Chomsky: Bolsonaro Is Spreading Trump-Like Fear Of "Election Fraud" In Brazil

Noam Chomsky

Since 2019, Brazil finds itself in the midst of one of its most difficult periods since the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, thanks to the inhumane policies of the Jair Bolsonaro regime which parallel those of Donald Trump's administration. President Bolsonaro is an apologist for the brutal military dictatorship that ruled Brazil from 1964 to 1985, and there is even the possibility that he may attempt to resort to the military guys who he thinks might back him up in the face of growing opposition to his handling of the pandemic.

Noam Chomsky has followed closely Brazilian and Latin American politics for many decades, and even visited Brazil's former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in prison in 2018. In this interview, he discusses the factors that brought Bolsonaro to power, dissects his policies and compares them to the Trump regime, and assesses what the future may hold for the troubled nation.

C.J. Polychroniou: Jair Bolsonaro — an apologist for torture and dictatorship and part of the global trend towards authoritarianism that brought us Donald Trump — was sworn in as president of Brazil on January 1, 2019. Since that day, his administration has been pushing an agenda with disastrous consequences for democracy and the environment. I want to start by asking you of the conditions in Brazil that brought Bolsonaro to power, a development which coincided with the end of the "pink tide" that had swept across Latin America in the early 2000s.

Noam Chomsky: A lot is uncertain and documentation is slim, but the way it looks to me is basically like this.

With the fall of commodity prices a few years after Lula da Silva left office in 2010, the Brazilian right wing — with U.S. encouragement, if not direct support — recognized an opportunity to return the country to their hands and to reverse the welfare and inclusiveness programs they despised. They proceeded to carry out a systematic "soft coup." One step was impeaching Lula's successor, Dilma Rousseff, in utterly corrupt and fraudulent proceedings. The next was to imprison Lula on corruption charges, preventing him from running in (and almost surely winning) the 2018 presidential election. That set the stage for Bolsonaro to be elected on a wave of an incredible campaign of lies, slanders and deceit that flooded the internet sites that most Brazilians use as a main source of "information." There's reason to suspect a significant U.S. hand.

The charges against Lula were withdrawn by the courts after they were completely discredited by Glenn Greenwald's exposure of the shenanigans of the prosecution in connivance with "anti-corruption" (Car Wash) investigator Sergio Moro. Before the exposures, Moro had been appointed Minister of Justice and Public Security by Bolsonaro, perhaps a reward for his contributions to his election. Moro has largely disappeared from sight with the collapse of his image as the intrepid white knight who would save Brazil from corruption — while, probably not coincidentally, destroying major Brazilian businesses that were competitors to U.S. corporations (which are not exactly famous for their purity).

Though Moro's targets were selective, much of what he revealed is credible — and not difficult to find in Latin America, where corruption is practically a way of life in the political and economic worlds. One can, however, debate whether it attains the level that is familiar in the West, where major financial institutions have been fined tens of billions of dollars, usually in settlements that avoid individual liability. One indication of what the scale might be was given by the London *Economist*, which found over 2000 corporate convictions from 2000-2014. That's just "corporate America," which has plenty of company elsewhere. Furthermore, the notion of "corruption" is deeply tainted by ideology. Much of the worst corruption is "legal," as the legal system is designed under the heavy hand of private power.

Despite Moro's own corruption, much of what he unearthed was real and had

been for a long time. His main target, Lula's Workers Party (PT), it appears, did not break this pattern. Partly for this reason, the PT lost an opportunity to introduce the kinds of lasting progressive changes that are badly needed to undermine the rule of Brazil's rapacious and deeply racist traditional ruling classes.

Lula's programs were designed so as not to infringe seriously on elite power, but they were nonetheless barely tolerated in these circles. Their flaw was that they were oriented towards the needs of those suffering bitterly in this highly inegalitarian society. The basic character of Lula's programs was captured in a 2016 World Bank study of Brazil, which described his time in office as a "golden decade" in Brazil's history. The Bank praised Lula's "success in reducing poverty and inequality and its ability to create jobs. Innovative and effective policies to reduce poverty and ensure the inclusion of previously excluded groups have lifted millions of people out of poverty." Furthermore, *Brazil has also been assuming global responsibilities. It has been successful in pursuing economic prosperity while protecting its unique natural patrimony. Brazil has become one of the most important emerging new donors, with extensive engagements particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, and a leading player in international climate negotiations. Brazil's development path over the past decade has shown that growth with shared prosperity, but balanced with respect for the environment, is possible. Brazilians are rightly proud of these internationally recognized achievements.*

Some Brazilians. Not those who consider it their right to wield power in their own interest.

Brazil became an effective voice for the Global South in international affairs, not a welcome development in the eyes of Western leaders, and a particular irritant to the Obama-Biden-Clinton administration when Brazil's foreign minister Celso Amorim came close to negotiating a settlement on Iran's nuclear programs, undercutting Washington's intent to run the show on its own terms.

The Bank report also concluded that with proper policies, the "golden decade" could have persisted after the collapse of commodity prices. That was not to be, however, as the soft coup proceeded. Some analysts have suggested that a crucial turning point was when Dilma announced that profits from newly discovered offshore oil reserves would be directed to education and welfare instead of the eager hands of international investors.

The PT had failed to sink social roots, to such an extent that beneficiaries of its policies were often unaware of their source, attributing the benefits to God or to luck. The corruption, failure of mobilization and lack of structural reform all contributed to Bolsonaro's electoral victory.

Bolsonaro's victory was welcomed with enthusiasm by international capital and finance. They were particularly impressed by Bolsonaro's economic czar, ultra-loyal Chicago economist Paulo Guedes. His program was very simple: in his words, "Privatize Everything," a bonanza for foreign investors. They were, however, disillusioned as Brazil collapsed during the Bolsonaro years and Guedes's promises remained unfulfilled.

Let's talk now specifically about some of Bolsonaro's policies, which have been denounced by activists, economists and organizations such as Human Rights Watch, as well as by Indigenous leaders. And how would you compare his policies to those of Donald Trump?

The analogy is apt. Trump was Bolsonaro's unconcealed model, though not the only one. In casting his vote to impeach Dilma, he dedicated it to her torturer during the military dictatorship. That's a level of depravity that even his hero Trump didn't reach. His admiration for the dictatorship is also unconcealed, though he does have some criticisms of the military. His prime complaint is that they were too mild. They should have killed 30,000 people as the military did in Argentina next door. He has also criticized the behavior of the military in earlier years. They should have imitated the U.S. cavalry, which virtually eliminated the Native population. Instead, the Brazilian military left remnants in the Amazon. But Bolsonaro has made it quite clear that he intends to overcome that problem.

