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USA

Trump and America: One-hundred days in the waiting room of fascism

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Since taking office 100 days ago, President Donald Trump has been engaged in destroying America's liberal, democratic state and its social welfare systems, taking away citizens' and non-citizens' rights, and attacking the institutions of civil society such as universities and the media. Trump's attack on our government and our society has shocked, disoriented, and disconcerted the American people. The resistance has been growing, but is still too divided, small, and weak to stop Trump

Trump dominates the Republican Party that controls not only the presidency, but also Congress and the Supreme Court. Trump created and put billionaire Elon Musk in charge of the Department of Government Efficiency which has run riot through government departments and agencies carrying out mass firings of hundreds of thousands of federal workers and cutting the budget of social welfare programs. Trump has signed 137 executive orders, many of them directed to ending diversity, equity, and inclusion programs that deal with racism. The flurry of actions by Trump, Musk and others are too numerous to list, so we look at only a few areas.

Trump, and his immigration team, Stephen Miller and Tom Homan, are ramping up mass deportations of immigrants. In August the Trump administration will end temporary protective status (TPS) which provides the right to live and work in the United States for 800,000 immigrants from 16 countries. They will have to leave or be subject to deportation to Haiti or Ukraine or wherever they're from. Trump's ultimate goal is to deport 11 million undocumented immigrants and he is prepared to do so under a 1798 law known as the Alien Enemies Act which allows the president to deport immigrants without a hearing. Hundreds of immigrants have been rounded up in violation of the Constitution and without due process and deported and imprisoned in El Salvador. Trump has said that he is also prepared to deport U.S. citizens in the same way.

Trump and his Secretary of Health Robert F. Kennedy Jr. have taken an axe to the two most important government public health institutions in the United States: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). They plan to cut the CDC from 82,000 to 62,000 employees. At the NIH 1,200 are being laid off and 30,000 scientists have had their research funding abruptly terminated. And \$2.7 billion will be cut from research grants.

Kennedy who has promoted conspiracy theories is an anti-vaxxer who now faces the largest measles outbreak in decades. In 2000, the United States declared that thanks to vaccination measles had been eliminated, but now, due to the anti-vaxxers who refused to vaccinate their kids, there are almost 900 cases of measles in 29 states, with two children and one adult dead. We risk a national epidemic.

The Republicans are anxious to extend Trump's 2017 tax cuts for the rich from 2025 to 2034 at a cost of \$4.5 trillion in federal revenue. At the same time, the Internal Revenue Service workforce that collects the taxes is being reduced from 102,000 to 65,000 employees, so fewer taxes will be collected. All of that means that with less income, there must be less spending. The New York Times writes that "The proposed budget for the 2026 fiscal year would cut billions of dollars from programs that support child care, health research, education, housing assistance, community development and the elderly."

The situation is frightening, dangerous. The resistance largely takes the form of legal action. Some 186 lawsuits have been brought against the Trump administration and in 122 of them the courts have at least temporarily paused the closing of agencies and firing of workers. There have been national protests that brought millions into the streets, but so far nothing is stopping Trump.

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