

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

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FEATURE

ARGENTINA

How to Defeat Milei: The Left's Strategy in a Reactionary Period

Martín Mosquera

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How social media invented the 'world's most racist country'

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USA

Primary Electoral Victories of DSA and Progressives Lead to ...

DAN LA BOTZ ·

The victory of Zohran Mamdani of DSA in the New York City mayoral election, sparked the recent series of victories that have led to increased tensions in the Democratic Party and in DSA itself. DSA is not itself an electoral political party but proposes and endorses candidates within the Democratic Party. DSA candidates' victories in congressional primaries in New York, Colorado, Michigan, and Florida, that is, in every region of the country and in both Democratic and Republican states, defeated more moderate Democrats backed by the party's leadership. The DSA has been winning by calling for taxing the rich, Medicare for all and an end to the U.S. funding of Israel's military. These DSA victories have had an enormous impact on the national political consciousness where socialism is now part of the debate.

So now some Democratic politicians want to crush DSA. The Democratic Party establishment argues that while these leftists may win in the primaries, they will be too far left for the general elections where they must compete not only with moderate Democrats, but also with Republicans and Independents, the latter now making up 43% of all voters—suggesting that the left's success may bring about a Republican victory. DSA's threat to the establishment led 15 centrist Democrats to issue an anti-socialist manifesto called Promise to America in which they defend capitalism, the police, and "fiscal discipline." It is a Democratic Party centrist faction's declaration of war against DSA. Of course, the right delights in this since Trump and the

Republicans now characterize not only DSA but the entire Democratic Party as "Communists."

At the same time that it is under external attack, there is also an internal struggle within DSA. DSA, which calls itself a "big tent" organization, is a congeries of caucuses, more than a dozen, not all of which support the party's electoral strategy of running in the Democratic Party. Some of these caucuses, which call themselves Communist, Marxist-Leninist, argue that supporting the Democrats, a capitalist party, is contrary to DSA's socialist goals. Some of these groups argue for building a revolutionary socialist party instead. Other caucuses hold that the key to social change is not electoral success, but powerful labor and social movements.

Often at the center of these debates is Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez who is seen as a possible candidate in the Democratic Party's presidential primary election in 2028. While she has not yet said if she will run, that possibility polarized DSA members. Many DSA members would be excited to see her run, while the anti-electoral caucuses argue that she has been transformed into a centrist Democrat—though her record in Congress does not show that. They fear electoral victories will draw DSA further into the Democrats' capitalist and corrupt world. The critics of the electoral strategy point to a real problem, the Democrats are a capitalist party dominated by the corporate oligarchy. But their alternative seems to be to run socialist candidates with little possibility of winning many votes.

Whether these electoral victories and the accompanying change in consciousness in the country can contribute to the kind of massive labor and social

movement that might propel real social change remains to be seen.

30 August 2026

NEPAL

The crisis in Nepal: climate crisis capitalism and the political economy of the Himalayas

KUNAL CHATTOPADHYAY ·

Such a disaster is not absolutely new in the history of Lang Tang. An earthquake in 2015 with a Richter scale reading of 7.8 had been recorded, with ice and rock falls from the same mountain as a result of which the langtang village was covered by the rocks and nearly 300 people had died. But there is a significant difference between the two events . The 7.8 Richter scale earthquake of 2015 had a direct cause while in 2026 we have found no evidence of such a tectonic trigger. Rather a part of the mountain broke and initially that avalanche was wrongly considered to be an earthquake.

But here the very word natural is facing a question. Glaciers have broken in the Himalayas in the past and glacier flash floods are not new. What is new is social economic system within which these natural processes are occurring. The mountains of Nepal have lost almost a third of their ice in the last 3 decades. In the recent decade the pace of glacier melting has increased by almost 65% compared to the past. Due to global warming ice is melting, the permafrost is weakening, the freeze thaw cycle is changing and as a result the ice and the solid soil that used to hold together the stones of the mountains are losing their stability. Scientists have not yet said that the particular glacier collapse of 26th August is solely or primarily due to climate change. But the situation in which the possibility and acuteness of such disasters are increasing, one can hardly doubt their relationship with the global warming that has been created by humans.

This is where an Ecosocialist analysis must start. The widely used notion that the climate crisis is

"man made" is inadequate and consequently false. All humans do not burn fossil fuel equally, all societies have not emitted carbon equally and all classes do not make the same kind of profit out of this destruction. It is the internal compulsions of capitalist production — the permanent accumulation, production and expansion of the market, the use of nature as free or cheap inputs have brought us into continuous direct conflict with the boundaries of life. Nepal is a country that is historically responsible only to a very small extent for global warming, yet it is the peoples of the Nepal hills who are paying with their lives for the rich industrialised countries and the large carbon dependent economies. This is the class and imperialist marker of climate injustice. This is where the question of climate change comes in but with caution. It is not yet firmly established that this particular avalanche was caused by climate change. In the cases of rock and ice avalanche geology, slope geometry, glacier dynamics, water, permafrost and many local factors work together.

An in-depth analysis of a specific incident might require months and even years. The 2021 crisis in Uttarakhand's Chamoli has not been directly attributed to climate change although it has been warned that global warming increases the possibility of such events. So ecosocialist criticism does not need to go beyond the findings of science. But the facts which are definite are deadly enough. From 1940 the summer temperature of this Langtang Lirung area has been rising by 0.29 degrees Celsius every decade. In 1996 to 2025 the average temperature was almost one degree more than that between 1961 to 1990. Between 2022 and 2025 four summers have been recorded as being among the five warmest summers in the last 86 years. July 2026

was the second warmest July in 86 years and the first 3 weeks of August showed the average temperature going above all previous August records. It is in this situation that on 26th August 2026 the mountain broke up in part.

Even more significant is the weakening of the permafrost. From 1957 to the present the glaciers of eastern Himalaya have lost on average a mass equivalent to ice of 30 metres thickness. Half of that has happened in the present century. The Yala glacier which is only 10 kilometres from where the disaster occurred was first surveyed in the 1970s and since then it has shrunk 66% and has retreated 784 metres. The annual average mass loss in 2012 to 2025 was 0.92 metre water equivalent. In 2024 it was 1.9 metres. Even more significantly the equilibrium line of Yala has gone up so far that the entire glacier is now practically within the melting zone.

In the entire Langtang catchment area the glacier area has gone down by almost 42% compared to what it had been during the little Ice Age. The rate of loss between 1815 and 1964 had been 0.11% but in 1964 to 2023 it rose to 0.49% with the fastest rise coming after the year 2000. As the ice cover removes the big glaciers are breaking up into smaller isolated glaciers and their numbers have gone up from 58 to 115. The connection between this and the so called "man made" (actually carbon guzzling big capital made) climate change is not a matter of speculation. The IPCC has concluded that the worldwide retreat of the glaciers from the 1990s is primarily due to human influence. But it is not all humans. It is a small number of corporations and a small number of extreme carbon emitting countries and the elites of those countries as well as of other countries. But to talk generally about global glacier retreat is different from the attribution of the specific avalanche of 26th August. Politically too this distinction is important. To deny the role of global warming by pointing to avalanches in the past is completely unscientific.

The degree of danger does not depend only on how much ice there is on the mountain but it depends

on how quickly that ice and the frozen ground under it is changing. If the glacier becomes thinner then the ice which had buttressed the steep rock faces gets thinner, the buttressing reduces, the melt water enters new fissures and failure planes; and when the permafrost warms up and melts, the ice which had been acting as a sealing agent on broken rocks becomes weakend. In other words compared to a stable cold glacier a relatively rapidly changing glacier rock system can be far more dangerous.

However, if we only hold external elements responsible then we will be concealing Nepal's own political economy. In the last few decades hydel-power has been hailed as the principal route to Nepal's development. The goal has been electricity generation, export, gaining foreign currency and developing the economic base thereby creating modernisation. Hydel-power is certainly not like coal or oil, and in order to come out of the grips of fossil fuel there is a need for hydroelectricity. But a project need not be socially and environmentally just, just because it is renewable. By blasting mountains to build roads, by damming up or diverting rivers, by building large hydropower complexes and transmission corridors and by developing the infrastructure for cross border trading on such an unstable geological reality, Nepal has been constantly increasing the risks. Research has already shown that in Nepal hydropower is mostly seen as a purely technical economic problem and the needs and knowledge of local communities dependent on the rivers have been kept outside the decision making processes.

So the cruel symbol of this disaster is that the hydel power which has been put forward as a green alternative to climate change has itself been damaged by climate change. The present flood has damaged several hydropower installations. Earlier during the flood of 2015, many hydropower projects and important infrastructures of the Sino-Nepal trading had been destroyed in the same area. In other words we are seeing simultaneously an ecological crisis and the crisis of a particular developmental model where mountains, rivers and glaciers have in

the first place been treated as exchangeable resources.

The question of class is inseparable from this. Floods do not affect everybody equally. Those who have proper houses, savings, cars, insurance, political connections and the ability to take shelter elsewhere are far less vulnerable than the peasants who cultivate on the slopes of the hills, the workers, small traders, transport workers and generally poorer families. In 2015 floods in the same area had shown that workers truck drivers small shopkeepers and people dependent on local livelihood had faced long term damages due to the closure of cross border trading. So the ecological disaster is simultaneously a class disaster.

In this context the recent political explosions in Nepal are also relevant. The youth anti-corruption movement of 2025 had shaken the old political order deeply. Agitators died due to police firing, there was tremendous anger and eventually the government of KP Sharma Oli fell. After the elections of 2026 though a new government came questions concerning corruption over centralised decision making, social discriminations and the accountability of the state have not gone away. So from an Ecosocialist perspective it is not possible to make a sharp demarcation between ecological democracy and political democracy. In a society where ordinary people cannot maintain effective democratic control over the decisions of the state, in such a society the democratic control of local communities concerning rivers, forests, mountains and energy infrastructures will also remain weak.

So the ecosocialist program is not simply one of carbon reduction. We need Himalayan ecological planning; We need long term monitoring of glaciers permafrost and slopes; we need effective early

warning and evacuation systems; a sharp control over constructions in risky river corridors; the power of democratic decision making by local communities over hydropower and road projects end ensuring that climate adaptation is not primarily the defence of private investment but rather the protection of human life and livelihood. It is necessary to demand that States and corporations which have been historically the major carbon emitters must donate for climate finance, transfer technology and provide loss and damage compensation. At the same time if that money goes into the hands of local elites the construction lobby and large infrastructure capital then the problem will merely be reproduced.

The present tragedy in Nepal is therefore also a warning for the future. The question is simply not why the glacier broke? The question is which social system is warming up the earth so rapidly, who is making a profit out of that, who is paying for that and in whose hands should the power to decide on the relationship between humans and nature rest? The ecosocialist answer is this crisis cannot be resolved while keeping ecological survival under the compulsions of capital accumulation. It is necessary to establish democratic social control over production, energy, land and infrastructure. It is necessary to have such a planned transformation where human needs rather than profits and the needs of reproducing the boundaries of nature will become the yardsticks for measuring development. The warning is particularly relevant in India, where the province of Sikkim and the Darjeeling areas of West Bengal are seeing exactly the same kind of "development", and Sikkim has already had warnings of ecological crises.

30 August 2026

PERU

The crisis will worsen with the Fujimorist victory

JORGE ESCALANTE ·

Despite the fact that the organisation Juntos por el Perú [1] won more than 9 million votes nationally and in most regions, mainly in the Andes and the Southern Andes, victory was given to Keiko Fujimori by the Jurado Nacional de Elecciones [2] and we entered another political period. This was an electoral victory riddled with irregularities, but one that does not end the political, economic, and social crisis that was forcefully expressed in the social uprising from December 2022 to March 2023, when the far right staged a coup against Pedro Castillo, and Fujimorism and its allies began to govern from parliament in an authoritarian manner, capturing almost all state institutions determined to continue the economic model that does not resolve the most pressing contradictions for Peruvians and only strives for the interests of powerful groups.

Since December 7, 2022, Keiko Fujimori and her mafia-like coalition have failed to defeat the social and citizen movement; they did not win the elections, and now they are preparing an authoritarian offensive against the majority of citizens, in favour of big business and international corporations, taking advantage of their control of the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Constitutional Court, the National Board of Justice, the Armed Forces, and the National Police. Keiko Fujimori will implement a continuation of the policies of her puppet predecessors: Dina Boluarte, José Jerí, and José Balcázar are now seeking legislative powers from Congress to implement their reactionary and anti-popular government plan. In addition to democratic and labour setbacks, they intend to crush social mobili-

sation by empowering the Armed Forces to intervene with a bill that deprives citizens of their human rights. Now, law enforcement could commit abuses, even killings, and will be tried in military courts—meaning they will investigate themselves if any accusations arise. The so-called Mafia Pact, led by Keiko Fujimori for the past ten years, is leading the country into a crisis of decay; applying a neoliberal model in deep crisis and also establishing a corrupt regime, a State with its back to the country, a bicameral parliamentary regime with a Senate with all the power; assaulting the institutions of state power.

A presidential message of continuity, a cabinet that expresses dictatorship, and the demand for legislative powers

Keiko Fujimori lacks the stature of a president or a great leader of the state; she is, in reality, an intermediary (lobbyist) for national and foreign private interests. That is why, in her inaugural address, she did not outline the major principles of a national project for the country, but rather continued measures favouring private capital projects, such as the anti-forestry law designed to repay favours to the Romero Group for logging and benefiting the palm oil industry. And so it is in every ministry, to such an extent that the bombastic increase in the minimum living wage to Peruvian Soles 1,300 [USD388] (a ridiculous Sol170 or less than USD51 increase) has been consigned to the freezer of the National Council for Labour and Employment Promotion. [3] The height of subservience is the appointment of an employee of the United States embassy as Foreign Minister, a person who has been a mouthpiece for the empire for 15 years, confirming that this government will be subservient to the interests of neo-fascist imperialism headed by Trump. In order to impose this reactionary govern-

ment plan they are requesting legislative powers from Congress to enable rigid enforcement without hindrance.

Unity, organisation and the struggle to confront the corrupt government and imperialism

In this first phase of government, Keiko rearticulates, realigns and deploys her conservative and ultraconservative forces. Her defeat in the election for the Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies and her fraudulent victory in the election for the Bureau of the Senate show that she does not have the parliamentary correlation of previous congresses, so governance will be more complex and her offensive will need to use all the power of the state. This is evident in the opening of criminal cases against retired colonel of the Peruvian National Police Harvey Colchadowho has led investigations into corruption, investigative journalist Gustavo Gorriti, and anti-corruption prosecutors Rafael Vela and José Domingo Pérez. It is also seen in the manipulation of judges to apply pro-crime laws and laws favouring military and police jurisdiction in the prosecution of military and police personnel.

The current Parliamentary group (JP, Ahora Nación or Nation Now, Partido Cívico OBRAS or Civic Party OBRAS), as well as the one united with the Partido del Buen Gobierno (Good Government party), must be part of this accumulation of forces acting in coordination with social and citizen struggles; for this task, a space of broad unity called Frente Patriótico, Democrático y Popular (Patriotic, Democratic and Popular Front or FPDP) has been formed.

The FPDP formed on July 26th of this year, a space that brings together various social organisations and the left, emerged to agree on a Platform for Struggle with the demand for solutions to urgent and unavoidable demands such as the repeal of pro-crime laws, the increase of the legal minimum wage to Soles1,500 or USD448, the freedom of Pedro Castillo and those unjustly imprisoned for the social uprising; as well as the resolution of regional, provincial and territorial demands in each

part of the country. At the same time, it must propose concrete measures of strategic scope, such as restoring the right to a referendum to hold a citizen consultation on whether or not they agree with a new Constitution, and others.

This Fujimori mafia government has not resolved the crisis; the existing polarisation is a reality that works against it. The main task is to strengthen the Patriotic Front at the national level so that it can resist and confront this reactionary and dangerous moment.

October elections for governors and mayors

In October, elections will be held for regional governors and mayors in provincial and district offices. Our Electoral Alliance Venceremos (We will Win) has registered 13 regional lists, 41 provincial lists, and more than one hundred district lists throughout the country. Another equally important task is to give priority support to the candidacy of our comrade Veronika Mendoza for governor in Cusco, and to obtain militant support in every region, province, and district for her. A victory in Cusco opens the opportunity for us to strengthen, from all over the southern Andes, the struggle against the Fujimori government and forcefully raise our most deeply felt demands, such as gas for all, the rights of indigenous peoples, a second agrarian reform for family farming, and to continue striving for a democratic solution to the existing crisis; for a Constituent Assembly and thus to bury the corrupt and subservient constitution of Fujimorism.