Like Trump, Bolsonaro's most important policy commitments, by far, are to destroy the prospects for organized human life in the interest of short-term profits for his friends — in his case, mining, agribusiness and illegal logging that have sharply accelerated the destruction of the Amazon forests. Scientists had anticipated, pre-Bolsonaro, that in a few decades, the Amazon would shift from one of the world's greatest carbon sinks to a carbon source, as it transitions from tropical forest to savannah. Thanks to Bolsonaro, that point may already be approaching. For Brazil, the effects will be devastating. Rainfall will sharply decline, with much of the rich agricultural land turning to desert. The world as a

whole will suffer a severe blow, a wound that might prove to be lethal. For the Indigenous inhabitants of the forest, the outcome is genocidal.

As elsewhere in the world, the Indigenous in Brazil have been in the forefront for years in trying to protect human society from the depredations of "advanced civilization." But time is growing short, and if the Trumps and Bolsonaros of the world are granted free rein, chances of decent survival are slim.

Again, as in the case of Trump, Bolsonaro's malevolence is not exhausted by his commitment to destroy organized human society — along with the innumerable species that we are quickly driving to extinction. Like Trump, he can claim personal responsibility for tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of COVID deaths, to mention one salient contribution to the welfare of his country. Police killings, overwhelmingly with Black victims, have long been a plague, mounting under Bolsonaro. A particularly shocking recent incident of military assault on a Rio favela reached international headlines.

All too easy to continue.

What is the likelihood that Bolsonaro could face charges in The Hague over the Amazon?

Virtually none. His contributions to global suicide may be particularly severe, but once that door is opened…
Who is going to allow that?

Brazilians took to the streets recently demanding the removal of Bolsonaro over his handling of the pandemic. Indeed, it seems that public opinion has finally turned overwhelmingly against Bolsonaro, and Lula is expected to trounce him in the 2022 elections. However, in a rather unsurprising manner, and reminiscent of his idol Trump, Bolsonaro announced just a few days ago that he may not accept the results of the 2022 election under the current voting system. How likely is the chance that the generals, on whom Bolsonaro has relied on from the first day he got into power, will stay the course and support an attempt of his to stay in power even if he loses next year's presidential election?

Since 2018, Bolsonaro has been claiming that the only way he can be defeated in an election is by fraud. He's even claimed (of course, without evidence) that Dilma actually lost the 2014 election, which she won handily by over 3 million

votes, mostly on sharp class lines, by historical standards a slim margin. He's now stepped up the rhetoric, preemptively charging the 2022 election with attempted fraud by his political enemies and telling a crowd of supporters a few weeks ago that, "Elections next year will be clean. Either we have clean elections in Brazil or we don't have elections" (*Jornal do Brasil*, 7-08-21).

Not exactly unfamiliar.

Right now, Lula is well ahead in the polls, just as in 2018, when measures were taken to bar his candidacy. There are legitimate concerns of a recurrence.

Parliamentary inquiries into the devastating mishandling of the pandemic by Bolsonaro's government are now reportedly reaching the military. The three branches of the armed services recently released a statement declaring that no inquiry that impugns the honor of the military will be tolerated.

There have been reports of steps that might be preparation for a military coup, perhaps modeled on the 1964 coup that installed the first of the vicious "National Security States" that terrorized the hemisphere for 20 years.

The pretext for overthrowing the mildly reformist Goulart government in 1964 was the ritual appeal to save the country from "Communism." Something similar could be concocted today.

How would Washington react? There are precedents that suggest an answer. One is 1964. The military coup that overthrew the parliamentary government was lauded by Kennedy-Johnson Ambassador to Brazil Lincoln Gordon as "the most decisive victory for freedom in the mid-twentieth century." As I discuss in *Year 501*, it was a "democratic rebellion" that would help in "restraining left-wing excesses" and should "create a greatly improved climate for private investment" in the hands of the "democratic forces" now in charge. After 21 years of rule, Latin America scholar Stephen Rabe comments in *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, the "democratic forces" left the country in "the same category as the less developed African or Asian countries when it came to social welfare indices" (malnutrition, infant mortality, etc.), with conditions of inequality and suffering rarely matched elsewhere, but a grand success for foreign investors and domestic privilege.

That's putting aside the "systematic use of torture" and other crimes of state

documented by the Church-run Truth Commission during the dictatorship's last days.

We should also recall that the reaction to the Brazil coup — and possible involvement in it — was no exception. Rather, it was the norm after 1962, when JFK changed the mission of the Latin American military from anachronistic "hemispheric defense" to very live "internal security." The predictable results were described by Charles Maechling, who led U.S. counterinsurgency and internal defense planning from 1961 to 1966. Kennedy's 1962 decision, he wrote, shifted the U.S. stand from toleration "of the rapacity and cruelty of the Latin American military" to "direct complicity" in their crimes, to U.S. support for "the methods of Heinrich Himmler's extermination squads."

Those who might innocently believe that things have changed can turn to the Obama-Clinton reaction to the military coup in Honduras in 2009, overthrowing the mildly reformist Zelaya government. Their support for the coup, almost alone, helped turn Honduras into one of the murder capitals of the world, stimulating a flood of terrified refugees now cruelly and illegally turned back at the U.S. border, if they can make it that far through the barriers imposed by U.S. clients.

The rich and ugly record might suggest something about Washington's possible reaction to actions by the Brazilian military to "save the country from Communism."

Peruvians elected as their president last month Pedro Castillo, a teacher and labor union leader, but the far right opponent Keiko Fujimori and her supporters are refusing the accept the outcome by crying fraud, allegations which have been rejected by international observers and while both the European Union and the United States praised the conduct of the election. But in places like Chile and Colombia, the right is also under pressure by citizens fed up with neoliberalism. Is another "pink tide" in the making across South America?

In Chile, a remarkable popular uprising is seeking to free the country at last from the clutches of the Pinochet dictatorship, a criminal enterprise backed even more strongly than usual by the U.S., with particular enthusiasm by the "libertarians" who then turned to launching the global neoliberal assault of the past 40 years. Colombia is being subjected to yet another renewal of the state and paramilitary violence escalated by Kennedy in 1962, when his military mission to Colombia, led

by Marine Gen. William Yarborough, recommended “paramilitary sabotage and/or terrorist activities against known communist proponents,” which “should be backed by the United States” — as it has been through many horrifying years, recently Clinton’s Plan Colombia.

