter-imperialist plundering of Africa is the DRC, where Europe, the US, Russia and China are all involved in the ongoing genocidal civil war to see who controls the Congo's cobalt and other key minerals.

The ongoing crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) highlights the brutal consequences of imperialist exploitation in Africa. The fall of Goma to the M23 rebels, backed by Rwanda and indirectly supported by Western imperialist interests, underscores the deep-rooted contradictions of capitalism on the continent. The mineral wealth of the DRC, particularly gold and coltan, has long been a key target of multinational corporations and their political allies. Rwanda, despite having minimal coltan deposits of its own, has become one of the world's top exporters—evidence of the systematic looting of the Congo's resources.

Trump's return to power will only intensify this

situation. His first administration demonstrated an aggressive approach to securing Africa's strategic resources, particularly in regions rich in rare earth minerals. With the growing competition between the United States and China, the DRC will remain a battleground for imperialist forces. The US, despite voicing concern over Rwanda's involvement in the conflict, continues to indirectly support Kagame's regime through military and economic partnerships. This contradiction exposes the hypocrisy of Western powers, which claim to champion peace while ensuring that Africa remains a source of cheap labor and raw materials.

The humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in eastern Congo—mass displacement, widespread rape, and collapsing infrastructure—is not simply a regional issue but a direct result of global capitalism. The Congolese ruling class, including figures like President Félix Tshisekedi, lacks the means or the will to challenge the imperialist powers. Instead, they rely on military mobilization and nationalist rhetoric to maintain control, even as the country descends further into war. The call for youth mobilization into the armed forces is reminiscent of past imperialist wars, where the working class and poor are sacrificed to defend the interests of the elite.

The situation in the DRC, much like the broader trends of US imperialism in Africa, highlights the urgent need for revolutionary change. Only by overthrowing the capitalist system—both in Africa and globally—can the cycle of war, plunder, and oppression be broken. The fight against imperialism must be tied to the struggle for socialism, uniting workers and peasants across borders to reclaim Africa's wealth from the exploiters.

Trump's re-election should serve as a wake-up call to the African proletariat and peasants to intensify their fight against both foreign and indigenous exploiters. Workers and peasants, rather than being passive receivers of global power manoeuvres, must advocate for self-sufficiency, economic sovereignty, and socialist alternatives to capitalism.

The intensified onslaught on African self-determination under Trump's leadership may, ironically, provide a chance for greater continental solidarity. The acceleration of capitalism contradictions—worsening inequality, diminishing social services, and increased labour exploitation—may prompt grassroots movements, trade unions, and socialist groups to advocate for policies that prioritize people above profit. African countries must move beyond rhetorical Pan-Africanism to actively pursue

economic integration, collective bargaining against colonial powers, and policies that promote industrialization and land reform.

In cultural and economic terms, Africa's interaction with the United States has frequently been mediated by the diaspora. Remittances, cultural exchange, and entrepreneurship have all played important roles in connecting African economies with US-based migrants. However, given Trump's history of racist immigration policies and xenophobic statements, a second term might result in tougher restrictions, interrupting economic flows and further isolating African populations in the United States from their homelands. This underscores the fragility of economic reliance on the imperial core, as well as the necessity for Africa to build self-sustaining economic models that are not dependent on diaspora remittances.



The African working class must prepare not just for another cycle of neocolonial exploitation, but also for increased resistance, organization, and fight for a better future that puts human development over profits. In this period of uncertainty, one thing is clear: Africa's liberation will not come from the boardrooms of Washington, Moscow, Beijing, or Brussels, but from the collective action of its workers and oppressed people. Only through those struggles will class consciousness and working-class unity be built across Africa.

The biggest tasks revolutionary movements and socialist organizations have are to intervene in the struggles to come, highlighting the need for mass organization independent of all imperialist powers and local capitalists, and to build the revolutionary parties and international that can lead those struggles to socialist revolution. 🌱

AUSTRALIA UNDER TRUMP'S SHADOW



Donald Trump and Peter Dutton

BY JORDAN HUMPHREYS

The shock of Trump's presidency is reverberating around the world and Australia has not been unaffected. The conservative right, previously enthused with his victory now suffers the consequences of that association. Against the rise of militarism and the far right, revolutionaries have the task of building an alternative.

Trump's shadow looms large over the 3 May Federal election. At first Trump's victory seemed to give an extra boost to Peter Dutton, leader of the Liberal-National coalition, the main conservative parties in Australian politics. The Liberals already had momentum due to the haplessness of the ruling Labor government in the face of a steep rise in the cost of living. The right-wing victory against a referendum on Indigenous issues in 2023 also hurt Labor and gave new confidence to the conservative right. So when Trump was elected, Dutton and his party thought it would help their cause. The polls were shifting in their favour and it seemed like victory over Labor was within reach.