We make a united call to close ranks in this just citizen and popular struggle to defeat the anti-popular government plan of the Fujimori regime, but the task is more arduous than this. At the same time, it is crucial to advance in building a great Latin American unity to stop the neo-fascist project of imperialism led by Trump and his agents in our region. The only tool will be the broadest unity and winning the streets to our cause.

August 19, 2026

Translated and annotated by David Fagan
International Viewpoint from ***Sumate***.

Our Support for the Open Letter: To Iran's political prisoners, trapped 'between two blades of a scissors'

COLLECTIVE ·

Our Support for the Open Letter: To Iran's political prisoners

As migrants and refugees in diaspora and in exile from Iran, who have our loved ones suffering in the Iranian state's prisons and facing its gallows, we salute the signatories of the open letter to "Iran's political prisoners, trapped 'between two blades of a scissors'", published in *The Guardian* on 20 August 2026. With us stand comrades and organisations from across the world who see this struggle as bound up with their own.

The open letter was signed by a number of current and formerly incarcerated political prisoners, political organisers and scholars, including Angela Davis, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Yasin al-Haj Saleh, Ricardo Jiménez, Michael Löwy, and Walden Bello, among others, who wrote to incarcerated people in Iran, "we stand in solidarity with you". In response to the letter, some on the left have since called on signatories to withdraw, describing the letter as "imperialist-sympathetic", and three names have been removed. We wanted to respond with an open letter, demonstrating the widespread support from people across the world for those who stand unapologetically with the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated political prisoners of Iran.

As collectives and individuals who have for years organised against western and Zionist imperialist wars and occupations, as well as against the Islamic Republic's state violence inside and outside Iran's borders, we know how difficult it is to step outside mainstream geopolitical framings, familiar but de-

humanising, and stand in solidarity with communities whose reality and struggle do not fit the binaries of "good vs evil", "us vs them", "west vs the rest". Yet the communities across the globe who are oppressed by multiple local-global forces at once cannot afford the privilege of choosing between their oppressors as the "lesser evil".

At a time when the historical struggle for collective liberation across Iran is besieged by the US imperialist Zionist war and the Iranian government's mass executions on one side, and pro-war Iranian monarchist Zionism led by Reza Pahlavi on the other, the international solidarity articulated by the statement has brought an unexpected fresh breeze of hope and opened new horizons of liberation beyond borders, especially coming from current and formerly incarcerated political prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal, Yasin al-Haj Saleh and Ricardo Jiménez, among others.

As is to be expected, the open letter has led to a wave of condemnations from vanguards and gatekeepers of "anti-imperialism" who have long abandoned the very basic principles of the anti-imperialist tradition: international solidarity in support of lives crushed under the hammer of global capitalism, colonialism and imperialism. Instead of calling for the abolition of capital punishment, these vanguards justify the mass imprisonment, torture and executions of our people.

In the midst of US military and economic war on Iran, the Iranian state has been intensifying the execution of prisoners as a matter of "national security", by framing the imprisoned protestors as "foreign agents" and "spies" without providing any evidence except forced confessions under torture.

Meanwhile the real "foreign agents" and collaborators have been operating from within the top layers of the IRGC ruling class, providing US and Israel with intelligence regarding the location of assassinated officials and their meetings. This is not a conspiracy, it has been admitted publicly by high ranking officials such as Araghchi who framed it as an ongoing "security breach" within the system. In other words, in a classic scenario scripted by ruling classes, the wretched of the earth in Iran are being scapegoated and sacrificed as "foreign agents", so a new arrangement of power in the region could be built on the blood of the oppressed and the colonised.

The minoritised communities in Iran bear the heaviest brunt of Iranian carceral and border violence. Nearly two million Afghan migrants and refugees have been deported from Iran since the 12-day Zionist war on Iran. The government used the Zionist war as a pretext to intensify the racist and xenophobic campaign of mass deportation against Afghans, committing to the ethnic cleansing of a people who have lived and moved on these lands long before the establishment of the Iranian nation-state and its borders.

While the prison system in Iran affects the poor and marginalised from all communities, prisoners from minoritised, racialised and internally colonised regions such as Kurdistan, Balochistan, Ahwaz, and Lorestan, are disproportionately targeted by the Iranian state's system of mass incarceration and executions. In a manner that is not dissimilar to the US where Black, Latinx, Muslim and Indigenous communities are targeted disproportionately by the white supremacist settler colonial patriarchal dual system of mass incarceration and racial capitalism.

While our position against US imperialism and IRI executions may seem unusual to some, it is in fact a common position among labor unions, student collectives, feminist, racialised and minoritised groups inside Iran and in exile. The most recent statement by the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company reads as follows:

Today, as our country struggles under the weight of devastating economic crises, runaway inflation, the collapse of rial, U.S. and Israeli military attacks, the continuation of a devastating war, economic sanctions, widespread and severe repression, and warmongering policies, the authorities are once again responding to people's demands for bread, work, justice, freedom, and human dignity, with the most brutal instruments of terror and intimidation: the gallows.

The statement ends by declaring:

The death penalty must be abolished immediately! Political prisoners must be released! No to war, intervention, military aggression, and warmongering policies! The path forward for workers and the toiling people is unity and organisation.

A day doesn't pass without the families and supporters of prisoners on death row risking safety to gather in front of prisons pleading to stop the execution of their loved ones. Mostly to no avail.

Between 13 to 28 July 2026, as US bombs were falling on the already racialised and marginalised southern regions of Iran, over 1,500 brave prisoners from Ghezelhesar prison held a mass hunger strike against executions of their fellow prisoners. This happened alongside the weekly prisoner strikes of the "No-To-Execution Tuesdays" campaign, which has been ongoing for 134 weeks across more than 60 prisons, demanding an end to all executions.

On 28 July, the site of public execution in Isfahan turned into a spontaneous popular protest by people who had gathered to prevent the execution. The protest was suppressed and the execution took place. Even though the executions have continued, the prisoner's hunger strike together with the families brave resistance and spontaneous protests in Isfahan have empowered a fast growing movement for the abolition of the death sentence, as a unifying demand among different social and political move-

ments inside and outside Iran even as US bombs fall.

The confidential information published by *The Intercept* regarding ICE and Iranian state collaboration on deportation in the midst of the war, reveals how police-states work together, and hold diplomatic talks behind closed doors to coordinate mass deportations of migrants and refugees, even as they wage war against each other. The same point holds for recent normalisations of relations between European powers and the Taliban and Al-Sharaa regimes, with the aim of deportations of Afghans and Syrians from fortress Europe.

Lastly we want to affirm the simple and universal truth that the collective liberation of all war torn, occupied and colonised communities of the MENA/SWANA region and beyond are interconnected.

From the Palestinian liberation struggle against genocidal Israeli settler-colonialism backed by western and US imperialism, to the Sudanese revolutionary struggle against the RSF's genocidal and SAF's counter-revolutionary war, backed by different regional and global imperial powers, to the Afghan liberation struggle against the Taliban put back in power by the US after 20 years of "war on terror", to the Kurdish anti-colonial struggle for self-determination, to the Baloch anti-colonial struggle against Pakistani and Iranian colonial occupations, to the Ahwazi Arab anti-colonial struggle for self-determination, to Congo's struggle against Rwanda's military invasion and imperial extractivism, to Haiti's historical struggle against slavery, debt, and terror backed by western colonialism and imperialism, to Venezuela's struggle against US neocolonialism and state authoritarianism, to the Zapatista struggle against Mexican mal gobierno (bad government) and US imperialism, to Lebanon and Syria's struggle against Israeli colonial expansion and sectarian political elites, to West Papua's struggle against Indonesian colonialism backed by imperial powers, to the Saharawi struggle against Moroccan colonialism backed by Israel, to the Uyghur struggle against the Chinese

state's mass incarceration and surveillance, to the Rohingya struggle against Myanmar's military genocide, to the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination against Indian and Pakistani military states, to the Ukrainian struggle against Russian imperialism and invasion, European self-serving hypocrisy, and the Ukrainian state's anti-worker policies; these and all other struggles for collective liberation are inherently interconnected.

For us the popular slogan "Nobody's free until everybody's free" means forging, articulating and building solidarities that may seem to some confusing or unusual in a world where hegemonic and normative politics is defined by a multipolar, (neo)colonial and patriarchal capitalist nation-state system and its borders, borders that have been, and continue fragmenting, dividing, conquering, hierarchising the lands and the peoples of our planet.

Fannie Lou Hamer's statement "Nobody's free until everybody's free" means rejecting hierarchies of liberation and selective solidarities, even when violent binaries present themselves as common sense. A new world requires new solidarities, rooted in revolutionary imagination and radical love beyond borders and prison walls!

We take up the demands of the Tehran Bus Drivers and of prisoners organising across Iran: an immediate end to the war and to sanctions, the abolition of the death penalty, and the release of every political prisoner. Each demand needs the other.

Long live peoples' struggles everywhere against imperialism, colonialism, statism, capitalism, patriarchy and militarism of all colours!

Freedom for all prisoners facing tortures and executions in the prisons of Iran, Israel, US, China, Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia!

Freedom for Mumia Abu Jamal, Fred "Muhammad" Burton, Veronza Bowers and all other Black and Indigenous prisoners in Turtle Island!

Freedom for Varisheh Moradi, Pakhshan Azizi, Zeinab Jalalian and all imprisoned revolutionary Kurdish women!

Freedom for Mahrang Baloch and other revolutionary Baloch prisoners in the colonial prisons of Pakistan and Iran!

Freedom for Dr Hussam Abu Safiya, Khalida Jarrar, Marwan Barghouti and all other Palestinian prisoners fighting for liberation from inside colonial zionist prisons!

Freedom for Saadia Mosbah and all other prisoners in Tunisia fighting against the Tunisian state's anti-Black and anti-migrant policies dictated by European extractivism and border imperialism!

Freedom for all South Asian & Filipino migrant and domestic workers affected by the war in the region!

No to war! No to genocide!

No to executions! No to prisons!

No to militarism! No to imperialism!

No to zionism! No to patriarchy!

No to campism! No to statism!

No to imperialist regime change, yes to revolution from below!

Yes to international solidarity!

Yes to collective liberation!

Yes to peace, justice and self-determination for all colonised, oppressed and exploited people globally!

Yes to Land Back!

Jin Jiyan Azadi!

Further readings and statements against US zionist imperialism and Iran's militarised authoritarianism

* EZLN statement on Iran and US imperialism

* Ward. Gaza. Queer

* Mobadara

* Sudanese Anarchists Gathering

* Priscillia Kounkou Hoveyda, Collective for Black Iranians, published on Africa is a Country

anti colonial iran

The above statement was written by anti colonial iran, a collective that seeks to translate, publish and circulate statements and political actions taken by marginalised, currently, and formerly incarcerated, colonised and revolutionary voices from inside

Iran. These are voices which have been historically erased, censored and sidelined, internally by the Iranian state (first Pahlavist and later Khomeinist), and externally by the diaspora elite, as well as Western state and corporate media.

Our aims are to internationalise voices from below which reject statism, militarism, reformism, racism, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism and borders in all their forms.

Our project began with the Jina Amini uprising under the title of "Translators4Jina" and, after a short break, we resumed our project as anti colonial iran. Statements we have translated over the years from @collective98, Roja Collective, @Sarkhatism, and many more, can be found at <https://anticolonialirancom.wordpress.com/>

Our statement is supported by: (names will be updated as responses are submitted so there will be a time delay with when names appear.)

1. anti colonial iran
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3. Priscillia Kounkou Hoveyda, Collective for Black Iranians
4. Prof. Abbas Vali
5. Assoc Prof Maryam Saeedi, Carnegie Mellon University
6. Shahrzad Arshadi, filmmaker & playwright
7. Prof. Nayereh Tohidi, California State University, Northridge
8. Prof. Fatemeh Shams, Professor of Persian Studies & Intersectional Feminist Collective
9. Samira Rashti, Health Not Punishment Collective, UCLA
10. Naeimeh Doostdar, Women Revolutionary Council & Amsterdam Vrij University
11. Amir Ahmadi Arian, Binghamton University
12. Nazan Üstündağ, Alice Salomon Hochschule
13. Zhaleh Sahand, former political prisoner
14. / آناهیتا رحمانی ، زندانی سیاسی سابق و فعال زنان و علیه اعدام / Anahita Rahmani, former political prisoner, women's rights and anti-execution activist, Toronto
15. Shokoufeh Sakhi, Ph.D, Adjunct faculty,

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| 22. Dr Mohammad-Reza Nikfar, IranAcademia | 54. Mona Hadisi, Iran Freedom Congress |
| 23. Omid Shekari, University of Pittsburgh | 55. Dr Mahdi Ghodsi, wiiw, WU, CMEG, Iran Freedom Congress |
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| 44. Muborak Sharif, Independent scholar | 76. Bahar Almasi, Independent Cultural Activist |
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169. Elea Foster, Greece	186. Claudette Bégin, Teamsters Local 2010, retired, Union City, CA
170. Charlotte Valloe	187. Jason Dawsey, Historian, Arizona State University
171. Lily Fox, York	188. Alex Larsen, Denmark
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UKRAINE SOLIDARITY

Aid Ukraine: Build the Convoy

FRED LEPLAT ·

Ukrainians have been fighting against occupation since 2014 when Russia occupied Crimea. Many more have been involved fighting since Russia's all-out invasion, which started in February 2022. At the time of the all-out invasion in 2022, many thought Ukraine would soon be occupied, Zelensky in exile and a puppet government installed. This did not happen. The Ukrainian people fought back. It is increasingly clear there is no easy path to victory for Putin.

Ukraine's cities suffer from heavy Russian bombing, hitting housing, schools, colleges and hospitals. This bombing of civilian targets is a war crime. Often rescue workers and ambulances are targeted in a second wave of attacks. Ukraine urgently needs more defensive missiles to protect the civilian population.

Ukraine is increasingly taking the war into Russian territory with long-range drone attacks on military and economic targets. Unlike Russia it is not targeting hospitals, schools and civilian housing.

Russia's war

The Russian government is telling the peoples of the Russian Federation that the war is a re-run of 1941-45, when the Soviet Union was part of a war against fascism, forgetting the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939-41. The Russian state puts out disinformation both within the Russian Federation and to the world, claiming the Ukrainians are all neo-Nazis, that Ukraine is corrupt etc. Ukrainians increasingly feel that it is the Russians who are the fascists, as they experience war crimes and occupation.

It is estimated the Russian Federation has suffered 1.4 million battlefield casualties (including dead, wounded and missing in action). Increasingly Russia is looking to troops recruited from other countries to fight its war on Ukraine, rather than risk a high death toll amongst their own citizens leading to growing anti-war sentiment in Russia.

Putin continues to bring in troops from North Korea. Up to 50,000 may be deployed. The Russian army is also supplied via human trafficking operations in which civilians from other countries are promised jobs in Russia, and then find themselves in the Russian army and sent to the front, often with minimal equipment and training.

Occupied territories

One of the major reasons for continued Ukrainian resistance is the situation of Ukrainians in Crimea and the other occupied territories of Ukraine. There is compulsory Russification, with requirements to take a Russian passport to access pensions and healthcare and to maintain ownership of homes.

Teachers have to teach a Russian-imposed curriculum in schools. Even those Ukrainians not involved in active resistance to the occupation may face theft of property, violence, rape and death.

Russia has abducted around 20,000 Ukrainian children from the occupied territories. Some of these children are in military academies where they are being brought up to be soldiers who will attack Ukraine. There cannot be a peace settlement without the return of the missing children.

People who say the Ukrainians should make concessions to end the war should ask themselves whether they would be prepared to live under these conditions. If the answer is "no", do not ask it of Ukrainians.

Ukrainian prisoners in Russian captivity

As prisoner exchanges have taken place many Ukrainians have been shocked by the contrast between the health of the Russians being sent home and the appearance of the Ukrainians returning from captivity.

Putin calls Russia's invasion of Ukraine a "special military operation". He has not formally declared war on Ukraine, because he denies Ukraine is a country.

One brutal consequence of this is that Ukrainian soldiers in Russian custody have not been given prisoner of war status. They are held in general prisons often along with Russian prisoners. Returning Ukrainian prisoners have often lost a third of their body weight and been subject to torture and severe ill-treatment in Russian custody. Some have died on return to Ukraine as a result of the conditions of their imprisonment.