There is turmoil and uncertainty throughout the hemisphere, including “the colossus of the North.” What happens here will, as always, have enormous impact.

Source:
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C.J. Polychroniou is a political economist/political scientist who has taught and worked in numerous universities and research centers in Europe and the United States. Currently, his main research interests are in European economic integration, globalization, climate change, the political economy of the United States, and the deconstruction of neoliberalism’s politico-economic project. He is a regular contributor to *Truthout* as well as a member of *Truthout*’s Public Intellectual Project. He has published scores of books, and his articles have appeared in a variety of journals, magazines, newspapers and popular news websites. Many of his publications have been translated into several foreign languages, including Arabic, Croatian, Dutch, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Turkish. His latest books are *Optimism Over Despair: Noam Chomsky On Capitalism, Empire, and Social Change*, an anthology of interviews with Chomsky originally published at *Truthout* and collected by Haymarket Books; *Climate Crisis and the Global Green New Deal*: *The Political Economy of Saving the Planet* (with Noam Chomsky and Robert Pollin as primary authors); and *The Precipice*: *Neoliberalism, the Pandemic, and the Urgent Need for Radical Change*, an anthology of interviews with Chomsky originally published at *Truthout* and collected by Haymarket Books (scheduled for publication in June 2021).

Linda Bouws – Herinner de Holocaust met wereldwijde context. Het Parool, 15 juli 2021

Linda Bouws. Foto: Het Parool

Het nieuwe Nationaal Holocaust Museum moet meer bestrijken dan de vervolging van Joden in Europa, vindt Linda Bouws. Ze pleit voor een nieuwe herinneringscultuur.

In Amsterdam wil het Nationaal Holocaust Museum de geschiedenis van de Holocaust gaan vertellen. De opening is gepland in 2022. 'De meeste mensen weten waar de Holocaust voor staat: voor de moord op zes miljoen Europese Joden, waaronder 104.000 uit Nederland. Met uw steun willen we het Nationaal Holocaust Museum tot de plek maken waar we dat wat nooit vergeten mag worden tonen aan de toekomstige generaties. Zo'n plek is nog steeds hard nodig in Nederland,' aldus de initiatiefnemer op de site van het Joods Cultureel Kwartier.

Er gaat niet dagelijks een nieuw historisch museum open. Zeker in deze tijd is discussie over de doelstellingen en context van zo'n initiatief onvermijdelijk. Daarbij spelen vraagstukken van identiteit en inclusie een steeds belangrijker rol.

Bij een beladen onderwerp als de Holocaust zal dat zeker niet beperkt blijven tot stemmen uit Nederland of Europa.

Zo is in Dubai onlangs de eerste Holocausttentoonstelling in de Verenigde Arabische Emiraten geopend in het museum Crossroads of Civilizations. Via persoonlijke getuigenissen wordt het verhaal verteld. Een klein gedeelte is gewijd aan Arabieren en moslims die Joden hielpen de Holocaust te overleven.

Lees verder: https://www.parool.nl/herinner-de-holocaust-met-wereldwijde-context/

An Interview With James Boyce: Agrarian Societies, Environmental Economics And Climate Change

C.J. Polychroniou interviews *Professor Emeritus James K. Boyce* about his career exploring agrarian societies, environmental economics and climate change.
This is part of PERI's economist interview series, hosted by C.J. Polychroniou. *It was first posted here.*

C.J. Polychroniou: How did your interest in economics come about, and why did you choose to pursue graduate studies at Oxford University after having completed your undergraduate degree at Yale?

James K. Boyce: Midway through my college years I worked for two years on a land reform and rural development project in the Indian state of Bihar. I had taken introductory economics in my freshman year, but it was in Bihar that I really began to learn and think about how economies function and malfunction.

On returning to Yale I designed an independent major in Agricultural Development that included some more courses in economics. More importantly, I met my life partner, Betsy Hartmann, who had just come back from working in India, too. After graduating we returned to South Asia and lived for about a year in a village in Bangladesh. Our aim was to write a book that would give readers a window into the lives and perspectives of some of the world's poorest people – an oral history of the present.

The book, *A Quiet Violence*, came out in 1983 after dozens of rejections from publishers. While we were completing it, we pieced together a living among other ways by teaching a Yale seminar on the political economy of world hunger. One book we used in the seminar was *The Political Economy of Agrarian Change* by Keith Griffin, an economist at Oxford. When I decided to go to grad school, I wrote to Keith and asked if he would consider working with me. He sent an encouraging reply, and that is the main reason I went to Oxford. It turned out to be a wonderful place to be. Keith was a splendid mentor, and I was also fortunate to study with Amartya Sen, who introduced me to the deep normative questions of value and distribution that lie at the heart of economic theory. I could not have had better teachers.

CJP: Your early research centered around food and development policy for mainly agrarian societies. What lessons have we learned about agrarian reform and economic growth in developing countries?

JB: In my dissertation I analyzed agricultural growth in Bangladesh and the neighboring Indian state of West Bengal, the two halves of Bengal that were partitioned in 1947 when India and Pakistan became independent nations. My central thesis was that water control – irrigation, drainage, and flood control – is the "leading input" in Asian rice agriculture, and that Bengal's agrarian structure posed formidable obstacles to resolving the attendant problems of coordinated water management and collective action. The self-interest of the larger landowners who dominated rural society often undermined possibilities for improving agricultural performance. It is an example of what is sometimes called the "inefficiency of inequality."

After receiving my doctorate, I embarked on a book about the Philippine economy in the Marcos era. The Philippines was the birthplace of the so-called "green revolution" in Asian rice agriculture, the introduction of highly fertilizer-

responsive varieties that allowed major increases in output. In that country, too, agrarian inequality acted as a brake on growth and on the extent to which the growth that did occur improved the lives of the poor.

The Philippine experience stands in marked contrast to that of South Korea, which was poorer than the Philippines at the end of World War Two. Today South Korea's per capita income is about ten times greater than that of the Philippines, and income inequality is far lower. The superior performance of South Korea in both respects can be traced above all to the fact that the country implemented a serious land-to-the-tiller agrarian reform shortly after the war, whereas the Philippines did not and still has not.

