

We Must Create A Broad Anti-Fascist Movement To Fight Back Against Trump 2.0



02-03-2025 ~ *The struggle against neofascism in the U.S. must be taken by all those whose rights are being targeted under the second Trump administration.*

A few years ago, [Noam Chomsky](#) warned about [the return of fascism](#) in contemporary capitalist societies. He pointed out that 40 years of neoliberal policies—a one-sided class war launched by the business class and its allies against the working people, the poor, the minorities, the young, and the old—had produced massive levels of inequality and increased social tension, “yielding a breeding ground for extremism, violence, hatred, search for scapegoats—and fertile terrain for authoritarian figures who can posture as the savior.” Thus, as he put it, “We’re on the road to a form of neofascism.”

However, it is specifically the economic and political repercussions of the financial crisis of 2007-08 that originated in the United States as a result of the collapse of the U.S. housing market and then spread to the rest of the Western world through linkages in the global financial system that became a catalyst for the revival of ultranationalism and the surge of authoritarianism and far-right parties and movements across advanced capitalist democracies. Parties that were either non-existent or struggling to gain political legitimacy and mass popularity were propelled into the political mainstream in record time. As has been pointed out, many of the most prominent far-right parties in Europe today, such as those

in Germany and Italy, are “[children of financial crises](#).” The financial crisis of 2008 is also the primary factor behind the transformation of [Hungary](#) under Victor Orban into the most far-right nation in Europe.

In the United States, it was the Obama administration with its big bailouts for financial institutions and broken promises that set the stage for the rise of Trumpism by breeding citizen disillusionment with the government. The pandemic and the subsequent economic disruption, combined with the widespread protests over the death of [George Floyd](#) and President Donald Trump’s own response to the crisis with threats to use the [military](#) against protesters, led to a Biden victory over Trump in 2020. Young voters and progressives helped former President Joe Biden win even though he campaigned with a centrist strategy and refused to back policies such as universal healthcare and a wealth tax, which were being advocated by Sens. [Bernie Sanders](#) (I-Vt.) and [Elizabeth Warren](#) (D-Mass.), respectively.

Yet, Biden’s electoral victory in 2020 did not mean that Trumpism had been defeated. Trump had been spewing racism and hate from the moment he entered politics, and his promise to “drain the swamp” resonated with many voters who, like their counterparts across Europe, were fed up with politics as usual and were looking toward a public figure, a savior, who would confront the despicable elites. Unfortunately, citizens in contemporary capitalist democracies can be as easily duped, perhaps even more so, as those living under a dictatorship. But the Democrats lost the 2024 election not so much because of inflation but rather because of the disastrous [Kamala Harris](#) campaign in which she totally threw the working people under the bus. As a result, she helped Trump make gains among almost all demographic groups, including African American and Latino voters who have been traditional supporters of the Democratic party, and triumph in all the seven swing states. Her campaign confirmed the suspicions of many that the Democrats have become the party of the elites. Indeed, even voters who previously backed the Democrats see the party as unwilling to fight for people and “[overly focused on diversity and the elites](#),” according to new research by the progressive group Navigator Research.

Fed up with politics as usual and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, voters who have thrown their support behind far-right politicians appear not to be overly concerned with the drift of liberal democracies toward authoritarianism. For instance, [polling](#) shows that the majority of U.S. citizens support mass

deportations of undocumented immigrants. European countries have also been adopting deadly border policies as many of the continent's citizens demand stronger border controls. In Germany, for instance, the conservatives even worked together with the far-right party Alternative for Germany (AfD) in passing a non-binding motion calling for drastic restrictions on migration. Thankfully enough, the German parliament [rejected](#) the immigration bill by 350 votes to 338, with five abstentions.