Zaporizhzhia power workers

One example of the brutality of Russian occupation is the treatment of the workers at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station. This plant came under Russian occupation on 4 March 2022. Many of the workers endured harsh treatment and 15 workers were abducted, have faced show trials and received long prison sentences. There is a campaign for their freedom.

Ongoing solidarity

in the face of continuing invasion, war crimes, and brutal treatment of prisoners, the Ukrainian people need solidarity as much as ever. This can take the form of material aid, support for sanctions against Russia, support for Ukrainian refugees and building the international solidarity convoy.

It is also about supporting the left and labour movement in Ukraine who are not just fighting the Russian invasion, but on the home front fight against the neoliberal measures of the Zelensky government. They are fighting for a future after the

war with a socially just reconstruction for the people, not the oligarchs. We can support them in that by campaigning for Britain and other countries, to cancel the debt owed by Ukraine. In Ukraine, the left organisation Sotsialnyi Rukh (Social Movement), a permanent observer to the Fourth International, campaigns strongly for workers rights in Ukraine and has members serving in the armed forces of Ukraine. It has supported the call for the convoy.

One important part of the struggle to protect Ukrainian independence is the maintenance of sanctions on Russian oil and liquid natural gas. The sale of these products directly funds the Russian war effort. Russia is operating a shadow fleet to transport sanctioned goods.

Refugees

Ukrainian refugees are coming under attack in several countries. This is part of general anti-migrant sentiments, fuelled by the far-right. Ukraine solidarity movements must defend the rights of Ukrainian refugees and the rights of Russian war resisters, who if deported to Russia may be drafted or imprisoned.

Build the convoy

The International Network in Solidarity with Ukraine (INSU) is building an international convoy to take aid to Ukraine and to remind the world of the sufferings of the Ukrainian people and the need for solidarity. It is an overland global flotilla.

The convoy will leave from departure points in Scotland, England, Belgium, Barcelona, France and Italy and Scandinavia. Public meetings will be held at stopping points on the journey to publicise the work of the convoy and build support for Ukraine.

- To find out more about, to sponsor, volunteer and donate, please see <https://solidarityconvoyukraine.com/>
- Ask your trade union branch, trades union council, or community group to sponsor the

convoy and donate to the aid for Ukraine, and plan to hold public meetings with Ukrainians and/or the International Campaign for

Solidarity with Ukraine, speakers about Ukraine and the convoy.

- Please share information on social media

AntiCapitalist Resistance

BRITAIN

What Jason Arday's death says about our society

SIMON HANNAH ·

Jason Arday is dead. The 41 year old Black academic from Cambridge was hounded by the British press for the last few weeks with accusations of plagiarism and outlandish stories about his personal life. The nation was gripped, intrigued about it, forgetting there was a human at the centre of it, someone with a life to live. Someone whose only possible 'crime' was academic plagiarism.

The entire story came about because of one racist fanatic, Nathan Cofnas. Cofnas had been sacked from his Cambridge job for saying that Black people were not intelligent and without Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) hiring practices such as positive discrimination they would only succeed as entertainers and athletes. This wretched man recast himself as a crusader, going through Black academics' careers and publications to find any dirt or inconsistencies, any publications that might show academic malpractice to prove his point. He found Arday's PhD from Liverpool John Moore University and claimed it was largely plagiarised.

Liverpool John Moore stood by their decision to issue him the PhD. Any subsequent investigation was between Arday, his employer and the university that awarded the PhD. But it was made into a public spectacle by sinister right wing forces, desperate to prove a wider point, and conduct a public trial to hang a Black man's career.

And this is the first claxon for racism. The press rubbed their hands with glee – salivating at the prospect of tearing down Arday. Arday was subjected to intense media scrutiny beyond anything a white academic has received in living memory. Lists are already circulating of white academics accused of fabrications or embellishments in their in-

tellectual work, but The Telegraph and The Times were not interviewing their ex-students to get a character profile on those teachers. It was not just the right wing press, the Guardian also contributed several articles on his situation.

Modern academia

And what does this tell us about modern academia? An institution rife with accusations of plagiarism. When the future of academia itself is being called into question due to pretty much every student, as well as some academics, using AI to write and mark papers? When there is a replicability crisis in science, researchers and academics unable to replicate the alleged outcomes of their peers to establish consistent results?

People have said that Arday was a fantasist and many of us read online the incredible claims of long distance running prowess and how much money he raised for charity. He had recently been paid £1.4 million for his memoirs. But how many of us know people that embellish stories? Make up facts? How many of us have lied on our CVs? Fake it till you make it. Hustle culture. Arday spoke about being an autistic Black man trying to navigate the world. Battling that crushing feeling of irrelevance in a world that tells you that you don't matter or you should get back in your box.

Arday was put under a spotlight and subjected to the court of public opinion and the feeling that all the things he had said did not stack up became more evident. But how many other people walking around would also crumple under similar levels of national scrutiny with full time journalists going through your personal life looking for dirt?

Let's be real, self promotion is necessary to modern life. Creating a narrative about your own life for

credibility is what every celebrity does, what every politician does, what your mate down the pub going through a divorce does, what your friend does when she's feeling hurt and wants to ego project confidence. Arday might have gone further than most and was hoping to make money from his memoirs, but this constant drive for celebrity, recognition and fame is something built into capitalism, into how we are encouraged to see humans as geniuses or 'people with incredible stories' that get turned into movies. The recent The Salt Path controversy is just another example of the way the book industry encourages these stories.

No doubt people will blame the university for hiring someone "unsuitable for the job". Shifting the blame onto DEI initiatives – already under attack by the far right – and away from the racist witch hunters. In an academic system built on hypocrisy, elitism and increasingly grasping after whatever scraps of money they can get to survive – late stage capitalism hates intellectuals – we face deeper problems than a possibly plagiarised PhD. Even if the university was to have taken disciplinary action it wasn't the Telegraph's job to decide who lives and who dies.

Lynching

What was the point of any of it beyond the obvious desire to see a Black man's career get hung?

Some will say it was tragic that he died but – he set the cause of racial equality back because of his behaviour. The reality is Arday was held to a higher standard than any white academic and it was the racists and the media making this into an intense publicity storm that is the real danger here.

The more we look at the forces arraigned against Arday the more it feels like a political motivated assassination. Or a public lynching.

This sad event reminds me of Pat Parker's 1985 poem Jonestown about how behind the tragic death of oppressively racialised people lies the reality of a society that did not care about them, that punished them for who they were or could not support those

people with mental health issues or autism or any of the thousand other aspects of humanity:

*"No one had ever cared
that much about me before
and it came home
the messages of my youth
came clear
the Black people
in Jonestown
did not commit suicide
they were murdered
they were murdered in
small southern towns
they were murdered in
big northern cities
they were murdered
as school children
by teachers who didn't care
they were murdered
by policemen
who didn't care
they were murdered
by welfare workers
who didn't care
they were murdered
by church people
who didn't care
they were murdered
by politicians
who didn't care
they didn't die at Jonestown
they went to Jonestown dead*

[...]

*they died in
the school rooms
they died
in the streets
they died
in the bars
they died
in the jails
they died
in the churches
they died
in the welfare lines*

Black folks do not

Black folks do not

Black folks do not commit suicide."

This is the cold reality: Jason Arday was driven to his death by a cruel world that was using the excuse of academic rigour as a cover to destroy someone that they hated. They hate him because he was Black and they want to remove Black people from public life. Jason Arday was a casualty in the race war that the far right aims to inflict on Britain, and people like Elon Musk are actively agitating for.

And right now I care far more about that than I do about someone allegedly copying parts of their PhD.

15 August 2026

Source: **Anti*Capitalist Resistance.**

USA

The Looming Election

AGAINST THE CURRENT EDITORS ·

But amid a deeply unpopular ruinous war, and frightening insecurity for tens of millions of Americans fearing for their future, this year's November 2026 elections are unpredictably unpredictable. The question goes well beyond whether the Democrats — and which Democrats — might overturn the narrow Republican Congressional majorities.

National and even international attention — and \$61 million of dark money — were drawn to the August 4 U.S. Senate Democratic primary in Michigan, and the victory of progressive insurgent candidate Dr. Abdul el-Sayed. More will be said below on its meaning and implications.

Much will probably change between the writing of this editorial and the election. Multiple swirling uncertainties include:

1) What might be the state of the U.S. war with Iran? Another truce, more negotiations and stabilized oil prices, or massive escalation and a war spreading through the region, with oil at or over \$150 a barrel, or — perhaps most likely — something messily in between?

2) What might the U.S. economy look like with down-and-up fuel prices, Trump's off-and-on tariffs, and sectors of health care, construction and agriculture potentially crippled by mass immigrant detention and deportation?

None of these can be known, particularly when Trump's own policies shift with every day's half-de-ranked Truth Social posts.

3) To what lengths could Trump and the Republican cult go to preserve their power? Last-ditch moves to ram through Trump's massive voter-suppression Enslave America Act, if not at the

federal level then adopted by some states, or to block voting by mail? Among the openly discussed scarier scenarios, ICE or Border Patrol agents stationed at polling places? Attempts to seize ballots, or to prosecute state election officials who refuse to obey unconstitutional government orders?

Presidential proclamation of a phony "state of emergency"? Rightwing mobs unleashed to block counting of votes? Sabotage of postal delivery of mail ballots?

Right now, the likelihood of such extreme and high-risk events may seem relatively low. The consequences, however, could bring a fundamental crisis of government legitimacy and what remains of Constitutional process.

Insurgencies Right and Left

Assuming for the moment a generally "normal" election process, we do know that the Trump 2 administration is more unpopular by the month, and Republican incumbents in critical Congressional district and Senate races look to be in serious trouble. Yet the Democratic Party is even more unpopular, if possible, than the Trump-cult GOP.

Undoubtedly the immediate primary factors driving popular anger are economic: food and fuel price inflation, health insurance costs making medical care inaccessible for millions, fears among technical workers that rampant Artificial Intelligence might wipe out their current jobs and future employment chances.

There are insurgencies within both capitalist parties, most obviously in the Democratic Party and left-moving parts of its voter base, but also among MAGA voters disillusioned over Trump's broken promises to "fix the economy" and "end forever wars."

On the MAGA-GOP side, Trump deflects with raves about "radical left Democrats" and the fantasy specter of a Cuban-driven "Communist threat," while advertising the brilliant successes of his tariffs which people increasingly can see as disastrous in their own lives. The gangster administration doubles down on sadistic immigration detentions and deportations.

Trump's antics aren't working terribly well as some former loyalists peel off toward (even more) irrationalist and antisemitic extremism. The administration itself is divided between, for example, the traditional militarism of the late Senator Lindsey Graham and Marco Rubio — now Trump's viceroy to run Venezuela — and J.D. Vance, whose neo-isolationist streak combines with open admiration for Europe's far right and affinity with Vladimir Putin's Russia.

Nonetheless the Republican machinery with its bottomless resources of corporate and dark money, the still-powerful Trump cult following, and the power of partisan and blatantly racial district gerrymandering enabled by the far-right Supreme Court majority, remains formidable. Its defeat is by no means certain. By most counts there are only 20 or so House of Representatives districts, out of the total 435, that are genuinely competitive outside of a massive "wave" election.

The Republicans' open intention to reject election results if they don't win brings a higher level of volatility, fear and more unpredictable unpredictability into the political climate.

Among the Democrats

We need to be clear on two points. (1) The capitalist Democratic Party will not be "transformed" by some progressive or democratic surge; but (2) in the absence of viable independent politics nationally, what's happened in the primaries reflect popular anger and political volatility and can't be ignored.

The open revolt against a sclerotic entrenched party leadership reflects a confluence of issues where the Democratic leadership has failed, retreated or col-

lapsed. Running scared, the establishment's backlash is already on display.

Rahm Emanuel, a potential 2028 presidential candidate, mentor and chief of staff of Barack Obama, and former mayor of Chicago where he fought a bitter and losing war to break the Chicago Teachers Union, writes in *The Wall Street Journal* that the progressive or democratic socialist left would "spoil" the Democrats' prospects.

When party progressive activists demand actual solutions to the crises that are crushing people's lives and hopes, establishment corporate centrists respond with calls for "realism," gradualism and the stagnant consultant-driven campaign tactics that lose elections over and over again. The centrist Third Way promises a \$15 million drive to attack democratic socialism.

The critical issues include the corruption of politics by corporate PAC and billionaires' money; the crying need for national "Medicaid For All" health coverage; the obscene concentration of wealth at the top; the Trump gang's deregulation spree and "drill baby drill" lunacy while North America and Europe literally burn; and the anti-immigrant terror that has sparked anti-ICE mass resistance.

Not least is rising fury over Israel's state genocide in Gaza, murderous ethnic cleansing in the occupied West Bank, and annexationist invasion of south Lebanon. It's remarkable and unprecedented that a majority of Americans — among all sectors except older Republicans — view Palestine more sympathetically than Israel. Even Rahm Emanuel warned an Israeli audience, despite his undying Zionist loyalty, that Israel's behavior is hemorrhaging support in the United States.

The Wire, the newsletter of Jewish Voice for Peace, reports that since the election of Zohran Mamdani "11 JVP Action-endorsed candidates, including six congressional candidates have won their primaries — not in spite of but because of their unwavering support for Palestinian freedom." (Special JVP Action PAC issue, July 31)

The Biden-Harris administration is quite rightly despised for enabling the Gaza genocide, even though it knew the magnitude of the slaughter from the beginning. Israeli prime minister Netanyahu is widely despised for luring Trump with flattery and the prospect of quick, world-changing "victory" over Iran.

Battle Grounds

These combined factors have brought about an insurgency that's seen the mayoral election of Zohran Mamdani in New York City and some notable Democratic primary challengers, although of course there are losses too like Cori Bush's defeat in Missouri. Francesca Hong lost the Wisconsin gubernatorial primary by less than half a point.

In media reporting as well as Trump vitriol, the Democratic Socialists of America are seen as the driving force behind the anti-establishment upsurge. Undoubtedly DSA plays a significant role in some of these races (as in Mamdani's victory, and for example in promoting a notion idea of Alexandria Ocasio Cortez running for president in 2028). But DSA is not the only factor.

In the nationally spotlighted open Senate race in Michigan, public health expert Dr. Abdul el-Sayed took on an established AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) centrist Democrat Haley Stevens in the August 4 primary. Identifying not as a socialist but as an outspoken advocate of Medicare for All and ending aid to Israel, El-Sayed was targeted by "pro-Israel" and corporate PACS with some spent on toxic attack TV ads and mailers.

El-Sayed's campaign energized Arab community, progressive and pro-Palestinian activism including the formation of "Jews for Abdul" and "Women for Abdul" to counter the attacks.

Meanwhile AIPAC (which generally devotes its resources to primary rather than general elections) openly says it will continue its effort to defeat El-Sayed. Undoubtedly its ads will especially target

Jewish, Black and women voters with the same toxic lies they spread during the primary.

A significant test of Democrats' "unity" will be whether Michigan and national figures — from outgoing governor Gretchen Whitmer to former president Obama — will energetically support El-Sayed as he runs against rightwing Trump Republican Mike Rogers, in what will be an exceptionally expensive and dirty contest that may decide which party controls the U.S. Senate.

Some progressive fantasies to the contrary notwithstanding, under the most optimistic scenarios — should the Democrats take control of the Senate and maybe even replace the discredited Chuck Schumer with someone like Senator Chris Van Hollen — the Democrats might become a genuine liberal opposition party in action rather than mostly empty talk.

That could be a big improvement — and no doubt revive many dormant illusions about the Democratic Party — but far from the transformation of social-democratic dreams. Frankly, on the national level this outcome is pretty much the ceiling of possibilities that might be achieved electorally.

In the House of Representatives, a swing to a Democratic majority would put the Speakership in the hands of Hakeem Jeffries — a committed centrist and the party's number-one beneficiary of AIPAC support.

In addition to the Democratic establishment counter-offensive, not to mention Trump's raving about the Communist menace (although his White House rant was pretty much a dud), there are deeper obstacles to the success of progressive Democrats or for that matter, activist movements.

The movements' outreach to the most critical sectors of society remains limited. This was not only visible in the No Kings Day mobilizations of the past couple years — large, creative and energetic but mostly white in their large majority. The Black

community is politically engaged, but with its own urgent concerns.

African American voters, who constitute the backbone of the Democratic vote in many states including especially the South, have been a bulwark of the party establishment at strategic moments. This was notably shown in the 2020 presidential primary in South Carolina, where the leading Black Congressional representative James Clyburn rallied the vote for Joe Biden, scuttling the rising Bernie Sanders candidacy.