Thoroughgoing land reform was a key distinguishing feature in the postwar economic trajectories of East Asian countries more generally. China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan shared this experience in common despite their diverse political circumstances. Land reform ended the fateful dichotomy between ownership of the land and labor on it. In so doing, it unleashed broad-based growth not only in the agricultural sectors but in the economy as a whole.

CJP: Over the years your research interests have shifted towards environmental economics. Why did the political economy of the environment become such a major focus of your research?

JB: I've been interested in the environment for as long as I can remember. When I started graduate school, there was not a single course on environmental economics at Oxford. This was not unusual for the time. When a faculty member introduced a new course on the subject, I was the only student to show up. We turned this into a two-person study group, working our way through the classic works in the field. It was a rather short list.

I quickly saw connections between economic development and environmental economics. In both arenas, bringing a political-economy lens to bear – that is, asking about not only the size of the pie but also how it is sliced – could help to explain pervasive market failures and government failures. In both arenas, inequalities of power and wealth impede the coordinated action needed to resolve these failures. In both, the self-interest of those on top – those who extract rents from land and power and those who profit from environmentally degrading activities – leads to outcomes that are inefficient as well as inequitable.

When I joined the UMass economics faculty in 1985, the department did not have any courses in environmental economics. I launched a new undergraduate course called "the political economy of the environment." It began with a couple dozen students, and over the years it grew into a larger lecture. Some years later, at the instigation of grad students, I started a graduate course of the same name.

When I had my first sabbatical in the early 1990s, I was a Fulbright scholar at the National University in Costa Rica. There I helped set up a master's program in ecological economics and sustainable development for students from across Central America and the Caribbean. This was when I wrote my first research paper on the political economy of the environment. It was called "Inequality as a Cause of Environmental Degradation," and it was published in the journal *Ecological Economics* in 1994.

At around the same time, I also began working on the economics of violent conflict and peacebuilding, another arena where large inequalities of wealth and power often lead to dreadful outcomes for the majority of people. I visited El Salvador soon after the signing of the peace accords that ended the country's long civil war. Soon thereafter the United Nations Development Program in San Salvador asked me to organize a study on the interface between economic policies and peace implementation. The resulting book, titled *Economic Policy for Building Peace*, led me onto work in other war-torn societies, including Bosnia, Guatemala, and Cambodia. Peacebuilding became another major focus for my research and writing.

In the past decade or so I have concentrated mostly on the environment. Climate destabilization in particular has become an urgent global issue, and my own country has been more part of the problem than part of the solution. Like many other Americans, I feel a sense of obligation to try to do something about it.

CJP: Environmental justice figures prominently in your analyses of climate change and climate policy. Why and how?

JB: Environmental justice (EJ) is about the distribution of environmental harms (and also the distribution of benefits from using and abusing the environment). In the 1980s pioneering research by Dr. Robert Bullard and others documented the fact that low-income communities and racial and ethnic minorities in the United States often bear disproportionate burdens from pollution and other

environmental hazards.

EJ activists and researchers have helped to reframe environmental problems to ask not only what people do to nature but also what we do to each other. Environmental costs are not impersonal "externalities" that fall randomly across the populace; these costs are often inflicted on communities that are disadvantaged both politically and economically, that is, in terms of both political power and purchasing power. In the U.S. multivariate analyses have shown that race and ethnicity have major impacts on exposure to environmental harm that are independent of income.

Climate change and climate policy intersect with environmental justice in multiple ways. Let me highlight five here.

1. Differential vulnerability: Climate change affects everyone, but throughout the world it is low-income and politically disempowered communities that are at the greatest risk. Many people live precariously close to the margin of survival where droughts, floods, and extreme heat waves can push them over the edge. They cannot afford private insurance, and typically they lack the political leverage to obtain insurance from the public sector. They often live in especially vulnerable settings, such as low-lying lands that are susceptible to storm surges. We saw these multiple factors clearly at work when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005.

2. Disproportionate impacts of co-pollutants: Fossil fuels are not only the main source of the carbon dioxide and methane emissions that are destabilizing the Earth's climate, but also the source of a slew of hazardous air pollutants that constitute a leading cause of premature mortality around the world. From an environmental justice standpoint, it is crucial that policies to reduce the use of fossil fuels take "co-pollutant" impacts into account and ensure that these are reduced first and foremost in the most vulnerable communities.

3. Carbon dividends: If the climate policy mix includes tight restrictions on the supply of fossil fuels allowed to enter the economy – and it must to guarantee that we achieve ambitious targets for emission reductions – this supply constraint will raise the price of fossil fuels, much as OPEC supply restrictions raised oil prices in years past. In many countries, including the U.S., higher fuel prices are tantamount to a regressive tax: as a percentage of expenditure (though not in

absolute dollar terms) fuel price increases hit low-income households harder than middle class households, and the middle class harder than the rich. To offset this regressive impact and its political repercussions, a substantial share of the revenue from auctioning permits to bring fossil carbon into the economy (or, equivalently, from a carbon tax) can and I believe should be returned directly to the public as equal per person payments. This is something I've studied for a number of years, culminating in my 2019 book, *The Case for Carbon Dividends*. From the standpoint of environmental justice, the gifts of nature – in this case, the limited capacity of the biosphere to safely absorb carbon – are owned equally by all. Pollution should not be free even when it is legal. Those who make use of the limited capacity of our environment to safely dispose of wastes should pay for their use, and the proceeds should be shared by all as equal co-owners.

4. A just transition: Like all major transformations, the shift from the fossil fueled economy of the past to the clean energy economy of the future will result in winners and losers. The overwhelming majority of humankind, including future generations, will benefit immeasurably. But in the course of the transition some people will incur costs. These include losses not only to fossil fuel firms and their shareholders, who can afford them, but also to workers and communities who have depended on the industry for their livelihoods. Policies to assist these workers and communities, many of whom have borne great sacrifices to provide our energy, is another dimension of environmental justice. A just transition also requires investing in the ecological restoration of landscapes that have been damaged by mountaintop removal, coal ash residues, oil spills and other toxic legacies of fossil fuel extraction and combustion.

5. Adjustment for whom? Tragically, the world's failure to respond more quickly and resolutely to the climate emergency means that we're already seeing its impacts and that they are sure to worsen in years ahead. Adjustment to climate change that we have failed to prevent will be a crucial challenge even as we move forward on mitigation. A key question is how the scarce resources available for adaptation – for building sea walls, establishing cooling centers to protect people during heat waves, protecting critical ecosystem functions and the like – will be allocated across competing needs and communities. From the standpoint of environmental justice, a bedrock principle is all lives are equally valuable and deserve equal protection. This is very different from prioritizing the lives and property of those who wield the most purchasing power or the most political

influence.