In January, Dutton announced that he was

appointing Jacinta Price, a far-right Indigenous politician who wears "Make Australia Great Again" hats, as shadow minister for government efficiency. In a clear nod to Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency, she was tasked with finding big cuts to government spending. Similarly, Dutton also revealed that if elected he would cut 41,000 public service jobs, investigate DEI hiring and end working-from-home arrangements for government employees. Then when Trump announced his genocidal plan to take control of Gaza, Dutton told a radio interviewer that it was a sign he is a "big thinker."

By the time Dutton announced these policies and thought bubbles the mood had soured



on Trump in Australia. By March an Australia Institute poll found that three in 10 Australians (31%) believed that Donald Trump is the greatest threat to world peace, more than Putin (27%) or Xi Jinping (27%). When Trump was first elected a Resolve survey found only 40 percent thought this was bad for Australia, by April it had risen to 68%. Following Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs, hostility to Trump has hardened and unites the majority of the population from across the political spectrum and different classes. Now even 58 percent of Liberal voters say Trump is bad for Australia.

ANY SIGN OF SUPPORT FOR TRUMP IS NOW TOXIC FOR THE FEDERAL ELECTION.

This has thrown the Liberal party onto the backfoot and derailed their campaign. They have tried to distance themselves from Trump, but many people now associate conservative politics in general with Trump's administration. They have also tried to assert that they will be the best placed to make a deal with Trump, but this hasn't convinced people either. The Resolve survey also found that 35 per cent of undecided voters are less likely to vote for Dutton because of Trump, and more people trust Albanese to promote Australia's "national interest" than Dutton. Since the tariffs the polls have shifted in Labor's favour, although it is still unclear if they can win an outright majority or will be forced into minority government.

Trump is not the only factor in the federal election. Widespread scepticism that the Liberals don't have any plan to turn around the cost of living crisis despite Labor's failures is a major fac-

tor hurting Dutton. Trump's impact on Australia though seems to have made it very unlikely that the Liberals can win the election on May 3.

HOWEVER, TRUMP'S IMPACT ON AUSTRALIAN POLITICS GOES WELL BEYOND THE FEDERAL ELECTION.

His willingness to launch economic attacks on friends and foes alike and seeming indifference to long-standing military alliances has raised serious questions. After all, the American government has been the main ally of the Australian ruling class since they turned away from Britain during the Second World War. Since then Australian business leaders, politicians, military strategists and "intelligence" officers have built strong relationships with the US State Department. The Australian ruling class see the American state as vital to stopping any challenge to the Australian capitalist class's imperial and economic interests in Asia. With the rise of China, this has become an even more important issue.

This is why both Albanese and Dutton have sought to shore up the military ties between America and Australia despite Trump's outbursts and actions. At the second election debate they both said that, while they oppose the tariffs, they had no reason not to trust Donald Trump. Albanese also said that the AUK-US deal, in which America will give Australia nuclear submarines in return for \$368 billion, was still going ahead despite growing scepticism amongst the media and a lack of clarity from the White House. Ever the loyal servants to the

Australian ruling class, both Liberals and Labor remain committed to the US alliance no matter Trump's behaviour.

Trump's antics though have created more space for concern over the US alliance to emerge.

UNFORTUNATELY, THOUGH THE FIGURES FILLING UP THIS SPACE ARE NOT LEFT-WING FORCES.

Malcolm Turnbull, the former Liberal Prime Minister, has criticised the AUKUS deal as being "born out of deceit." In April he organised a "Sovereignty and Security" forum with scores of defence experts to discuss reassessing the AUK-US alliance in the wake of Trump's election. He is joined by longer-term opponents of AUKUS and critics of the US alliance such as Paul Keating, another former Prime Minister although from the Labor party. They are supported by a layer of academics, media commentators and contrarian military strategists.

The problem though is that this criticism of AUKUS is hardly anti-militarist. Many of those critical of the AUKUS want the Australian government to increase military spending so it isn't dependent on the US. Clive Hamilton, a former Greens candidate and social progressive, wrote an opinion for the *Age* newspaper arguing that Trump's madness shows that Australia needs to develop its own nuclear weapon system. This is what they mean by an "independent foreign policy."