The Detroit vote was also a big part of why Abdul el-Sayed's razor-thin victory in Michigan was so much closer than polls predicted. Indeed, in the final stage of the primary Clyburn came in to support Stevens, whose campaign heavily promoted her advertised connections to the African American community, to Black women in particular, and the endorsements she received from Black elected officials (as well as prominent white Michigan establishment of course).

There are powerful Black-led and multi-racial protests around numerous cases of police brutality

and murder of African American community members. The difficulty arises because much of the community sees the supposedly "more electable" Democratic mainstream as its only solid defense against the Trump-Republican rampage that ravages Black people's lives and rights.

For the left, the continuing tragedy is the absence of a meaningful political option independent of the Democratic Party. Local independent political campaigns are a viable possibility and important to be pursued, but only a first step in a very long march to any kind of national political alternative.

For independent politics to become a viable factor in the United States, Black as well as Latinx movements must be central forces from the outset. That's an enormous challenge, especially in the face of the very real intense menace from the right.

At this moment, the only really predictable thing in crisis-ridden America is how much hangs in the balance, and not only in the looming midterm elections. Elections don't determine the future, but they help create the terrain of battles to come.

September-October 2026, ATC 244.

SOUTH AFRICA

How the 1976 uprisings led to the people's education movement of the mid-1980s in Soweto

TERRI MAGGOTT ·

Fifty years ago, the student uprisings of June 1976 radically altered the terrain of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. They laid the foundations for the mass resistance of the mid-1980s, as they opened up new possibilities for solidarity between students, workers, parents, and teachers, and galvanised nationwide resistance beyond Soweto. Until today, the events of June 1976 remain a global symbol of resistance to apartheid and genocide beyond South Africa.

Ten years after June 1976, Sowetans were again at the forefront of education resistance. In December 1985, local organisations saw 1986—the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprisings—as a watershed year in Black education, given the sustained interruptions to schooling since 1976. Activists in Soweto and other townships drew power from the emerging civic movement that was seizing control over local governance, as well as from the trade union movement with the launch of Cosatu in 1985. They called for a "people's education" that spoke to the histories, hardships and hopes of all South Africans.

Trade unions and civics

The June 16 uprisings erupted from students' frustration with the implementation of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in Black urban schools from 1976 onwards. However, the protests that followed transcended the language issue. The militancy of students was grounded largely in the ideology of Black Consciousness (BC), which pushed them beyond their school grounds and into the struggle against the racial capitalist system of apartheid,

during which they forged strategic ties with workers and trade unions. In August and September of 1976, students and workers waged two successful stayaways that bridged intergenerational divisions evident during the uprisings.

In Soweto, another source of intergenerational solidarity came from progressive parents. Shortly after 16 June 1976, Soweto parents formed the Black Parents' Association (BPA) to assist families of detained, missing and injured students. It included important activists such as Winnie Mandela, Dr Nthato Motlana, Sally Motlana and Rev. Manas Buthelezi. The BPA was banned in October 1977 but soon reconstituted as the Committee of Ten, chaired by Dr Motlana, a local physician and ANC member. Many of these activists were detained for their solidarity actions.

When the Soweto Civic Association (SCA) was launched in 1979, the Committee formed its first executive. By then, the state had dealt a lasting blow to the BC movement. This coincided with (or left space for) the re-emergence of Charterist politics through organisations such as the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), which was also launched in 1979.

Rather than crush resistance, state repression instead birthed a deeper commitment among the masses to dismantling apartheid. The regime tried to reform some of the more stringent apartheid laws, but the formation of the UDF in 1983 signalled mass rejection of any reform that did not grant full political power to the Black majority.

Liberation now, education later

By 1984, Black students were leading internal resistance to apartheid, with the mighty COSAS spear-

heading class boycotts across the country. By 1985, these had rendered township schools ungovernable. In August 1985, COSAS was banned, just one month after State President Hendrick Verwoerd—himself a key architect of Bantu Education policy—declared a state of emergency. The situation in schools was so violent that military and police presence had become an almost permanent feature of township school life. In response, many parents sent their children to the relative safety of the Bantustans. The boycotts in Soweto threatened to disrupt year-end exams scheduled for October 1985. Learning was virtually impossible, and the political climate was compounded by dilapidated school buildings, underqualified teachers, and lack of access to essential textbooks and stationery.

As boycotts continued, parents' committees sprang up nationally. In Soweto, an SCA meeting on 13 October 1985 deliberated a collective response to the exam issue, and the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee (SPCC) was formed. It was mandated to meet with the Deputy Minister of Defence and Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, about removing the military from Soweto schools so that exams could proceed in (relative) peace. A week later, the SPCC reported to a second meeting that Vlok was unavailable or unwilling to grant them an audience. Instead, representatives met with Sam de Beer, Deputy Minister of Education and Development Aid, who agreed that exams would be postponed to 7 January 1986. However, 1985 year-end exams were only written in March 1986, after a complicated battle with authorities.

Unlike the BPA, who had limited engagement with formal education authorities, the SPCC met with various ministers at least ten times, from its inception in late 1985 to its demobilisation in 1987. It was made up of key Soweto activists who were deeply impacted by 1976. Curtis Nkondo, of the non-racial National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA), was the principal of Lamula High School in Meadowlands. He was also a leading figure in the Soweto Teachers Action Committee that mobilised teachers in a mass exodus of the profes-

sion in 1977, in defiance of Bantu Education. Dr Motlana, a leading ANC activist from Dube, was instrumental in the formation of the BPA and Soweto Committee of Ten. Like many young people after 1976, one of Motlana's own sons skipped the border to join the liberation movement in exile, which shows the deep entanglement of personal and political life.

On Christmas Day 1985, the SPCC sent a three-member delegation to meet with exiled ANC leaders in Lusaka, Zambia, and thus consolidated its position in the constellation of Congress alliances.

People's education for people's power

Another pressing issue for the SPCC was the schools boycott. The banning of COSAS forced angry students to re-organise, and organisations like the Soweto Students' Congress (SOSCO) and the Transvaal Students' Congress (TRASCO) emerged to fill this void. They worked closely with the SPCC to organise what is perhaps the most historically significant convention in Black education, the National Education Conference at Wits University on 28–29 December 1985.

About 700 representatives from 200 organisations, including the South African Council of Churches, South African Committee on Higher Education, UDF, NEUSA, Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), and many other student, youth and civic structures, attended. They resolved that students would return to school in January 1986, but on condition that the government meet six critical demands by March 1986:

- Reschedule examination dates to a time agreed on by students, parents and teachers;
- Lift the emergency in all areas;
- Withdraw the military from all townships;
- Unban COSAS;
- Reinstate all dismissed teachers and release all detained students; and
- Allow schools to elect democratic student representative councils (SRCs).

The Wits conference marked a massive shift in education resistance, and the earlier slogan "liberation now, education later" was replaced by "people's education for people's power". This emphasised occupying and taking control of schools, rather than boycotting. Schools were thus repositioned as sites of renewed struggle. This shift coincided with a broader move towards adult literacy and worker education in the trade unions. The conference also mandated the formation of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) to coordinate national campaigns against apartheid.

As March 1986 drew closer, the SPCC realised that its demands would go unmet. Under the auspices of the NECC, the SPCC organised a second national conference in Durban on 27–28 March 1986.

The Durban conference defied the government by declaring COSAS unbanned. It called on students to elect SRCs in schools, and on parents to withdraw from school management committees and elect parent-teacher-student associations (PTSAs) instead. Both BC- and ANC-aligned groups participated in both conferences, and their differences produced tangible tensions over People's Education. AZAPO representatives walked out on the first day of the Wits conference, and because the Durban conference took place on the same weekend as the national conference of the BC-aligned National Forum, ANC-aligned organisations dominated the trajectory of the process. But

BC groups, especially students, participated robustly in the NECC up until the early 1990s.

Soweto activists lead

Ten years after 1976, Soweto activists were again leading education resistance. These activists drew on local political networks established in the 1970s and evoked the memory of 1976 to channel student frustration away from the frontlines and back into classrooms, towards "people's education". But on 12 June 1986, just days before the tenth anniversary, the government detained hundreds of anti-apartheid activists, including some of the SPCC. By 1987, the NECC itself was banned, and the SPCC activists that had been absorbed into its leadership faced serious police intimidation. By 1989, People's Education was effectively demobilised. It was only in 1990 that a new layer of activists emerged, under the banner of the Soweto Education Coordinating Committee, to take up education liberation for Sowetans.

While the road from 1976 to 1986 was not linear, without the disruptive actions of students on that fateful day in 1976 and the politics that came from it (student-worker solidarity, parents' organisations, and the proliferation of local education crisis committees nationally), people's education would arguably not have manifested in the mid-1980s.

15 July 2026

Source: Amandla.

ALBANIA

Three months of mass protests in Albania

GERHARD KLAAS ·

Sometimes, tens of thousands of people take to the streets – in a country with only 2.5 million people. What began as a mobilization against environmental degradation has become a questioning of the system. The Albanian national flag and KLA symbols fluttered in the wind alongside American flags and flamingos. What we are talking about here is nature, corruption, capitalism.

It all started because of a piece of coastline. On the island of Sazan, Atlantic Incubation Partners LLC, linked to Kushner's investment company, Affinity Partners, wants to invest €1.4 billion. €4.7 billion is also earmarked for tourism projects in the Narta Lagoon near Zvërnec. These two areas are protected; In particular, it is one of the most important European stopovers for flamingos and other migratory birds. They are to give way to hotels, apartments, villas and a marina. For the government of Tirana, this is a prestigious project: international investment, luxury tourism, jobs, growth. For opponents, this is a telling example of the way the government treats Albania.

Initially, the protesters were calling for the withdrawal of the relaxations of the Protected Areas Act, which were passed in 2024 shortly after Kushner's plans were released. They also called for the repeal of the Strategic Investment Law, which allows for an acceleration of the processing and approval of projects considered to be priorities. Atlantic Incubation Partners LLC has already achieved strategic investor status. But Kushner's plans are only the tip of the iceberg. All over the country, projects are allowing land with historical and cultural sites as well as ecologically protected areas to pass into the hands of private investors, es-

pecially foreign investors, in an extremely opaque manner.

"Albania is not for sale"

This is the slogan chanted night after night by the crowds gathered in Skanderbeg Square in the city centre and on the streets leading to the government district. They no longer want to be mere spectators of an evolution that others decide. During demonstrations, Albanian flags are mainly fluttering, sometimes accompanied by a few KLA flags. The Kosovar-Albanian "Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës" (Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA) still occupies an important place in what might be called the "emotional baggage" of the Albanian national consciousness. American flags are also sometimes seen.

At first glance, it seems paradoxical: a demonstration against an American luxury project – and next to it, the American flag... But it is precisely in this contradiction that the whole meaning of the movement lies.

Elsa Paja is 33 years old; She is a visual artist, graphic designer and activist. She participated in the demonstrations from the beginning. With other artists, she has set up a space where children can draw and express what they feel. "When you look at the messages conveyed by these drawings, you see how much this conflict affects even children," says Paja. They draw beaches, flamingos, excavators, fences.

The politicization of the demonstrations was rapid: a fenced nature reserve, security forces who violently repressed the demonstrators in Zvërnec. The images of this violence have gone viral. "We were no longer allowed to set foot on our land, that was now clear," explains Elsa Paja. And suddenly the

question was who had the right to decide the future of this country.

The pink flamingo against the oligarchs

Melitian Nezai, a 29-year-old environmental biologist and activist, also became involved in the movement very early on. "The symbol of our revolution is the pink flamingo," he says. The pink flamingo represents neither a party, nor a nation, nor a leader. It is the very symbol of a living space. Thus, it became the rallying point of a movement that was difficult to classify ideologically. "Left, right, liberals, conservatives: a lot of people are participating," says Nezai.

The movement has indeed brought together an exceptionally broad coalition, including left-wing organisations, members of the LGBTQ+ community, environmental activists, representatives of the four religious communities, feminist collectives and, last but not least, conservative, nationalist and right-wing forces. This sometimes gives rise to conflicts: for example, it was not possible to wave a rainbow flag, since this was considered unrelated to the cause defended by the movement.

But the boundaries are also blurring. "Albanian boys now wear pink, the colour of flamingos, and think it's cool," says Elsa Paja. What unites the protesters: they are simply fed up with the government of prime minister Edi Rama, who calls himself a socialist and denounces the movement as part of an externally orchestrated "hybrid war".

For Nezai and many protesters, opposition leader (and former prime minister) Sali Berisha is also part of the problem. It is not a question of replacing the government with the opposition party. The problem is the corrupt elites who control the political system.

The Albanian flag is omnipresent. Some of the emblems of the KLA can also be seen. But they do not constitute evidence of KLA's organizational involvement. On the contrary: the KLA veterans' organization itself has warned against the instrumentalization of its symbols for current political ends.

Activists explain the presence of the many American flags by the traditional proximity of many Albanians to the United States. Similarly, Paja does not direct her criticism in general against foreign investment. "We want investments that benefit the local population, not just the oligarchs and foreigners who have come to take over our country."

Who decides on land use? Who decides how to use the resources? Who benefits from it? Since the early 1990s, these issues have been troubling Albania.

After the end of the "Socialist People's Republic of Albania" (1944-1990), the country was subjected to neoliberal shock therapy. While the institutions of a bourgeois democracy were still in their infancy and underdeveloped, privatization proceeded at a frantic pace and the country opened up to foreign capital. Few people benefited from it, and it led to significant social upheaval. The majority of Albanians had no experience of the capitalist market economy and were therefore vulnerable to manipulation. The rapid spread of satellite television made a large part of the Albanian population aware of all that had really or supposedly been missed in more than forty years of isolation under the regime of Enver Hoxha, thus fuelling the desire for quick enrichment.

The mafia pyramid schemes built on exorbitant interest rates, in which politicians from both parties were involved and where a large part of the population had invested their savings, finally collapsed in 1997. The state effectively ceased to function in some parts of the country; popular anger led to the "lottery insurrection," and clashes worthy of a civil war left more than a thousand people dead.

It is not the chaos of 1997, but the shock therapy, euphemistically described as "transformation", which has more or less lasted until today; it has become a permanent state. The generation that is demonstrating today does not know so-called "socialism" from personal experience. But it is living with the consequences of its collapse and the neoliberal shock therapy that followed.

A never-ending transition phase

"I'm 29 years old, and we've been immersed in transformation for 36 years now. My whole life so far has been just a transitional phase," says Melitian Nezai. Personally, he is doing quite well: he works for an environmental NGO and earns more than the average salary of 630 euros. On the other hand, other young people his age, such as taxi drivers, work six days a week, twelve hours a day. But the average salary is barely enough to live on, with food prices worthy of Western Europe and small apartments that still cost 400 euros in rent, even in the suburbs of Tirana.

This is why many young Albanians leave the country. Almost five million now live abroad – almost twice as many as in Albania itself. (However, this figure also includes Albanians from neighbouring Kosovo and North Macedonia, who together make up almost two million people.) At the same time, Albanian tourism is booming. Beaches, mountains and historic towns are attracting more and more visitors. Along with the construction sector, tourism is now the main economic driver.

For the protesters, this is not a contradiction, but a facet of the same problem. "We feel like tourists in our own country," says Elsa Paja. She describes how certain places, increasingly designed for visitors and investors, are now foreign to them. And a society in which young people look for their future elsewhere. "People are no longer there, so they can't make their voices heard anymore," says Nezai, who draws a direct link between the exodus and the question of political power. When young people leave, there are fewer people left who are able to oppose the attacks on their regions.

Elsa Paja believes that capitalism and neoliberalism are clearly part of the problem. "While a few bene-

fit, everyone else is excluded," she explains to describe Albanian society. "People from other countries are now coming to Albania to be inspired by this movement," says Nezai. They are interested in how resistance against major projects can be organized.

Where is the movement today?

Albanian flags and flamingos: this movement seems to embody a patriotism critical of capitalism, which defends national sovereignty and demands social emancipation. It is above all an anti-corruption movement, without a clear direction and driven by Generation Z. Its symbol, the "Jolly Roger", a flag adorned with a skull and a straw hat, is omnipresent during demonstrations. In addition to the two established parties, rejected by the movement, there are at least three smaller parties that support the protests.

In addition to a centre-right and a reformist party, *Lëvizja Bashkë* ("Together Movement") is particularly worth mentioning: This is a radical, young, ecologically oriented and left-wing force that strives to nurture and build on feelings hostile to those who hold the levers. *Lëvizja Bashkë* activists were present in the protests from the beginning, documenting incidents – such as intimidation by security forces – and publicising them, allowing the movement to gain visibility beyond local borders. In a way, it constitutes the organizational backbone of the movement; it helps to coordinate demonstrations, speeches, banners and communication – without presenting itself as the only leadership. The movement is calling for new elections – *Lëvizja Bashkë* would benefit from this.