These and other justice-centered policies can help to build a more egalitarian society in the course of climate change mitigation and adaptation. In turn, building a more egalitarian society will help to advance effective climate policy. The two go hand-in-hand.

CJP: You advocate carbon pricing policies as a means of reducing carbon dioxide and emissions of hazardous air pollutants into the air. Is there evidence that carbon pricing policies work for lowering global warming emissions?

JB: We know that price signals affect consumption and investment decisions. When the price of gasoline went up in the 1970s, for example, as a result of the supply restrictions imposed by OPEC and the Iran-Iraq war, consumers cut back their automobile use and began to demand more fuel-efficient vehicles. Businesses invested in energy efficiency. Governments – federal, state, and local – responded to the price incentive, too, by implementing policies to reduce their use of oil.

Of course, a carbon price is not an end in itself. The end is to curb emissions along a path consistent with stabilizing the Earth's climate. The Paris Agreement's target of holding the rise in average surface temperatures to 1.5-2 °C above the pre-industrial level translates this goal into quantitative terms. Achieving this goal will require cutting emissions at something like 8% per year – if we start now – and even more quickly if we delay further.

Past carbon prices invariably have been too low, far too low, to achieve such steep reductions, even when they have been coupled with other climate policies like public investment and regulatory standards. Politicians routinely succumb to the temptation to err on the side of optimism, hoping that a modest carbon tax (alone or in combination with new regulations, more investment, and moral suasion) will suffice do the job. I would like to believe this too, but just because I hope it's true doesn't mean I think it necessarily is.

This is why I believe we must include in the climate policy mix a hard limit on the amount of fossil carbon that is allowed to enter the economy each year, a limit anchored to targeted reductions of, say, 8% per year. If other climate policies turn out to be adequate to meet this goal, that's great, the limit does not act as a binding constraint. But if they are not sufficient it becomes binding, and a limited

number of permits (also known as allowances), up to the level set by the target, are issued to bring fossil carbon into the economy. I believe these permits should be auctioned to the energy firms, not given away free as under a cap-and-trade policy. Most, if not all, of the value of these permits will be passed on to consumers as higher fuel prices. We need to face up to this reality. And we need to face up to the impact that higher fuel prices will have on working families.

By recycling most or all of the revenue from permit auctions (or from a carbon tax) to the public as equal per person dividends, we can transform the regressive impact of the higher fuel prices into a progressive net impact. If the carbon dividends are delivered in manner that is fair, transparent, and visible (and not buried in the fine print of income taxes or electricity bills), they can help to sustain durable public support for the policy.

CJP: A growing number of environmentalists are adopting the position that economic growth is incompatible with environmental sustainability and any sincere struggle to deal with the climate crisis, but you find this perspective to be flawed and perhaps unrealistic. Why? Can capitalism co-exist with a sustainable, equitable, and environmentally friendly economy?

JB: The first question is whether economic growth is compatible with environmental sustainability, above all climate stabilization. We know that national income (or GDP) is a deeply flawed measure of human well-being. As I wrote in the opening essay of my 2019 book *Economics for People and the Planet*, it is a combination of things that are good, bad, and useless. Anything that carries a price tag in the market gets counted as part of national income, no matter whether it's good (like food and housing), or bad (like the costs of pollution remediation and incarcerating people), or useless (like rat-race spending on "positional goods," a phenomenon described a century ago by the economist Thorstein Veblen). Meanwhile, things that are not exchanged in the marketplace, whether good (like unpaid child care) or bad (like environmental degradation) are not counted even though they can greatly affect human well-being.

If national income is an unsatisfactory measure of well-being, then by the same token the growth of national income ("economic growth") is an unsatisfactory measure of changes in human welfare. When environmentalists and their opponents argue about the "limits to growth," they're thinking about different things: environmentalists think about the bad stuff, while growth proponents

think about the good stuff. When they assume that the good and bad are bound together, both sides repeat the mistake in national income measures: they fail to separate the good from the bad. I believe that we need a new banner: grow the good and shrink the bad. The clean energy transition is an example of doing precisely this.

Your second question is about capitalism. Like socialism, this is a word that carries a lot of baggage. If by capitalism you mean a world where wealth and power are concentrated in a narrow elite, then no, I don't think it's compatible with environmental sustainability or equity. But if you mean an economy where there are markets and private property, co-existing with other kinds of property and other institutions for resource allocation, then yes, I think it is. The same applies to different meanings of socialism.

The market-versus-state dichotomy that framed debates between the "right" and "left" in the 19th and 20th centuries turns out to have been off the mark. More fundamental, and more decisive for the well-being of ordinary people, is the dichotomy between an oligarchic order in which wealth and power are concentrated in the hands of a few and a democratic society in which they are broadly and equitably shared. This, to my mind, is the most important lesson we can draw from the tumultuous history of the 20th century.

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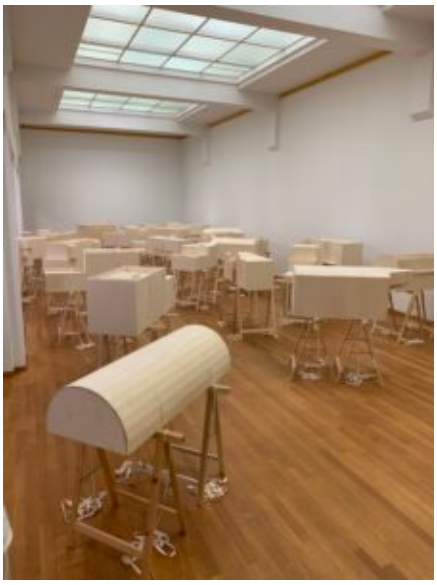
To A New Culture Of Remembrance



Joseph Sassoon Semah – Architectural model based on a mass grave of Jews in Baghdad – "Farhud" – the progrom against the Jews of Iraq on June 1-2 1941 – Kunstmuseum Den Haag

A new Nationaal Holocaust Museum is being built in Amsterdam to remember the history of the Holocaust. The opening is planned for 2022. An interesting initiative.

This is what the initiators said over their plan: 'Most people know about the meaning of the Holocaust: the assassination of 6 million European Jews, of which 104.000 came from the Netherlands. With your support we want to make the National Holocaust museum the place where we show future generations that this must never be forgotten. A place like this is still very necessary in the Netherlands'. This can be read on the Jewish Cultural Quarter website.