And any move in this direction will also mean finding government savings elsewhere. Richard Dennis, a social democratic economist, challenged those at the "Sovereignty and Security" forum to explain how they were going to increase military spending without cuts to education, health and welfare payments.

This is also the context in which the Greens, a progressive middle-class party who have taken a stand in support of Palestine, have unveiled their own defence policy. While it calls for an end to AUKUS, and redirecting some military funding to social services, it also calls for \$4 billion to be used for developing Australian missiles and drones. The Green's defence policy has been cautiously welcomed by the mainstream media as a sign of a maturing of the party. Sucking up to the establishment is indeed the motivation of the Greens here.

This is linked to their desire to form a coalition government with the Labor party after the Federal election.

All of this means that socialists in Australia have to be clear that it is not enough to demand an end to AUKUS, think Trump is crazy or talk about a vague "independent foreign policy." We need to oppose any turn to increased military spending and reject the Australian government's contribution to the global drive towards war.

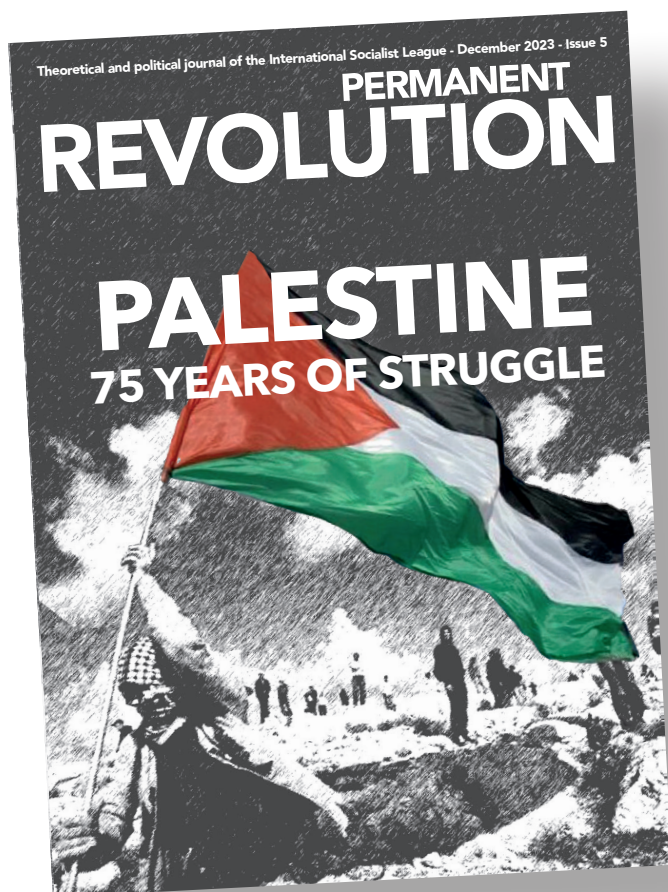
THE FUTURE OF THE AUSTRALIA-US ALLIANCE THOUGH IS NOT THE ONLY DEEPER QUESTION BEING RAISED BY TRUMP'S GOVERNMENT.

For many years now political developments in the US have had a greater impact on Australia than events in other countries. Most recently the Black Lives Matter rebellion of 2020 led to tens of thousands taking the streets in Australia, despite attempts by state governments to restrict the demonstrations here.

Trump's attacks are leading to an accumulation of grievances in the US. The instability he is causing in bourgeois politics is opening up the space for a new wave of resistance. The anti-Trump "Hands Off" rallies are the first important expression of this shift against Trump. If such resistance increases it will undoubtedly be met with sympathy from many workers and students in Australia, and shape the politics of left-wing engaged people. It is in this context that Socialist Alternative has initiated a national day of protest on Saturday May 24 to demand that the Australian government cut ties with Trump's America.

This is the hope for the future. As Trump intensifies the chaos and barbarism of the global capitalist order he also creates more and more opponents, not just to himself, but to the system that has allowed him to rise to the top of the world order.

And while the Liberals are floundering and the far right is marginalised in Australian politics, there can be no guarantee of this in the future. And so the global fight against the far right is also important in ensuring such politics don't expand in Australia in the years to come. In this context continuing to build a revolutionary alternative to the Labor government is more vital than ever. ✊



la montaña
EDICIONES SOCIALISTAS



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A monochromatic, purple-tinted photograph of Leon Trotsky. He is an older man with white hair, a beard, and glasses, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. He is looking down and to his right, holding a rolled-up document or book under his left arm. The background is a blurred field of tall grass or reeds.

LEON TROTSKY
LEV DAVIDOVICH BRONSTEIN
85 years since his assassination