14 August 2026

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VENEZUELA

Washington's Seizure of Venezuelan Oil: Where Have the Oil Revenues Gone Since 3 January 2026?

ÉRIC TOUSSAINT ·

This intervention therefore marked a major turning point in Venezuela's recent history. The vice-president of the republic and other officials effectively accepted the situation and submitted to the will of Donald Trump and his administration. The armed aggression perpetrated by the US military and the submission of the authorities in Caracas have enabled Washington to take control of the country's oil exports and seize the accounts into which the revenue from these exports is paid.

This issue is all the more significant given that Venezuela possesses the world's largest proven oil reserves. For decades, oil has been the country's main source of foreign revenue. Control over these revenues is therefore a key instrument of economic and political control.

Relatively modest oil revenues prior to the US intervention

It is worth noting, first of all that oil revenues were recorded prior to the intervention of 3 January 2026. According to data published in March 2026 by the Central Bank of Venezuela, oil exports generated \$18.4 billion in 2024 and \$18.2 billion in 2025. [1] These figures represent oil export revenues and not the net profit of the state-owned oil company PDVSA or the state's tax revenues.

These figures are relatively low given the country's oil potential and reserves. In particular, they reflect the fact that production levels remain significantly lower than in previous decades, the difficulties facing the oil industry, US sanctions and the conditions under which Venezuela had to market its oil.

The contrast with the period following 3 January 2026 is therefore particularly striking.

After 3 January: Washington takes control of exports

Following the capture of Nicolás Maduro and his wife, the Trump administration eased certain sanctions, allowing Venezuela to sell its oil more freely on international markets. However, the revenue from these sales is not freely controlled by the Venezuelan government. It has been channelled into accounts managed by the US authorities. The US presidential decree of 9 January 2026 is particularly revealing. [2] It establishes a mechanism designed to protect Venezuelan oil revenues held in US Treasury accounts. Washington legally presents these funds as belonging to the Venezuelan government but places them under the custody and control of the US authorities.

Legally, therefore, according to the US framework, this arrangement does not constitute a straightforward appropriation of the revenues by the US Treasury. However, the political and economic outcome is fundamental: Venezuela no longer has free control over the revenues derived from its main export. Washington controls their collection, safekeeping and disbursement.

This situation gives the arrangement a distinctly neo-colonial dimension.

Joaquin Castro, a Democratic member of Congress, told the *Financial Times*: "Trump's invasion of Venezuela has been about oil, power and graft from the very beginning, with billions of dollars in Venezuelan oil revenue being controlled by the Trump administration without transparency or safeguards," adding that Congress was being "kept in the dark." [3] *The Financial Times* notes that

"Shortly after the January raid, President Trump stated that these revenues 'would be controlled by me'".

According to the London-based daily: "In June, Trump claimed that the US had recouped '28 times' the cost of the military operation in Venezuela through oil, adding that the US was 'also making a lot of money'." [4]

A sharp rise in exports

The US takeover was followed by a rapid increase in oil exports.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the estimated value of US-controlled exports rose from around \$600 million in January to around \$3.7 billion in April 2026. The US accounted for around 43 per cent of exports, India 26 per cent and Spain 8 per cent. [5]

In the first quarter of 2026, the Central Bank of Venezuela recorded \$5.49 billion in oil export revenues, representing a 21.5 per cent increase compared with the first quarter of 2025. [6]

However, a distinction must be made between two things: the revenue recorded in Venezuelan statistics and the sums actually available to the Venezuelan government. It is precisely on this second point that the lack of transparency begins.

Over \$13 billion in revenue since January

At the end of July 2026, the Financial Times estimated that over \$13 billion had been generated by Venezuelan oil sales since the start of the year and that these revenues had passed through accounts controlled by the US government. [7] This estimate is based on the volumes exported and the prices at which Venezuelan oil was sold.

The sum is considerable. In just a few months, it represents around 70 per cent of the oil revenues Venezuela had earned throughout the whole of 2025.

However, these 13 billion should not be interpreted as a net profit for the United States. It is an estimate of the value of the revenue from oil sales placed under US control. Part of this revenue must cover the costs associated with marketing, transport, intermediaries and the operation of the oil industry.

The key question is therefore: what proportion of these revenues actually went to Venezuela?

How much money was transferred back to Venezuela?

This is where the lack of transparency becomes particularly significant.

In January, an initial mechanism was set up involving an account in Qatar. Secretary of State Marco Rubio stated that Venezuela had received \$300 million, while approximately \$200 million remained in that account. Energy Secretary Chris Wright later asserted that Venezuela had finally received the entire \$500 million.

Subsequently, the US State Department told Congress that around \$3 billion had been authorised for transfer to Venezuela. Washington claimed that these funds were being used, in particular, to finance the Venezuelan government's operating costs and the oil industry.

However, this statement does not provide certainty as to the amount actually transferred and spent.

According to the Financial Times, the Venezuelan government, for its part, published a register of transfers in March 2026. However, according to the Financial Times article of 22 July 2026, only a single transfer of \$300 million appeared in this register. We were able to trace the link to a portal set up by Delcy Rodríguez's government: 'Transparencia Soberana', designed to make revenue and expenditure public. At the time of consultation on 15 August 2026, the portal did indeed show only one transaction of \$300 million, corresponding to an 'extraordinary sale of fuel oil', which, according to the information on the website in question, was allocated in full to the Social Protection Fund to in-

crease workers' minimum income in the form of vouchers.

The State Department, for its part, claims that approximately 3 billion has been authorised or disbursed. There are currently no comprehensive public accounts available to reconcile these two figures.

What does Washington say the money is being spent on?

US officials have provided some details.

According to information provided to Congress, the funds were used, in particular, to pay the salaries of Venezuelan government workers and to finance equipment and supplies needed by the oil industry. However, Washington has not released a detailed breakdown of the expenditures, including the amounts spent on salaries, oil equipment, and other expenses.

This lack of transparency is all the more surprising given that the State Department had announced the introduction of an audit mechanism by KPMG, with quarterly reports. The Council on Foreign Relations noted as recently as last month that no detailed public report had been published.

The State Department has, moreover, awarded KPMG a contract worth up to \$84.4 million for a transparency mechanism regarding revenue derived from Venezuela's natural resources. [8]

The situation is therefore paradoxical: the United States controls billions of dollars of Venezuelan oil revenues and has put an audit system in place, yet the public still does not have access to a detailed breakdown enabling it to track all financial flows.

Control that gives Washington a powerful lever

Control over oil revenues gives the United States considerable leverage over Delcy Rodríguez's government.

The Venezuelan government can continue to export oil - except to Cuba, which is in vital need of it - but it does not have free access to the revenue generated by these exports. Washington decides the condi-

tions under which the funds are released and can thus directly influence the government's spending.

This mechanism therefore goes far beyond the economic sanctions that preceded the intervention.

The sanctions sought to prevent or restrict certain transactions with Venezuela. The new system allows Washington to control the financial flow of the overwhelming majority of Venezuelan exports.

The return of foreign oil companies

Control over revenue is accompanied by a transformation of the oil sector.

The new Venezuelan government has adopted a reform of hydrocarbons legislation that opens up the sector further to foreign investment and reduces some of the prerogatives previously held by the state-owned company PDVSA. Foreign companies have resumed or expanded their operations in Venezuela. These include Chevron, Shell, Eni, Repsol and, now, BP.

This development does not mean that all these companies are working on behalf of the US government. However, it forms part of a reorganisation of the oil sector sought by Washington: increased production, the return of Western companies, greater openness to foreign capital and US control over the financial channels for exports.

Venezuela is thus becoming an oil producer whose export capacity is growing rapidly, but whose state no longer has free control over the revenues.

A paradox: more oil, but not necessarily more resources available to the state

In 2024 and 2025, Venezuela had earned around 18 billion dollars a year from its oil exports. Following the US intervention, exports rose sharply and the value of sales controlled by Washington had already reached over 13 billion dollars within a few months.

One might have expected this increase in revenue to quickly translate into a substantial improvement in the country's economic and social situation.

However, the effects remain limited. The Financial Times noted in July that the Venezuelan economy did not appear to be experiencing an improvement commensurate with the scale of the oil revenues generated.

A neo-colonial arrangement

Venezuela possesses the resources. Companies extract and sell the oil. International buyers pay for these shipments. But the revenues are channelled into accounts under the control of US authorities, who determine the conditions under which the Venezuelan government may access these resources.

It is precisely this control over the revenue that is the key issue here.

The system established after 3 January 2026 creates a particularly deep relationship of economic dependence: a 'sovereign' state continues to produce and export its main natural resource, but a foreign power controls the financial proceeds from these exports.

The Financial Times itself noted that this mechanism could be regarded as an "almost neo-colonial" relationship, in which Washington exerts its influence over the Venezuelan government by controlling its oil revenues.

Conclusion

The US military aggression of 3 January 2026 has therefore ushered in a new era in Venezuela's history.

For the first time on this scale, the United States directly controls the financial flow of Venezuelan oil exports. Washington claims to be acting as a custodian of funds belonging to Venezuela and to wish to use them for the benefit of the population. However, the lack of comprehensive public accounts still makes it impossible to know precisely how many millions have actually been transferred to Venezuela, how much has been spent on its operations and its oil industry, and what amount remains under US control.

This lack of transparency is not a minor issue. It lies at the heart of the new neocolonial relationship established in Venezuela.

The issue of Venezuela's debt must also be viewed within this new context: control over oil revenues is now a central element in the balance of power between creditors, the Venezuelan government and the United States.

It is essential that a citizens' audit of the public accounts be put in place, with access to all necessary information regarding both state revenues - including oil revenues - and public debt (newly accumulated debts, old debts claimed from the country, and payments made).

It is essential to set out once more to reclaim national sovereignty: the people's sovereignty over the country's resources, the people's sovereignty over the public accounts, and full and complete sovereignty.

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Source: CADTM.

ARGENTINA

How to Defeat Milei: The Left's Strategy in a Reactionary Period

MARTÍN MOSQUERA ·

The far right is advancing worldwide at an uneven but decisive pace. It is not invincible, as evidenced by Viktor Orbán's recent electoral defeat in Hungary, but neither is it merely a temporary phenomenon. In the last European Parliament elections, if its various political factions are combined, the far right became the second largest force in Parliament, just one seat behind the traditional right, represented by the European People's Party. In France, Le Pen's party has a real chance of reaching the Élysée Palace for the first time. In Italy, Meloni has governed since 2022 with sustained approval ratings, while in Germany, the AfD broke through the post-war cordon sanitaire to become the second largest party in the country. In the United Kingdom, Reform UK is leading the polls for the first time ever.[This is no longer the case in August 2026.- Ed]

Trump leads the world's leading power with an explicit agenda of authoritarian state restructuring and openly supports his far-right allies around the globe. In Latin America, although Bolsonaro was ousted from power three years ago and Lula has since improved key social indicators, with economic and employment growth and a recovery in popular incomes, Flavio Bolsonaro has even surpassed Lula in some runoff polls. In Ecuador, Daniel Noboa is consolidating an authoritarian regime that combines the systematic persecution of activists and opponents with a disturbing institutional entanglement with drug trafficking. In Chile, José Antonio Kast has been in power since March of this year. The examples could be multiplied:

Erdoğan's Turkey, Modi's India, Bukele's El Salvador, or Netanyahu's Israel. The global force of this phenomenon is impressive.

Although the far right still resists definitive characterisations because it is a heterogeneous and developing phenomenon, the events of recent years force us to abandon a thesis that was until recently dominant: the one that saw in these movements merely a strident and only discursively more aggressive variant of the traditional right. While a "bourgeois normalisation" towards conventional conservatism cannot be ruled out in certain cases, the prevailing trend points in the opposite direction: a real authoritarian threat, ready to erode democratic freedoms, social rights won in the 20th century, and even the physical integrity of the political opposition.

The examples are piling up. In the United States, Trump transformed ICE into a federal political police force of arbitrary arrests and deportations. Trumpism is experimenting with projecting it as a general instrument of authoritarian control beyond immigration: a tentative move that became evident with Steve Bannon's recent suggestion to use it to "guard" the November elections under the pretext of alleged fraud in the making. Netanyahu is waging a war of extermination in Gaza and prosecuting his opponents. Milei is leading the largest offensive against the working class since the last military dictatorship and intensifying the repression of social protest. Bolsonaro instigated an attempted coup on January 8, 2023. Bukele governs El Salvador under a permanent state of emergency, with tens of thousands detained without due process, and has turned this prison model into an object of admiration for much of the Latin American right. Orbán,

for more than a decade, built an authoritarian regime, the self-styled "illiberal democracy," which the rest of the international far-right bloc has also turned into an aspirational model.

But the authoritarian advance does not yet equate to lasting consolidation. In recent months, several events have occurred that seem to indicate a slowdown in this advance: Orbán's electoral defeat, Trump's declining popularity and his quagmire in Iran, Milei's deteriorating image, and Meloni's defeat in the last constitutional referendum. Examples could also be cited in the opposite direction: Flavio Bolsonaro leading in the polls, Reform UK breaking Britain's historic two-party system and its successes in the last municipal elections, and Fujimorism's strong performance in the Peruvian runoff. All of this demonstrates that we are facing an open situation and that the far right has not yet stabilised its project. It is an ongoing political battle, with advances and setbacks, that will likely continue for some time.

The global trend is still unstable, but it transcends any passing situation. We are going through a reactionary period, following Valerio Arcary's analysis: a prolonged cycle in which the balance of power becomes unfavorable due to the accumulation of defeats, the left is left on the defensive, and the extreme right maintains a strong social base. [See: <https://jacobinlat.com/2024/09/la-izquierda-brasilena-ante-una-nueva-epoca2/>] The electoral growth of the right wing is merely a symptom. What is at stake is a deeper disruption of the political and social balance, which reduces the capacity of the popular classes to defend themselves and increases the risk of far-reaching defeats. Stopping the far right is, therefore, the central political task of our time.

The Argentine case: Milei as the crystallisation of a defeat

In contrast to the global trend, much of the analysis by the Argentine left assumes that the local political situation continues to be defined by the pendulum swing of an unresolved and unstable balance of

power, usually described as polarisation or hegemonic stalemate. In that interpretation, the partisan forces that represented the two poles of the pendulum would go through a parallel crisis: just as Milei swept away the traditional right, Peronism would suffer in the other camp a crisis of representation that the left would be capitalising on. It would be, as Tony Cliff would say, the 1930s in slow motion: a context of polarisation in which neo-fascism and the radical left would grow at the same time, and in which the task would be to prepare for a new offensive after the brief interval of Milei's government.

The diagnosis is wrong, and misguided — even delusional — political consequences follow from it. Social power relations have deteriorated significantly in recent years. In a country where, for a long period, the possibility of adjustment policies and pro-business structural reforms was blocked — a reality that both Kirchnerism and Macriism grappled with, each with their own strategy — Milei managed to impose "the most significant fiscal adjustment in a peacetime economy" (IMF). And he did so not only without an immediate social explosion, but by consolidating his power. Something shifted at the very heart of society.

Currently, as recorded by all opinion polls Milei's image is suffering a significant decline. However, this does not justify concluding that we are in a situation of "equilibrium", as if it were a mechanism that had simply been delayed a little longer than expected. After two years in office, in a context of plummeting revenues and paralysed consumption, the fact that the government maintains an approval rating of between 30% and 40%, having started with support close to 50%, speaks more of resilience than weakness. It is worrying to imagine the political power it could wield if it had an expansive economy like the one that underpinned Menem's first term between 1991 and 1994. It's not surprising that it's eroding. What is remarkable is that it remains standing amidst an austerity experiment unprecedented in the democratic era.

Milei's political survival says something important about the evolution of social and political power relations. The Argentine situation can no longer be considered static, marked by the eternal and almost metaphysical impossibility of resolving the historical "Argentine stalemate." We are not simply passing through one of the poles of a pendulum that always oscillates between the same points: the pendulum movement itself has been eroding the capacities of social resistance. It is curious that the Gramscian concept of "catastrophic stalemate" is usually invoked and the main conclusion of his analysis is ignored: the catastrophic stalemate does not describe a state of permanent paralysis, but an unstable and self-eroding dynamic that tends to be resolved through bonapartist leadership.