It doesn’t happen often that a new historical museum is opened. The most recent Dutch attempt to establish a Nationaal Historisch Museum initiated by Jan Marijnissen failed miserably.

Especially in this day and age, a discussion is inevitable about the objectives and context of such an initiative. Issues of identity and inclusion play an even more important role. With such a sensitive issue as that of the Holocaust, it will certainly not be limited to voices from the Netherlands or Europe.

Just recently the first Holocaust exhibition was opened in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Dubai at the Crossroads of Civilisation Museum. Using personal testimonies the story of the Holocaust is told. A small part of the exhibition is dedicated to Arabs and Muslims who helped Jews survive the Holocaust. If they have devoted any attention to the Holocaust (Farhud) in the Middle East is currently unclear.

It will be inevitable for a museum that proposes to focus on future generations to be clear from the outset about the context of their museum-related activities. For example, you could add to the name Holocaust Museum: ‘The history of the Holocaust in the culture of the time and the worldwide meaning for the present’, or words with an equivalent meaning.

The Holocaust cannot be understood to be an exclusive definition of the assassination of 6 million European Jews. Hitler’s interest went beyond that of Europe. The Holocaust, albeit on a smaller scale, also took place in the Middle East. Jews in Iraq, Tunisia and Libya were persecuted and killed. In Bagdad during the Farhud on June 1st and 2nd 1941 there were around 200 victims and Jewish stores and houses were looted, destroyed and set fire to. The general presumption is, because of the later discovered mass graves, that the number of casualties was very much higher. The persecution of Jews increased after the founding of Israel in 1948. From 1950 until the seventies a huge exodus took place, mostly forced, from Arabic and South-African countries, often described as a Babylonian exile, meaning for so many the loss of a homeland, culture, traditions and stories.
Certainly in Europe, but also in the Middle-East there is a lack of knowledge and awareness of the injustice done to the Jews in the Middle-East, partly as a result of the Holocaust, after previously living harmoniously with Muslim communities in their residential and working environment.

Joseph Sassoon Semah – On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) III – The Third GaLUT: Baghdad, Jerusalem, Amsterdam

If the future Nationaal Holocaust Museum in Amsterdam, a city with many cultures, wants to be interesting for future generations, then it is necessary to place the exhibitions in the context of diversity within Jewish culture of the time and the meaningfulness for the present. The National Holocaust Museum in Amsterdam has the unique possibility of taking the initiative for a new future-proof Culture of Remembrance. This means that in programming and permanent exhibitions there should be a focus on Jews from all over the world and certainly those in the Middle East; their rich culture after the first exile from Jerusalem, with among others the Talmud Bavli, the centuries of peaceful and productive living with Muslims, the 'Kristallnacht' there, the second exile after the founding of Israel and the emerging Mizrahi Hebrew voice in the public domain, must not be forgotten, after being marginalized for so long.
Only then will justice be done to 'diversity and inclusivity of the Jews' and can the question 'Are Jews white?' perhaps be provided with a more balanced answer.

At the Kunstmuseum Den Haag there is the exhibition '*On Friendship .....*' until the 29th of August 2021 of work by Joseph Sassoon Semah, the grandson of the last Chief Rabbi of Baghdad, Sassoon Kadoori (1886-1971). Metaphorically speaking it is a tribute to the lost culture in Iraq, and at the same time an invitation to a dialogue about different cultures. 36 architectural models

of houses, synagogues and the mass grave of Farhud, and 86 drawings bring back to life the lost, integrated Jewish culture of Baghdad.

Linda Bouws, former director Felix Meritis Amsterdam, curator exhibition

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Translation: Jean Cameron – Amsterdam

Radical Political Action Is Our Only Hope To Stop Criminal Negligence Of Climate Emergency

CJ Polychroniou

It can be done. It must be done. For there is no tomorrow if we fail to decarbonize and thus rescue the planet from a climate catastrophe.

Planet Earth is on fire because of global warming, yet there are still untold numbers of climate deniers in our midst, including over 130 elected officials in the U.S. Congress, and the global community's response to the climate crisis continues to be not merely unacceptably slow, but borders on criminal negligence.

Economic, political, and even psychological factors are at play as to why humanity refuses to move away from a "business-as-usual" approach when it comes to taking the drastic but ultimately necessary steps needed to tame global warming, which are none other than complete independence from fossil fuels. Yet, we must

direct immediately all political energy towards this goal, otherwise complete climate collapse with apocalyptic consequences is inevitable and irreversible. We know the facts and have the know-how to save the planet. Indeed, human activities are destroying planet Earth, but political action can stop the destruction before it's all over.

The belief that human activity could change temperatures and somehow alter a local climate has been around since antiquity. Of course, ancient civilizations didn't know anything about climate science. We first learned about Earth's natural "greenhouse effect" sometime in the early 1820s, thanks to Jean Baptiste Joseph Fourier, a French mathematician and physicist who was the first person to recognize that the Earth's atmosphere retains heat radiation. Then in the late 1850s the Irish scientist John Tyndall provided the explanation for the phenomenon of the "greenhouse effect" via his discovery that certain gases such as water vapor and carbon dioxide trap heat and warm the atmosphere. And in the late nineteenth century, the Swedish chemist/physicist Svante Arrhenius discovered that various human activities, including fossil fuel combustion, were contributing to the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Moreover, Arrhenius was able to determine through a numerical computation that the temperature in Europe could be lowered by between 4 and 5 degrees Celsius if the levels of carbon dioxide were cut in half, and inversely, if levels of carbon dioxide were to be increased by 50 percent, there would be a warming of between 5 and 6 degrees Celsius.

Still, climatology did not emerge into a major scientific enterprise until after World War II, and it was only in the 1950s when researchers began measuring carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, thanks to David Keeling, a pioneer in modern climate science.

Indicative perhaps of how slow politics and societies in general react to scientific discoveries, the cause-and-effect relationship between the greenhouse effect and global warming does not emerge in public consciousness as a major issue—at least in the United States—until NASA scientist James Hansen's seminal testimony in front of a U.S. Senate Committee on June 23, 1988. This was the first warning to the world at large that the age of global warming had arrived. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's most authoritative voice on climate crisis, was also created in 1988, which, incidentally, was the hottest year on record since the beginning of the century. Since the 1980s, each decade

has been warmer than the previous one, with 2020 being one of the hottest years on record. In fact, and while as of this writing the Pacific Midwest is experiencing an unprecedented heatwave, with hundreds of deaths, "there is a 90% likelihood of at least one year between 2021-2025 becoming the warmest on record," according to the WMO Lead Centre for Annual-to Decadal Climate Prediction.