What the drift toward authoritarianism says about the state of liberal democracy in the Western world is hardly encouraging news. Neoliberal capitalism has weakened in enormous and profound ways both the institutions and the culture of a democratic polity. Under neoliberal capitalism, liberal democracy has lost its capacity to respond to the needs of the working people. Economic liberalization, deregulation, privatization, and the dictatorship of finance capital (reinforced in the Anglo-Saxon context through the ideological prism of social Darwinism) have forced social democracy on the retreat across the Western world. In its turn, popular mainstream media reinforces the neoliberal ideology in multiple ways, such as by what [Noam Chomsky](#) calls “the strategy of distraction” and by “treating the public like children.”

For the past 40 years, neoliberal capitalism has been hard at work in making people think not like citizens but rather like consumers. A citizen is one who participates in the affairs of the polity and is concerned for the well-being of his or her community and the weak and most vulnerable among us. A consumer is one whose identity and values are with reference to the self and has surrendered power to the market and to those who make the ultimate decisions for his or her wants and needs. The first is active while the latter is passive. The [nearly 90 million eligible U.S. voters](#) who did not vote in the 2024 presidential election are consumers or what people in the classical city-state of Athens called *idiotes*—that is, the private individuals who did not hold office and did not participate in public affairs. Incidentally, it is from the Greek word *ἰδιώτης* that we get the contemporary English word “idiot.”

Indeed, one could credibly argue that the U.S. is now on track to having a full-fledged neofascist regime because nearly 90 million eligible voters opted to skip the 2024 presidential election, while millions who did vote for Trump did so out of pure ignorance as to what Trump represents. Acting like an emperor and engaging in colossal acts of cruelty toward the weak and the vulnerable surely

gives enormous pleasure and satisfaction to those racists and bigots that make up such a huge part of the MAGA movement, but this fact alone also reveals the rather exceptional fragility of U.S. democracy, since it rests on a political culture that is obviously incapable of escaping its racist roots. Trump's efforts to end diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs are deeply rooted in racism and will only make U.S. society less tolerant toward the "Other" and thus even more racist.

Ultimately, the most critical question is how we fight back against neofascism in the U.S. right now. Fascism is not inevitable. It reared its ugly head in the past and was ultimately defeated everywhere by people who refused to subordinate themselves to a brutal and hateful form of politics. But the fact that it is still rearing its ugly head all over the Western world today is clear proof that neoliberal capitalism has failed to keep fascism at bay. Increased protectionism, chauvinism, jingoism, and repression are objectively necessary for a system that thrives on exploitation and by widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots, all the while engaging in a vicious assault on the public sector.

Trump 2.0 is an unmistakably neofascist administration that will be run by highly dangerous and unqualified cabinet appointees. A left resistance to Trump's neofascist regime is vital but must be based on a political struggle that merges with every other struggle. The anti-fascist movement that must emerge against the tactics of the Trump 2.0 presidency should build strong alliances between workers, women, minorities, and environmentalists. The struggle for workers' rights, women's rights, minority rights, and LGBTQ rights are all part of the same struggle against 21st-century neofascism, a movement that wishes to turn back the clock.

Thus, creating an anti-fascist mass movement that merges different struggles is of the utmost importance. We should not forget that fascism in the past came to power after assuming the character of a mass movement. It is the same now. Trumpism is a reactionary social movement, and we may not be that far away from becoming a witness to the emergence of an army of modern blackshirts, especially since the pardoning of Capitol attackers has sent a clear message to white supremacists across this country that the current government is on their side.

As the renowned communist and feminist leader [Clara Zetkin](#) argued more than

100 years ago, fascism was “an expression of the decay and disintegration of the capitalist economy...”

The same can be said today in reference to the rise of neofascism. It is an expression of the inherent political, economic, and social contradictions of capital accumulation under a neoliberal regime.

Zetkin saw “fascism as the strongest, most concentrated, and classic expression... of the world bourgeoisie’s general offensive.” Accordingly, she concluded that “the struggle against fascism must be taken up by the entire proletariat.”

The same goes today. The struggle against neofascism in the U.S. must be taken by all those whose rights are being targeted under the second Trump administration. And the strategy to do so is the united front, as Clara Zetkin would surely have advocated if she were alive today.

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Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/create-anti-fascist-movement>

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