This shift in the balance of power can take different paths. The most obvious one was open repression: military dictatorships, fascism, or state violence aimed at crushing unions and workers' organisations, atomising the workforce, and breaking their collective trust. Another way, complementary or alternative to direct coercion, is the exemplary defeat of a strategic labour sector: the classic cases of the British miners against Thatcher or the air traffic controllers during the Reagan era show how the breakdown of a historically strong union can discipline the rest of the working class. Terminal economic crises, especially hyperinflation, can also play this role by instilling widespread and paralysing fear. Finally, there is a less analysed mechanism, derived from Gramsci's analysis of the "catastrophic stalemate": a gradual alteration of power relations caused by a prolonged political deadlock, in which each force manages to veto its adversary's project but cannot impose its own. This dynamic erodes the social base of the contenders themselves and instills in the population a widespread sense of demoralisation and hopelessness. The recent Argentine case can be seen as an example of this logic.

As Adrián Piva's recent work shows, [see <https://jacobinlat.com/2024/12/milei-desmovilizacion-popular-y-avance-autoritario/>] in recent

years we have witnessed the silent maturation of a social defeat that explains relative passivity in the face of a colossal fiscal adjustment and a generalised decline in income, unthinkable at another time. This process has an objective basis: the economic stagnation that began around 2011-2012, which cumulatively eroded the capacity for collective action. The intuitive association between crisis and revolt is often misleading: when deterioration stabilises, what proliferates is unemployment, having to take on multiple jobs, and the fragmentation of the workforce, and therefore the weakening of the social power of the working class.

In recent Argentine history, this was compounded by persistent inflation, which reached triple-digit annual figures. As Perry Anderson observed in his analysis of stabilisation plans in Latin America during the 1980s, hyperinflation can operate as a "functional equivalent" of a dictatorship: it terrorises the population, imposes discipline without the need for direct coercion, and prepares the ground for demands for order. Although Argentina did not recently experience hyperinflation, it did go through a prolonged period of high inflation that was enough to cause profound wear and tear and generate a general demand for order. The picture was completed by the political failure of the last Peronist government, which demoralised the progressive movement and fostered an anti-statist atmosphere that was crucial for Milei's rise. The combination of these factors weakened the combative force of society and allowed the new government to implement measures that, under "normal" circumstances, would have provoked enormous resistance.

This silent erosion was mirrored by the consolidation of a right-wing social and political bloc which, after a gradual radicalisation, ultimately crystallised in the figure of Milei. This bloc reacts politically to the cycle that began in 2001 and, more specifically, to the way in which Kirchnerism managed it. The power dynamics established after the 2001 crisis were contained and institutionalised during the first Kirchner administration. In other words, they were stabilised and, in a sense, pre-

served through the partial channelling of popular demands within a context of exceptional external prosperity. That strategy had some initial successes, during which Kirchnerism managed to rally a significant portion of the business community behind it. When the right-wing offensive erupted in 2008, Kirchnerism shifted towards a strategy of political accumulation based on polarisation and the consolidation of a hard core of support: it generated a climate of politicisation and ideologisation, though not of mobilisation or self-organisation, a feature that distinguished it from the Venezuelan or Bolivian experiences during those same years. This politicisation was expressed in the incorporation of a new generation into militancy with an anti-oligarchic discourse, in the capture of a large part of the intellectual left, and in the cultural prolongation of the period inaugurated in 2001.

But that strategy did not disorganise the right-wing social base that was being built in parallel; on the contrary, in a way it consolidated it through the same logic of permanent polarisation: fortifying a core of support on the basis of constant confrontation with an enemy also serves to cohere and activate that adversary. And the economic cycle that had made the whole scheme possible, sustained by Asian demand for commodities, the high exchange rate inherited from the 2002 devaluation and previously eroded wages, began to run out between 2011 and 2012.

Pointing out the limitations of Kirchnerism should not reduce the new right to a mere epiphenomenon of progressive frustrations. The Argentine right had its own agency and a social and institutional terrain on which to develop: anti-Peronist middle classes, the agrarian bourgeoisie, large media groups, sectors of the judiciary, concentrated business interests, international support, and a long-standing anti-popular culture. The Milei phenomenon can only be understood as the condensation of a multi-causal process, in which the limits of progressivism weighed as an important factor among several. This is confirmed by the fact that in the world the extreme right appears as a replacement for all types

of political signs: right-wing, centrist or social democratic governments.

The construction of the right-wing bloc, for its part, had its own history. The Kirchnerist strategy began to generate tensions with the dominant classes as early as 2005, when sectors that wanted to mitigate the incorporation of popular demands, especially wage increases, left the government, which was reflected in the departure of Economy Minister Roberto Lavagna. But the real turning point came in 2008, with the "rural conflict." Faced with this confrontation, most of the urban middle class broke with the ruling party and reverted to their traditional anti-Peronism. This is how an anti-Kirchnerist identity was constructed, combining a rejection of populist style with a desire for social distinction from the popular sectors receiving state assistance. Added to this was the defense of concrete material interests: from the rejection of export taxes on commodities, which united the agrarian bourgeoisie with the rural middle classes, to the protection of dollar savings, affected by the currency controls imposed from 2011 onward. This identity solidified before finding a suitable political instrument: since 2008, there had existed an electoral segment, initially a minority but increasingly cohesive, willing to support any candidate with a realistic chance of defeating Peronism. Macri capitalised on it in 2015; Milei, in 2023.

Building on this accumulated ground, Macri provided the final ideological piece that unlocked the radicalisation of the right. As Javier Balsa shows in *¿Por qué ganó Milei? [Why Did Milei Win?]* <https://fce.com.ar/tienda/politica/por-que-gano-milei/?srsltid=AfmBOopNIuTaUgUjTKD-VQOy4HoeZmQasocYrEAKt31aXro4U-pQfQwOb>], after the failure of his government he offered his own base a coherent explanation: "we pursued gradualism instead of shock therapy; we didn't dare repress those who mobilised to defend their corporate privileges." Offering an explanation for the failure serves to appease one's own social base and provides a future strategy, which naturally follows from the diagnosis: neoliberal shock therapy and

whatever repression is necessary. This interpretation paved the way for whoever would most consistently embody what Macri failed to achieve.

Milei represents the culmination of fifteen years of right-wing construction in the face of an exhausted progressive camp. His rise depends not only on his own strength but also on the strategic weakness of his adversary: the social bloc that sustained the partially favourable balance of power after 2001. The right wing's social base emerged more radicalised from Macri's failure. Kirchnerism's base entered a stage of demoralisation and confusion. For all these reasons, the extreme right must be understood as an organic phenomenon and not as a circumstantial accident.

This characterisation does not imply, of course, that the political context and the relations of power that made Milei's rise possible are irreversible. But the most likely thing is not a sudden turn of the situation. If there is recomposition, it will have a slower and more cumulative pace, similar to the cycle that opened in 1995 and ended in 2001.

Milei is the byproduct of a still partial social defeat; his programme seeks to transform it into a far-reaching defeat, capable of drastically modifying the relationship between the State and capitalist accumulation and sweeping away the vestiges of "collectivism", labour regulations and social rights accumulated in a century of workers' conquests. On the other hand, if the extreme right is interpreted as an accidental phenomenon, detached from social power relations, the conclusion will be that its government is unviable and that it will lead to a sudden reactivation of conflict. Under that premise, the left wouldn't have much to innovate: it could simply stick to business as usual and even wait for a drastic shift that would redirect social discontent from the far right to the radical left. The reality is quite different: a social defeat has significantly altered the balance of power. Today, there is no combative society capable of swiftly retaliating. That changes everything.

Social defeat and its limits

This is not to argue that the social defeat has produced a homogeneous shift to the right across the entire population or an irreversible loss of the capacity to resist. I call "social defeat" a negative practical alteration of the balance of power: the loss of capacity of the popular classes to block regressive offensives that, at another time, would have encountered much more intense resistance. Social and political defeats have diverse scopes: they can be circumstantial, allowing for a rapid recovery, or historical, requiring the effort of an entire generation to reverse, with countless nuances in between. Furthermore, the true depth of a defeat is never immediately apparent; its real impact is gradually revealed through its effects.

The empirical work on which Balsa relies, conducted in 2023, allows us to clarify this. His surveys showed a society divided, broadly speaking, into three thirds. One third with coherent economically progressive positions: defense of the role of the State, labour rights, and redistribution. Another third with a hard neoliberal core. And an intermediate, more diffuse third: centrist, moderate, apolitical, or simply frustrated sectors, without a firm ideological framework in any sense. As the electorate ultimately fractured into two large blocs, what typically determined the primacy of one or the other was which of the two strong minorities managed to attract the majority of the middle sector. There was, therefore, no mass conversion of society to neoliberalism or the right: the bloc of redistributive positions and the neoliberal bloc started from a position of approximate numerical parity. The decisive factor occurred on another level.

The central phenomenon is the radicalisation of the right. The study records the near disappearance of "classical liberals," who combined free markets with cultural progressivism, in favor of an "authoritarian liberalism" where economic ideology coexists closely with social conservatism, xenophobia, and antifeminism. A radicalised and cohesive right wing, in a context marked by the failure of the last Kirchnerist government, was able to engage and sway the middle third of the electorate. This diffuse

sector fragmented between abstention and, in a decisive portion, votes for Milei, who was captivated by a viscerally anti-popular and anti-Kirchnerist discourse. It was this shift of the middle sector, driven by the right-wing pole, that ultimately tipped the scales.

We don't know exactly how these currents evolved after two years of Milei's government. The hardline government supporters showed remarkable resolve in the face of fiscal austerity and falling revenues, but the current government crisis seems to be gradually strengthening the opposition and creating cracks in its official support base. Even the business community is beginning to consider an alternative figure capable of sustaining the economic programme should Milei's declining popularity jeopardise his electoral viability. However, as a counter-trend, the long years of inflation seem to have solidified a common sense, particularly within that strategic middle sector: the demand for a "balanced" macroeconomy and a fiscal surplus, in opposition to the "populist" tendency to expand spending "irresponsibly." It is no coincidence that almost the entire political spectrum has embraced the demand for fiscal discipline, which, to some extent, originates from the grassroots.

In any case, empirical studies on 2023 remain relevant: there is a social base with redistributive positions, equivalent in size to the neoliberal core, willing to oppose the current adjustment programme. Although this progressive sector is not immune to the subjective effect of the inflationary crisis, which disciplines its expectations, it maintains a fundamental challenge to the regressive nature of the model's distribution. Today, however, that base functions more as an ideological bloc than as an active political force: it is on the defensive, trying to avoid the worst. It is the exact opposite of its adversary's radicalism.

Empirical data on social conflict under Milei confirms this diagnosis. According to the Ministry of Labour, in 2025 there were 465 labour disputes involving strikes in Argentina, the lowest figure in two decades; in the private sector there were only

157, the lowest number in the statistical series. According to a survey by the consulting firm Diagnóstico Político, picket lines fell from 8,239 in 2023 to 3,893 in 2025: a decrease of nearly 53% and the lowest since 2011. The conflict that does exist is predominantly defensive: according to the Centre for Argentine Political Economy (CEPA), 63.6% of the cases surveyed between January 2024 and February 2026 correspond to layoffs.

There were, of course, major days of mobilisation against the government: the marches of March 24, the Antifascist and Antiracist Pride March after Milei's statements in Davos, the CGT general strikes and the university demonstrations against the budget cuts. These large mobilisations show that the capacity for resistance is not broken, and that a foundation of organisation and politicisation persists which, although diminished, constitutes a point of support. But, for the moment, they are not enough to alter the underlying situation: low levels of labour conflict, a historical contraction of the piquetero movement, and an absence of sustained processes of self-organisation in workplaces.

The asymmetry in the magnitude of the adjustment is striking. According to CIFRA-CTA, the economic and social research centre linked to the Argentine Workers' Central Union, real registered wages fell by about 9% under Milei's administration, or 13% if a CPI calculated using a more up-to-date basket of goods and services than the official CPI is used. Measured by the official CPI, the wage loss was markedly uneven across sectors: in February 2026, public sector wages were 18.3% lower than in November 2023, and in the national public administration, the loss reached 37.2%. This is compounded by a decline in job quality, reflected in an expansion of informal employment.

This weakness is also evident in the ideological sphere. Recent university election results are an indicator of this: the left is losing its ability to influence younger generations. In the student elections at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), a historically important barometer of politically engaged youth, the left registered its worst performance

since the late 1990s. This does not imply that youth have become massively centrist or right-wing, but rather that the discourse of the left, which maintains its hard core, has ceased to operate as an attractive alternative on a broader scale.

The low level of conflict is shaping the hypotheses about how Milei's government might end. A defeat driven from below, by a resurgence of popular mobilisation, would undoubtedly be the best scenario: it would remove Milei from power and allow for a rapid rebuilding of the popular movement's social strength. A sudden shift or social explosion cannot be definitively ruled out; no one has a seismograph for class struggle. But the trends point more toward a gradual process of recomposition, not an explosion. Therefore, the fight to defeat Milei will predictably shift to the electoral arena.

This diagnosis has an important political consequence for the entire coming cycle. A potential electoral defeat for Milei in 2027 would open a new political juncture, but it would not, in itself, close the reactionary period. The conditions that produced it would continue to operate: the social right wing built since 2008, the ebb of social conflict, and the atmosphere of pragmatism inherited from both progressive failures and right-wing radicalism. The Brazilian case serves as an eloquent mirror: although Lula defeated Bolsonaro in 2022 and managed to improve key social indicators, Bolsonarism retains an electoral base close to 35% and continues to compete in very competitive conditions in the upcoming elections.

The fact that an electoral defeat doesn't end the political cycle doesn't mean it's all the same whether or not it's inflicted. In such a situation, buying time is crucial. Defeating Milei electorally isn't enough to rebuild the strength of the popular movement, but it does prevent the far right from achieving a strategic victory: it stops them from seizing their current window of opportunity to permanently and drastically alter the balance of power between the social classes.

Why aren't we in the 1930s?

The prevailing Marxist left-wing interpretation of the far right invokes the 1930s as a frame of reference: crisis of the liberal order, rising fascism, acute polarisation, and still-open revolutionary possibilities. This analogy is misleading and leads to misguided political orientations. There are at least three reasons to reject it.

First: revolution is off the political horizon. This may seem obvious, or heresy, depending on the context. In 1932, the Communist International was still operating with the expectation of an imminent insurrection, and it wasn't entirely wrong. Germany was the central stage. The accumulated revolutionary defeats (1918, 1921, and 1923) had failed to demobilise the working class or the revolutionary left, as evidenced by the resurgence of the Communist Party during those years.

Today we do not live in an era where a revolutionary rupture is part of the immediate picture. The socialist perspective can only be rebuilt starting from this reality. When the working class cannot go on the offensive, the main task is to rebuild the social and political foundations for a future counter-offensive. This alters the relationship with classical Marxist analyses of the 1930s. For Trotsky, for instance, anti-fascism had a dual dimension: it was simultaneously a unified defensive struggle of the entire working class and a direct anti-capitalist struggle, aimed at turning resistance to fascism into a lever for proletarian revolution. Today, that second dimension is absent: no serious analysis can maintain that in Argentina, Brazil, France, Italy, or any developed country, the conquest of power through insurrection is on the horizon in the short term. The task is defensive, and this point redefines the entire strategic reasoning.

Second: mass workers' parties no longer exist, at least not in the sense of the large reformist parties of the early 20th century. The so-called "united workers' front" presupposed large organisations with a real and massive presence within the working class, one reformist and the other revolutionary. Today, that landscape has disappeared, and this forces us to rethink what class unity means

when the parties that historically represented it have changed in nature. We will return to this point.

Third: there is no social polarisation, there is a radicalisation of the right. In the 1930s, there were active mass movements on both sides of the political spectrum. Today, only one pole is radicalised and emboldened; the other remains defensive and mired in pragmatism. Society is fractured into two opposing camps, but this fracture has not produced a symmetrical radicalisation. The right has become radicalised. This asymmetry implies, as Henrique Canary explains, [see <https://jacobinlat.com/2024/07/en-la-lucha-contra-el-fascismo-basta-con-ser-antisistema/>] that the myth of a shared "anti-system field" is a fantasy: there is no politically neutral social radicalism that the left can contest with the extreme right simply by raising the "anti-system" tone of its discourse. What the far right calls "the system" are, in reality, the social rights and public freedoms won in the previous period: union rights, redistributive policies, and "woke" culture. Constructing a left-wing version of this radicalism does not bring the left closer to the masses; it disconnects it from the actual levels of popular consciousness and militancy.