Yet, very little has been done since the late1980s to combat global warming. The Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 1997 and entered into effect in 2005, was the first legally binding agreement (pdf) on the climate crisis. But the treaty had severe limitations. First, it applied only to industrialized countries, requiring them to reduce greenhouse gases on average by 5 percent below the 1990 levels from 2008 to 2012. Major emitters like China and India were left out, and the treaty was never ratified by the United States. The Kyoto Protocol was obviously inadequate in addressing global warming, but it was reservedly hailed as a "reasonable first step" (pdf), which was really another way of saying that climate crisis was a problem to be solved by future generations.

Unlike the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement that was adopted by virtually every nation in 2015 seemed to offer greater hopes for combating global warming. The primary aim of the Paris Agreement is to limit global warming in this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. However, the treaty not only allows individual countries to determine themselves their preferred course of action for reducing greenhouse gases, but it is not even legally binding. In sum, it is a treaty for combating global warming without any teeth. Hardly surprising, therefore, that a recent Nationally Determined Contributions synthesis report found that "current levels of climate ambition are not on track to meet our Paris Agreement goals." The report corroborates the view of Princeton University environmental scientist Michael Oppenheimer who marked the progress made five years after the signing of the Paris Agreement in terms of the prospect of meeting a 2 degrees Celsius target with a grade of D or F.

The emissions reduction process is indeed moving at a very slow pace when we consider the fact that we need to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 in order to avoid the worse possible effects of global warming. The Covid-19 pandemic did produce a relatively sharp decline, approximately by 5.8 percent, in global energy-related carbon dioxide emissions. But this does not constitute a "success story" given that at some point more than half of the world economy had come to

a forced standstill. Destroying economic activity is not the way to combat global warming. Moreover, as the pandemic experience has shown, even with more than half of the world economy in a lockdown, the reduction in carbon emissions was not as huge as one might have expected, and carbon emissions are now again on the rise. Demand for oil has surged even in the midst of new worries about Covid-19, a development which stresses the point rather forcefully of how addicted the world remains to the fossil fuel economy.

Nonetheless, all is not yet lost. The Green New Deal is gaining traction as more and more people become aware of the way that global warming plunders the planet and affects their very own existence. Green parties across Europe are making huge gains in local, national, and European parliament elections, all while grassroots responses to the climate crisis are growing worldwide and climate lawsuits are becoming a global trend themselves. As a case in point, a Belgian court ruled recently that state authorities have shown negligence in tackling the climate crisis and "breached the European convention on human rights." Germany's highest court found that the country's climate law is unconstitutional, a decision that has been heralded as a "historic" victory for youth. In the U.S. over fifty organizations have called for a Green New Deal plan for Pacific Northwest Forests as part of a response to the growing threat the climate crisis. And Robert Pollin, professor of economics and co-director of the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, has designed scores of commissioned state-level Green New Deals aiming towards a transition to a net-zero emissions economy.

But we are still at the beginning of the war against global warming and the fossil fuel economy and its allies. Powerful interests will continue to stand on the way to saving the planet as long as profits are to be made from any activities associated with fossil fuels. This includes not only the fossil fuel industry itself, which has spent many billions of dollars so far in the U.S. alone opposing clean energy policies and even undermining climate science, but other corporate and financial entities such as banks. Governments too. We need greater public mobilization to exert influence on policymakers. We need many more Sunrise Movements, strong coalitions among civil rights groups, environmental groups, and progressive political forces, and intensification of campaigns and protests against investment in fossil fuels.

It can be done. It must be done. For there is no tomorrow if we fail to decarbonize

and thus rescue the planet from a climate catastrophe. Humans are responsible for the impending climate apocalypse, but we also have the power to stop it. All it takes is true commitment and concerted action.

Source: https://www.commondreams.org/radical-political-action

C.J. Polychroniou is a political economist/political scientist who has taught and worked in numerous universities and research centers in Europe and the United States. His latest books are *Optimism Over Despair: Noam Chomsky On Capitalism, Empire, and Social Change*" and "*Climate Crisis and the Global Green New Deal: The Political Economy of Saving the Planet*" (with Noam Chomsky and Robert Pollin as primary authors).

The Differences Between Fascism And Trump(ism)

C J
Polychroniou

Trump's policies were brutally neoliberal, racist, nativist, authoritarian, narcissistic — but fascist?

Donald Trump will go down in history as the president responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of Americans due to the criminal negligence in his handling of the Covid-19 pandemic and for pushing the world closer to a precipice with his denialism of our climate crisis; yet, he may ultimately be best remembered for having decidedly transform American political culture with the theatricality of his proto-fascist politics.

Trump emerged on the political scene at a time of increasing contradictions in the American system of economic organization and distribution, with the rich getting richer and the poor poorer, and growing divisions within society at large over race, ethnicity, and culture. While he had no previous political experience, his instincts told him that the route to power in a highly divided society was to double down on those divisions–a tactic that had been employed quite successfully in the past by various extreme political figures all over the world, including the likes of Benito Mussolini in Italy and Adolph Hitler in Germany, respectively.

Indeed, Trump's stratagem of tapping into a huge reservoir of racism and nativism through the use of white identity politics and exploiting public discontent associated with America's economic decline through a standard repertoire of ultranationalist rants and transparent scapegoatism was key to his rise in power. Moreover, rather than aiming to unify a divided country while holding the nation's highest office, he continued to act more like the leader of a political party bent on cementing the ideological and cultural divisions in American society, all while implementing economic policies that would lead to further inequality and the expansion of the power of the plutocracy.

Trump's transformation of American political culture consisted in the unleashing of dangerous forces–arch-enemies of the open and diverse society–that posed an internal threat to liberal democracy. His refusal to accept the outcome of the 2020 election, and subsequent attempts by him and his allies to overturn the election, was indeed the culmination of four years of proto-fascist political rhetoric and authoritarian grandstanding.

Subsequently, Trump's politics has led many to conclude that the alleged billionaire entrepreneur is a fascist and that the United States was actually on the verge of becoming a fascist country during his four-year tenure in power. It is a belief that continues to hold sway over the minds of many progressives, especially since the GOP is officially now Trump's party and Republicans are fighting as dirty as they can to return to power, with or without Trump at the helm.