The strategic legacy of 20th-century Marxism remains important, but mechanically applying it to the present leads to a false analogy with the 1930s. The lesson worth preserving is the need for a unified and patient policy, supported by social mobilisation. In the 1930s, the united front was a tactic for uniting an organised working class with a strong presence and offensive capacity. Today, a mass policy against the far right starts from a much more adverse position: a more fragmented working class, with less confidence in its own strength and lower levels of awareness and militancy.

Anti-fascist popular front?

What value, then, do the debates that Marxism developed in the face of the rise of fascism in the last century have, particularly those concerning the

united workers' front and the popular front? It is worthwhile revisiting the Marxist debate of the 1920s and 30s. The united front was first discussed in 1922 in the Communist International and later taken up again in the struggle against fascism. Lenin was categorical about its importance: anyone who didn't understand the united front was lost to the communist movement. Perry Anderson defined it as "Lenin's last great piece of advice to the Western workers' movement before his death." For Gramsci, the united front policy seemed to involve more than just defensive unity with the reformists. Therein lay, in embryo, a new conception of revolutionary politics under Western conditions: the shift from manoeuvre warfare to positional warfare, and from the theory of the offensive to the theory of hegemony.

The united front was an effort to unify and bring together the activities of all workers, not just those who followed the revolutionary party. Its logic is relatively simple. The masses need to unite their forces to defend themselves. The revolutionaries, in turn, are better positioned to contest the leadership of the movement if they appear as its most unified wing, not as a divisive force. Since the masses learn primarily from their own experience, the distinction with reformism arises from the course of the struggle itself, when those leaderships demonstrate their inability to carry it through to the end. From there, more complex scenarios can emerge, such as a united front government: a unified government of working-class organisations, both reformist and revolutionary, conceived as a transitional moment in the struggle for power.

The problem is that, a century after that debate, the reality of the working class and the left could not be more different. As we pointed out, the united front of the 1920s presupposed the existence of two real partners with a massive presence among the working class: a reformist social democratic party and a revolutionary communist party. That world no longer exists. Traditional European social democracy, such as the French Socialist Party or the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, ceased to be gen-

uine workers' parties decades ago; today they tend increasingly to become organic representatives of their bourgeoisies, although they still retain a link with the working class that differentiates them from conventional bourgeois parties. The new left-wing forces, such as Die Linke, Podemos, and La France Insoumise, are significant actors, but their strength is primarily expressed in the electoral arena and does not translate into an organic mass base. Neopopulist experiences in Latin America, such as Kirchnerism and Morena, cannot be characterised as independent reformist forces either. While they possess deeper social roots than European social democracy, they are formations that simultaneously forge ties with factions of the ruling classes and with popular sectors.

If the united front presupposed the unity of workers' forces that, together, constituted a social and electoral majority, today it is unclear who could occupy that position. Should unity be forged between small revolutionary groups of marginal influence and electoral machines deeply integrated into the economic and political networks of the ruling classes? What does it mean to speak of a united front when there are no longer two major workers' parties vying for leadership of an organised working class, but rather fragmented left-wing parties, unstable electoral machines, and much weaker popular movements? A united political approach remains necessary, especially where left-wing and working-class organisations exist. But the landscape in which we operate is no longer the same.

This historical discontinuity with respect to the party landscape of the 20th century leads to one conclusion: currently, the exclusive unity of left-wing forces based on the working class, although it persists as the organising principle of socialist politics, is probably insufficient to stop the extreme right. This scenario shifts the debate to more thorny ground: the possibility of ad hoc agreements with dissident sectors of the bourgeoisie or with deeply institutionalised social democracies. Faced with this dilemma, the debate on popular fronts promoted by the Communist International (Com-

intern) following its Seventh Congress in 1935 inevitably arises.

The Popular Front was the Comintern's policy that succeeded the ultra-leftist tactic of "class against class," a line that identified social democracy with fascism and rejected any joint action with reformist sectors. Under this new orientation, the Comintern shifted towards a strategy of alliances not only with workers' parties, but also with "democratic" bourgeois parties in the struggle against fascism.

This policy was challenged by Leon Trotsky. The Russian revolutionary accurately identified the central risks: that the coalition with the liberal bourgeoisie would act as a brake on worker mobilisation, and that the Communist Parties, caught in the need not to "frighten" their allies, would end up operating as the last barrier against a possible revolutionary rupture.

In times of acute polarisation or revolutionary upsurge, the Popular Front often functioned as a mechanism of containment. Trotsky's critique targeted this core issue: the alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie tended to discipline the working class, subordinating its own objectives to the maintenance of the coalition. France and Spain offered dramatic examples of this limitation.

But historical experience proved more ambiguous than the simplified version of the Trotskyist canon. The electoral victories of the Popular Front also bolstered the confidence of the working classes and acted as catalysts for mobilisation. Blum's triumph led to the strikes of June 1936; in Spain, the Popular Front's victory preceded an extraordinary mobilisation of workers and peasants, which reached its peak in the resistance to the Francoist coup. The fact that Stalinism later sought to contain and discipline that process does not negate the fact that, in its initial phase, unified anti-fascism helped to activate latent popular energies.

Perry Anderson pointed out that Trotsky made sectarian errors in his writings on France and Spain, by underestimating the need for alliances with non-working-class sectors in defense of democratic free-

doms, a flexibility that he had shown in the face of the rise of Nazism or in his practical experience with Kornilov's attempted coup in August 1917. But despite these errors, Trotsky's analysis of the French case captured the ambivalence of the Popular Front, and was more nuanced and interesting than is usually recognised. Already in 1934 he wrote that, if the French socialists managed to win the confidence of the majority, the revolutionaries would be "always prepared to defend an SFIO government against the bourgeoisie." Once Blum's government was formed, the tactic he proposed was not outright opposition, but a combination of pressure from below and partial demands on the leadership. In a letter of June 21, 1936, addressed to his French followers, Trotsky warned that repeating the slogan of a general strike "without defining or specifying it would be a mistake," and predicted that the next wave of strikes would most likely be directed not against Blum, but against his enemies: the "two hundred families," the Radicals, the Senate, and the General Staff. For Trotsky, this distinction was crucial: "We don't lump Léon Blum in with the Wendel and La Roque factions. We accuse Blum of not understanding the formidable resistance of the Wendel and La Roque factions." From this stemmed the obligation to present themselves to the working class "not as an obstacle, but as people who want things to move forward."

This point allows us to draw a strategic conclusion that is probably counterintuitive to the common sense of the Marxist left: in many cases, the masses do not become radicalised despite trusting reformist leaderships, but rather through that trust. Popular mobilisation usually begins when broad sectors perceive that there is a political force capable of translating their demands into concrete results. In the initial stages of an upsurge, this force is usually moderate, national-popular, or reformist. Without this initial moment of confidence, a second moment of pressure, unrest, or radicalisation is unlikely. To posit unrest as the starting point, rather than understanding it as a possible outcome of a

process, is to confuse the outcome with its conditions.

As the strikes of June 1936 demonstrated, the Popular Front's victory acted as a catalyst for direct action. The same logic can be observed in other processes. In Chile under Popular Unity, confidence in the "electoral road to socialism" unleashed a mobilisation that even outflanked Allende himself on the left, with factory occupations and industrial belts. Argentina in 1973 offers another example: Cámpora's inauguration in May and Perón's in October fuelled a radicalisation of the popular movement that Peronism did not control, accompanied by a significant increase in labor unrest. Many more examples could be found.

Without equating historically distinct processes, they all show a logic that is important to retain: trust in a popular or reformist political leadership can unleash social energies that that same leadership does not fully control. Electoral victory, when experienced by the working class as their own, alters the collective mood, raises social expectations, and makes the idea that struggle is worthwhile more plausible. This dynamic does not guarantee a progressive solution; it can also be contained or defeated. But it refutes the notion that all reformist mediation only produces passivity.

So, what form should the unity of popular forces and their relationship with liberal or centrist parties take in the fight against the far right?

Two things must be distinguished. On the one hand, the Popular Front as a strategic subordination of the workers' movement to the bourgeoisie, under the implicit slogan of demobilising so as not to "frighten" the allies. On the other hand, the unitary, specific, and temporary action, structured around a limited and precise objective: to block the path of reaction and defend threatened democratic freedoms. This latter approach allows the left to maintain its political independence, under the premise that the central task the following day remains the autonomous recomposition of the working class. Marxist tradition has not rejected this

second type of intervention. For example, the united action against dictatorships in Latin America included the participation of bourgeois elements, even initially in processes that culminated in revolutions, as in Nicaragua and Cuba.

The Lula-Alckmin coalition in Brazil in 2022 was not a beautiful expression of revolutionary Marxism; nor was the Nouveau Front Populaire, which in 2024 temporarily blocked Le Pen's rise to power in France. In both cases, these were defensive measures, born out of adverse power dynamics, that served an immediate purpose: to dislodge or contain the far right. But in neither case did the leadership of the alliance fall into the hands of the liberal bourgeois wing. In Brazil, it was Lula who spearheaded the process, not the Centrão [2] parties; in France, hegemony fell to the force led by Mélenchon, not the Socialist Party. This internal equilibrium opened up two arenas of struggle: against reaction, through fronts with genuine electoral competitiveness, and within the "anti-fascist camp" itself, to prevent the fight against the far right from resulting in social-liberal governments that would ultimately demobilise and demoralise the popular classes. A broad alliance led by the centre tends to turn the fight against the extreme right into a defense of the existing order; a broad alliance with the hegemony of a reformist or populist leadership can, on the other hand, open up a more favourable terrain of dispute, especially when it is based on mobilisation and a programme of social recomposition.

The current challenge is to translate the lesson of unity to a social and political landscape profoundly different from that of the antifascist scenarios of the 20th century. In a reactionary period, unity against the extreme right is indispensable, but its content, its leadership, and its relationship to popular mobilisation are matters of contention. A socialist policy that merely defines or denounces falls short of the task. The left must intervene in the "anti-fascist bloc" as its most consistent wing: pushing for unity against reaction without dissolving class independence and linking every democrat-

ic battle to the material and organisational recomposition of the popular classes.

To radicalise? Or move to the middle?

Within the left and the opposition to Milei, two opposing responses are circulating in the face of the extreme right.

The first, predominant in Peronism and progressivism, argues that it is necessary to moderate oneself in order to align with the new ideological climate of society and capture the centrist vote that usually oscillates between one bloc and the other. As is often the case, this approach is not solely driven by ideology. It also reflects a broad consensus among the political elite regarding the need to curb fiscal expansion, which during the previous cycle had served as a means of containing popular demands.

The argument points to a real problem: the middle ground exists, it fluctuates, and without it, elections cannot be won. How else can one compete with the apolitical, centrist, or frustrated sectors that until recently leaned towards Milei or took refuge in abstention? The problem is that the shift to the centre — or directly to the right — paves the way for future defeats. The experience of the last Peronist government is the most recent example: a broad coalition that promised to restore incomes ended up managing austerity measures with progressive rhetoric and ceded the monopoly on discontent to the far right.

At the opposite extreme, it is argued that the rise of the far right is inseparable from the frustration produced by progressive moderation. The response, then, would be to radicalise the programme: to provide a clearer response to popular needs and strengthen the popular movement in the fight against the far right. The intuition is correct. But everything depends on what is meant here by "radicalise."

It is advisable to proceed with caution. At least in the immediate future, the social and political conditions do not exist for measures that break with the

bourgeoisie or for abrupt intervention in large property ownership. As we have seen, there is no neutral "anti-system" radicalism that the left can contest by simply raising the tone of its discourse. Attempting to compete on that level leads to isolation.

The most successful recent experiences of the left globally, such as Zohran Mamdani's in New York, La France Insoumise, or Adelante Andalucía, are often cited as examples of left-wing radicalisation. But, strictly speaking, they do something else: they break with the socio-liberal model of conventional social democracy without putting forward an ambitious socialist programme. Mamdani's central slogan was around the cost of housing and living in New York, not Red Vienna. The other cases point in the same direction. In this context, unity against the far right needs to be based on a "minimum programme," in the classic sense of the social-democratic distinction between a minimum and a maximum programme: a set of measures that, under current conditions, will improve the daily lives of the working class, restore collective confidence, and block the authoritarian onslaught.

It would be excessive to call this a radicalisation in the strict sense, at least in the sense that a socialist assigns to the expression. But it does force a re-evaluation of the programme that the various sectors of the political class, including to a large extent Kirchnerism, are willing to adopt. The last Peronist government frustrated its social base not so much because it failed to deliver on even modest promises to restore wages and incomes for the working class after Macri's austerity measures, but because it faced pressure from below for profound structural reforms. This frustration stems not only from the will or mistakes of its leaders, but also from structural constraints to which I will return later.

The alternatives to Milei

Without ruling out a re-election of Milei — a hypothesis that the consistency of the right's social base makes plausible, especially if the economic situation improves — we must ask ourselves what re-

alistic scenarios could open up after 2027? Broadly speaking, four are emerging.

The first scenario is continuity within the space itself: a change of candidacy that preserves the programme and methods, with a figure like Patricia Bullrich capable of unifying La Libertad Avanza (Liberty Advances or LLA, Milei's electoral alliance) and the Propuesta Republicana (Republican Proposal or PRO, of former President Mauricio Macri) and capitalising on Milei's wear and tear. It would be a continuity of the far-right project, not a turn towards the conventional right. Another possibility is a change to the traditional centre-right, with Macri or what remains of PRO, offering a more orderly management of the same economic course, although probably with less authoritarian intensity. A third option is the Peronist right: Massa or a similar conservative leader, capable of capitalising on the decline from a market-friendly Peronist perspective. Finally, there is the possibility of a revival of Kirchnerism or progressivism, with Axel Kicillof being the most likely candidate at the moment.

The first three hypotheses are, essentially, variations on the continuation of the economic programme, whether or not they mitigate authoritarian methods. Therefore, it is worthwhile to focus on the fourth, which is the one that some sectors of the left envision as the desirable future.

What could be expected from a new Kirchnerist government? Not much. It would not be a government of rupture or drastic confrontation with the ruling classes; Kirchnerism never expressed ambitions of that kind. But that doesn't mean such a government would be indifferent to the interests of the people. The fundamental question is whether the conditions exist to recreate a redistributive experience like the one that characterised the first Kirchner administration. That experience took place in a very particular political, economic and international configuration: the boom driven by Asian demand, combined with a balance of power partially favourable to the popular classes after 2001 and a salary greatly depreciated by the crisis

and the abrupt devaluation carried out by the Duhalde government.

The current situation is more ambiguous. Argentina has accumulated a significant lag in competitiveness and productivity, which fuels business pressure for reforms that will ease restrictions and implement fiscal adjustments. Internationally, there are signs of a new cycle of increased export revenues, this time driven by demand for new export products: unconventional oil and gas, lithium, copper, and other critical minerals, although the results are not yet immediate. However the relationship of forces is much more degraded. The exceptional context in which the business sector tolerated a government with features of autonomy, on the condition of restoring social order, as happened with the first Kirchner administration, no longer exists. Any alternative government would likely face constant hostility from "the markets." Finally, the wage freeze imposed by Milei, which has persisted since the Macri and Fernández administrations, coupled with the ongoing structural reforms, could facilitate investment, provided that businesses perceive a favourable business climate. In short, there is some room for economic recovery and a partially redistributive policy without drastic changes to the economic structure or large landholdings—something no sector of Peronism is proposing. However, this room is narrower than the one enjoyed by the first Kirchner administration.

In any case, that narrow margin alone does not define the political orientation of an alternative government. Lula won in 2022 with a programme of modest income recovery for the working class. During the first stage of his administration, adapting to the expectations of the ruling classes and postponing some progressive measures eroded his base and gave Bolsonaro's movement a boost. The picture began to change when the government resumed a clearer social agenda: expansion of the income tax exemption for low-income workers, greater tax burden on high-income sectors, public investment through the New PAC, [3] and credit

measures for precarious sectors. This approach allowed him to regain the political initiative and partially restore his popularity. Currently, the consolidation of his government is progressing in tandem with the campaign for a reduction in the working week, the approval of which would represent a far-reaching victory.

The Brazilian experience offers a glimpse into the limitations and potential that an electoral defeat for Milei at the hands of a partially progressive force stemming from Peronism would create. Such a government, unlike one of the traditional right or the Peronist right, would offer more favourable conditions for grassroots pressure. Its commitments to its social base, the unions, and the popular expectations it inspires would make it more receptive to mobilisation, without the left having to compromise its political independence. The objective would be to advance a programme for the recovery of income and popular rights, along with the defense of democratic freedoms and labour and social organisations against authoritarianism.