However, as I will argue below, and without any intention of downplaying the dangers that Trump and Trumpism represent for a dysfunctional democracy like the one that prevails in the United States, this is a belief based on a misunderstanding of fascism both as a movement and as a regime. Fascism has specific politico-economic properties, even though there are some subtle

differences between Italian fascism, German Nazism, and Spanish Francoism, and is defined by a unique philosophical worldview regarding the relationship between state and individual. Fascism is an extreme right-wing authoritarian form of government, but not all authoritarian governments qualify as fascist, and the term in connection with Trump is quite misleading. In fact, hardly any expert on fascism thinks that what Trump practiced fits with the political ideology behind fascism.

The differences between fascism and Trump(ism) are quite striking. Trump and the political movement that he created do share certain traits with fascism, such as reliance on hate, fear, and conspiracy theories, along with the rejection of reason, to deepen social divisions and to create a sense of an imminent collapse as part of a strategy whose aim is to change the political environment by bringing about a change in the existing balance of social forces. But these are tactics that have been widely used by authoritarian leaders and extreme populist movements throughout the modern era of politics. Moreover, while the characterizations of Trump as an authoritarian figure with an utterly narcissistic personality or as a dangerous con artist who manipulates people to believe in lies and "alternative facts" are totally, unmistakably true, the orange maniac is not an ideologue by any stretch of the imagination; instead, he will gladly say whatever he feels is necessary to please his base.

What is fascism?

First, fascism represents one form of "exceptional capitalist state," as the Marxist political sociologist Nicos Poulantzas had argued, and reflects the breakdown of social order as a result of a severe capitalist crisis and the ensuing confrontation between different classes and ideological groups for political hegemony.

Fascism emerged in Europe during the interwar years (1919-1939) and was first established in Italy under Benito Mussolini (1922-1945) and then in Germany under Adolph Hitler (1933-1945). Italian fascism and German National Socialism represent "classical fascism" and rest on similar belief systems and regime properties, with one possible exception: the "biological" state did not figure as prominently in Italian fascism as it did under the Third Reich.

Fascism relies on paramilitary squads to spread terror and pursues relentless raids against socialists, communists, and other arch-enemies of fascism. This was

typical of the role of Mussolini's paramilitary squads, known as the "blackshirts," whose activities covered all regions of the country, including the peninsula and the islands of Sardinia and Sicily, and constituted an integral component of the fascism's march to power and the establishment of a dictatorship.

The Nazi rise to power followed a similar path. In 1921, Hitler formed the paramilitary organization Sturm Abteilung (SA), more commonly known as the "brownshirts." The purpose of the "Sturm Unit" was none other than to intimidate political opponents. In 1925, Hitler established a sub-division of the SA, the Schutzstaffel (German for "Protective Echelon"), otherwise known as the SS, which served as Hitler's personal bodyguards. The SS, Hitler's "master race," would eventually see its role and size expanded dramatically after 1929 when Heinrich Himmler was put in charge. By the start of World War II, the SS consisted of more than 250,000 members that had a hand on virtually all major Nazi activities, including running concentration camps.

Unless I am mistaken, there were no signs of "blackshirts" or "brownshirts" engaging in thuggish vigilantism before Trump's rise to power.

Fascist political ideology is also unmistakably unique. Fascism strips away individual rights and glorifies the state. The organic state is typified by the fascist regime, which assigns the state complete control over every aspect of national life. For Giovanni Gentile, the philosopher and political theorist of Italian fascism, "state and individual are one," while "the authority of the state is not subject to negotiation, or compromise, or to divide its terrain with other moral or religious principles that might interfere in consciousness."

Fascism bans political opposition, ends constitutional rule, enforces censorship, and imprisons political opponents.

Indeed, as Benito Mussolini's own formulation of fascism has it, "Everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State."

It is worth quoting at length the fascist conception of the state, as articulated once again by Mussolini himself:
Anti-individualistic, the Fascist conception of life stresses the importance of the State and accepts the individual only in so far as his interests coincide with those of the State, which stands for the conscience and the universal, will of man as a historic entity. It is opposed to classical liberalism which arose as a reaction to

absolutism and exhausted its historical function when the State became the expression of the conscience and will of the people. Liberalism denied the State in the name of the individual; Fascism reasserts.

Totalitarianism and state terrorism are defining attributes of fascism. Trump's administration, horrific as it was, exhibited no such features.

There are also striking differences between fascism and Trump(ism) when it comes to the economy.

Fascists do not oppose private property but believe in taming capitalism by forming a specific relationship between state and big business or monopoly capital, with the state having the upper hand. Mussolini identified the economics of fascism as "state capitalism." Fascism also intervenes in the overall workings of the economy through coordinated actions of some central planning board to attain a set of "fixed objectives," even if those actions tended at times to involve "dis-organic intervention," as Mussolini himself had once complained. Fascism also controls the monetary system, sets prices, and promotes large government projects and all sorts of public works as part of the pursuit of its alleged "full-employment" economy. Hitler's autobahn construction (though plans for the autobahn date to the 1920s and construction had actually begun before Hitler came to power) was undertaken under that pretext. Nonetheless, it was rearmament that helped the Nazis achieve economic recovery in the 1930s.

Trump's economic policies, on the other hand, were brutally neoliberal in origin and scope. The war alone that his administration launched on regulations clearly testifies to Trump's commitment to free-market fundamentalism. As far as his opposition to "free trade" is concerned, it was initiated by his belief that other countries were bending the rules at the expense of the United States, not because he was in principle against the idea of "free trade."

Trump's policies sought to enhance even further the power of the plutocracy in the United States. And he accomplished this through the pursuit of extreme neoliberal policies, not through a corporatist model. On the other hand, to keep his fanatical base loyal, he employed a standard repertoire of proto-fascist rhetoric and challenged as far as he could the foundations of liberal democracy, which, according to his followers, had set rules that cater to the whims of the "detestable elite."

In this manner, Trump was not alone. Virtually all authoritarian political figures out there today (Orban in Hungary, Erdogan in Turkey, Bolsonaro in Brazil, to name just a few) use similar tactics, exploit the vulnerabilities in the political culture in which they operate and exhibit disdain for the rule of law. Do they all, with Trump together, belong to the fascist camp? Not unless the aim is to reduce fascism to a meaningless political ideology and forget the sickening atrocities committed by fascist regimes in the most murderous century in recorded history.

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Source: https://www.commondreams.org/

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