Tasks of the Left

Milei expresses a partial social defeat as well as attempts to transform it into a lasting reconfiguration of power relations. This diagnosis establishes the starting point: the left cannot passively await the end of the government as if it were just another swing in the Argentine pendulum. The "mobilising utopia" of the current situation is to block the far right and create a more favourable environment for popular reorganisation. Putting this into practice requires building unity against reaction without sacrificing political independence. It also demands a slower process: rebuilding the social, union, national, and cultural strength of the popular movement. The most difficult discussions begin when it comes to giving concrete content to the unified orientation: with what programme, under what leadership, and with what relationship between electoral participation and grassroots mobilisation.

Before moving forward, we must dispel a misconception. In recent months, polls have surfaced plac-

ing Myriam Bregman [4] among the leaders with the best public image, in some cases even in first place. This is promising. But it doesn't equate to voting intentions, much less to a mass radicalisation toward the left. A left-wing figure can be valued by sectors far broader than their electoral base without thereby becoming an effective political alternative. In France, Olivier Besancenot enjoyed a near 60% approval rating in the late 2000s, surpassing leading figures in the Socialist Party and the right wing, even though neither the LCR nor the NPA [5] ever garnered more than 5% in a presidential election. A segment of society may value a figure's honesty, combativeness, and charisma without sharing their ideas or believing they can solve their specific problems.

The rise of a left-wing figure does not necessarily contradict the defensive nature of the period. In a context of Peronist crisis, but where a relatively consistent progressive social core persists, it is natural that a significant sector views Bregman favourably without necessarily breaking with the national-popular camp. Balsa's work confirms this gap between sympathy, political identity, and voting intention: in 2023, four out of ten Bregman voters in the primaries migrated to Massa in the general election, and 58% of them actually felt close to the ruling party. A significant portion of this electorate functions as a porous boundary of the national-popular vote: it expresses discontent by voting for the left in primaries or in non-decisive elections, and returns to Peronism when the threat of a right-wing victory becomes imminent.

The phenomenon is, in any case, a positive symptom: it expresses the appreciation of a voice perceived as coherent within a progressive field tired of the conservative candidates offered by Peronism. The crucial question is what to do with this positive image? And here the ceiling of the Left Front reappears, which is above all a ceiling of understanding the current period. In practice, its main currents tend to treat Milei as a passing phenomenon and shift the focus of the discussion from how to defeat the far right to who leads the opposition: Peronism

or the left. This interpretation makes unified efforts impossible, which are precisely the only ones that would allow both blocking Milei's rise and consolidating the growth of the left. A left wing willing to operate as the combative wing of a broad bloc against reaction, capable of proposing the unified measures the situation demands without relinquishing its independence, could emerge strengthened from this cycle while simultaneously helping to curb the far right. For now, unfortunately, there are no signs that this shift is about to occur.

The government's decline presents an opportunity for the left, provided it adopts a different approach. There is a core segment of society that has resisted the reactionary forces and values voices perceived as coherent and combative. This opportunity must be cultivated on several fronts. The first is the street: to converge as broadly as possible in every specific defensive conflict, against labour reform, in defense of public universities and healthcare, against layoffs, and against the repression of protest. Unity of action does not require programmatic agreement or the dissolution of identities.

In the electoral arena, the task is to construct transitional tactics that acknowledge the current reality and the threats at play. The left must start from a basic fact: it does not currently have the strength to remove Milei from government on its own. This is obvious. If the priority is to prevent the far right from consolidating its cycle of regressive reforms and its authoritarian hardening, then some kind of specific, critical and limited support for the candidacy that is in a real position to defeat it, foreseeably emerging from Peronism or from a broader progressive bloc, cannot be ruled out. Denying this problem in the name of political independence shifts the left to a merely symbolic position at a time when the possibility of preventing a more far-reaching defeat is at stake.

However, this support, where necessary, should not be confused with integration or political confidence in a future Peronist government: it would be strictly defensive, aimed at ousting the extreme right. As we argued earlier, a potential Peronist government

is unlikely to break with the structural constraints of the Argentine economy, and will probably tend toward a moderate stabilisation, negotiated with sectors of the business community and limited by the mandate of fiscal discipline imposed by the inflationary crisis. But it would block the path to the far right and be more responsive to pressure from below. That's why the left must intervene in two ways: help prevent Milei from taking power and prepare from day one to act with complete independence against that government, demanding measures to rebuild popular support and relying on social mobilisation. That this is perfectly possible is shown by a recent experience. In Brazil, PSOL [6] built itself as a left-wing force independent of the PT, combining political autonomy, united action against Bolsonarism, and specific agreements with Lulaism when the situation demanded it. And throughout this process, it strengthened its position and influence.

On a strategic level, the task is slower and more decisive. An electoral victory can open up more favourable ground, but it doesn't, in itself, change the balance of power. That change requires rebuilding the social strength of the popular movement: organising in workplaces and neighbourhoods, revitalising union activity, reviving social conflict, and challenging cultural hegemony. We must re-

build workers' and popular institutions—in the union, party, and community spheres—that give social substance to any ambitious transformative project. It is there that the possibility of forging new political forces lies, forces capable of overcoming the limitations of previous progressive experiences from the left. Only on this basis will it be possible to build a fundamental alternative to the neoliberal order in crisis and to far-right reaction, and not merely defensive coalitions.

None of this guarantees anything. The period is adverse and could worsen. But the left faces a dilemma: understand the moment, buy time for regrouping and building a united perspective, or squander the opportunity while watching, from self-isolation, as the right consolidates its victory. In every country where the far right is gaining ground, regardless of national peculiarities, the same problem resurfaces: how to avoid sectarian isolation without eroding political independence, and how to build a unity that accumulates real strength to defeat reaction. How this dilemma is resolved will largely determine the direction this period takes.

9 June 2026

*Translated and annotated by David Fagan for
International Viewpoint from **Revista Jacobin**.*

USA

Rampage of the Surveillance State: What's Behind the Minneapolis Indictments?

RANDY FURST ·

Based on new revelations, it turns out that federal authorities took their sinister siege a step further, according to just-released federal documents. Undercover federal agents engaged in a broad spy operation, targeting activist groups and mainstream labor organizations who supported the resistance.

Agents posing as protesters infiltrated meetings at union halls and in churches, secretly making audio and video recordings, and spied on peaceful demonstrations. They seized union financial records.

These disclosures have emerged in a federal criminal case brought by the U.S. Attorney's office in Minneapolis which indicted 15 activists in June for protests outside the federal Whipple building where immigrants were being held.

After the indictments were announced, prosecutors were required to provide the defense with materials given to the grand jury that indicted the protesters. Those documents detail investigative practices that recall some of the worst abuses by law enforcement in U.S. history, underscoring how the Justice Department and Homeland Security have become the tool of rightwing extremists.

The newly released materials reveal that Homeland Security agents "participated in organizing and directing the groups they were surveilling, at times working to entice people into discussing or committing crimes," according to a filing by Kevin Reich, a Minneapolis attorney representing one of the defendants in a case that's become known as the Minnesota 15.

The 15 defendants are accused of conspiracy, assault and other charges, stemming from protests outside the Whipple federal building in the Twin Cities. The feds allege that the defendants violently impeded immigration officers during the ICE invasion in the Twin Cities.

The defendants counter that they were engaged in First Amendment-protected activities and the charges are aimed at silencing dissent in the metro area where "ICE out" signs, especially in Minneapolis neighborhoods, have become ubiquitous.

Mystery "Antifa"

Prosecutors claimed those charged were members of two groups tied to "Antifa," an anti-fascist movement in the United States, even though there is no actual organization called "Antifa."

Indeed, the 90-page indictment provided no information that the so-called violent activity by the defendants injured anyone. When asked at a June news conference announcing the charges, to identify specific incidents where law enforcement officers were injured by the alleged conspiracy, U.S. Attorney Daniel Rosen declined.

The new spying disclosures are contained in a motion for discovery by attorney Reich, who is asking a federal magistrate judge to require Homeland Security to turn over all its surveillance records.

"Undercover agents posing as protesters surveilled community meetings at churches, parks, libraries, schools and union halls," Reich wrote. "These agents surreptitiously recorded dozens of conversations with ordinary people who were simply exer-

cising their First Amendment rights to protest ICE's lawless rampage in our state."

That included spying on a peaceful No Kings demonstration and another protest against U.S. involvement In Iran.

The government's presentation to the grand jury reflected a "broad and irrational investigation," Reich declared. "With no evidence, the government alleged to the grand jury that the conspiracy in this case extends far beyond the defendants to include the AFL-CIO, the Minneapolis Federation of Educators, the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees [a union representing state employees]...Veterans for Peace and the Grease Pit bicycle repair shop, among others."

It should be noted that the Minnesota AFL-CIO has played a central role in organizing the big No Kings protests in the Twin Cities, developing a large marshaling system that ensured that the marches and rallies would remain peaceful.

Operation Puppet Master

Demonstrations grew massive in Minneapolis this winter in the wake of the January murders by ICE and border patrol agents of two nonviolent citizen observers of ICE activity, Renee Good and Alex Pretti. Between 100,000 and 200,000 protesters rallied outside the State Capitol in St. Paul in April in a No Kings protest that may have been the largest single demonstration in Minnesota history.

Rather than prosecute the killers of Good and Pretti, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the investigative arm of the agency, launched a massive spying campaign on January 29, four days after Pretti's death, that it dubbed "Operation Puppet Master." It did so, with a memorandum, filled with lies, claiming that ICE was the target of a violent conspiracy.

"Since November 28, 2026," the memo said, "ongoing protests and incidents of civil unrest have occurred in public areas throughout Minneapolis, MN. During these events violent opportunities

(VOs) have exploited the protests as cover to attempt breaches of federal properties and have perpetrated multiple assaults against federal officers tasked with protecting these facilities.

"HSI St. Paul has identified an organized network of conspirators operating through online and in person who are providing material support to violent opportunists and agitators involved in impeding federal law enforcement, rioting, destruction of federal property and assaults on Federal agents and Officers."

As attorney Reich points out, HSI does not identify any "violent opportunists" in its memorandum, nor does it cite any incidents of "rioting, destruction of property" or "assaults on federal agents and officers."

Two weeks after it began Operation Puppet Master, HSI launched "Project Whipple Shield," citing protests at the Whipple federal building. The purported purpose of the project was to investigate and disrupt "sophisticated organized campaigns" aimed at "acts of violence, destruction of property, intimidation of federal officers and employees and attempts to impede federal operations."

Reich reported that Homeland Security secretly obtained financial records of several national labor unions including the Service Employees International Union and the Communication Workers of America. The records provided federal authorities with nothing useful, according to Reich.

The alleged "conspirators" were listed in a diagram, presented to the federal grand jury, that defies credulity. The so-called conspirators include the Minnesota AFL-CIO; the Minneapolis Federation of Educators Local 59; the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees [a labor union representing state employees], Service Employees Union Local 26; Democratic Socialists of America; Socialist Alternative; and Vets for Peace.

None of these groups have been charged, however, which is further evidence of the spurious character of the accusations.

Also named as a conspirator was Monarca, the rapid response unit of Unidos MN, a pro-immigrant group, that trained thousands of Minnesotans to be non-violent constitutional observers during ICE's "Operation Metro Surge." Monarca encouraged observers to blow whistles to alert neighborhoods of the presence of ICE agents and film ICE activities without interfering.

Monarca issued a statement, immediately after the new spy revelations. "Hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans took action together," it said, "including constitutional observation, sharing food, filing legal briefs, protecting kids on their way to school and marching in subzero weather to protect our neighbors and restore the rule of law....Minnesotans have already proven we won't cave to bullies. We know the power we have when we organize and act together and we'll continue using that power to defend our neighbors and our freedoms."

Bernie Bernham, president of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, also blasted the government's actions and allegations in a statement:

Instead of holding federal agents accountable for shooting and killing Renee Good and our union brother, Alex Pretti, or addressing the dangerous and deadly conditions within immigration detention facilities, the Trump administration continues to weaponize our federal government to intimidate our unions, our communities, and anyone who peacefully opposes their radical authoritarian agenda.

Marcia Howard, president of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators, the union representing the city's school teachers, defended her local's role in the protests, according to the Minnesota Star Tribune.

Howard stated, "Minneapolis educators worked in union to exercise our constitutional rights to peacefully protest Operation Metro Surge and other discriminatory policies of the president and we will continue to do so."

Going through local banks, HSI surreptitiously obtained financial records of labor unions and non-profit organizations as part of a "financial investigation" into "domestic terrorist financing." It used an administrative summons to obtain years' worth of "wire transfers from various financial institutions to and from Service Employees International Union (SEIU) from U.S. Bank of Minneapolis."

Not surprisingly, attorney Reich notes, SEIU finances revealed nothing more than "various types of debits and credits to include annuity payments, strike supplies, investments, union member dues, retiree dues, medical expenses and pension fund expenses."

HSI also issued an administrative summons seeking financial information on the Communication Workers of America (CWA), regarding donations and PAC spending from 2023 to 2026.

The CWA represents 700,000 workers, many in telecommunications, but also in the media industry, including virtually all of the major newspapers in the United States. It may be more than a coincidence that the Trump administration has been on the warpath against journalists.

"Our union has become the latest target of a corrupt administration that weaponizes the legal process against law-abiding Americans exercising our Constitutional rights," declared Claude Cummings, the CWA president.

The CWA is a union with a long history of standing up to bullies and billionaire bosses. We will not be intimidated, and we will not be silenced in our solidarity with our members, with our communities, and with our neighbors. Our union halls remain open. Our fight continues. Together, we will speak out, we will vote, we will fight, and we will win.

No Limits

HSI also subpoenaed PayPal and Venmo for information regarding payments to and from Voices for Racial Justice, which describes itself as "the longest

running social justice organizing training organization in the state of Minnesota."

HSI agents surveilled community meetings at churches, parks, libraries, union halls, schools and restaurants, including a meeting at the United Labor Center, the building that houses a number of Minneapolis labor unions.

Federal agents also surveilled, investigated and obtained financial records related to Sunrise Movement, a nonprofit focused on climate change and other social justice issues.

Undercover agents described one meeting of the Sunrise Movement at a public library, according to a government document: "During the Action meeting, it was made clear that the Sunrise Movement organization focused on 'peaceful' protests."

The agent wrote that he privately spoke to one individual whose name is redacted, and "informed him that he works construction and could build items that might assist other groups with more 'direct-action' protests." The agent told the individual "that going to jail did not bother him."

The Homeland agents also surveilled individuals observing ICE vehicle activity at the Whipple building, even though federal judges in Minneapolis have ruled this year that such observation is not unlawful.

There seems to have been no limit to Homeland Security's reach. Undercover agents took pictures of license plates of attendees during a meeting of anti-ICE protesters and activists at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Roseville, a St. Paul suburb.

They used that information to obtain the names of the attendees, searched social media for pictures of the individuals, and compiled an "intel workshop" that included names, photos, addresses and personal information, including family and employment information and vehicle registration information.

"None of these individuals did anything other than engage in protected First Amendment speech in a

church meeting," Reich wrote.

Undercover Everywhere

Homeland Security also sent an undercover agent to an in-person meeting at La Dona Cervceria restaurant in north Minneapolis, where activists were planning for what was referred to as a general strike and march in Minneapolis on January 23 when tens of thousands marched. The agent described it as "a general discussion of the upcoming walk out on ICE event being held on January 23."

There were reports of agents surveilling a No Kings protest and a "Stop the War on Iran!" protest organized by 50501, Veterans for Peace and the Sunrise Movement.

"Incredibly," as Reich notes, a Homeland agent whose last name is Garcia told the grand jury:

"One of the things that is absolutely clear, not only in guidance in just principles as far as this investigation is, no one is ever investigated or looked at or even researched on for First Amendment protective activities. Every single individual that we have investigated there is a criminal predicate to why we're investigating them, either statements that they have made that are criminal to their actual participation in overt criminal acts."

Susan Du, a reporter for the Star Tribune, wrote on August 13 that the newly released documents confirmed that the government prosecutor who convened the grand jury for the Minneapolis indictments was Deputy Attorney General Brian Lynch.

Lynch was appointed this year as director of the Joint Task Force Vanguard, a special unit dedicated to prosecuting leftwing political violence.

"Lynch was reportedly photographed participating in the Jan. 6 Capitol protest, standing inside a restricted zone while rioters stormed the building," Du wrote.

The Justice Department did not respond to a request for comment from the Minnesota Star Tribune about Lynch's involvement in the

protest, but an official told Talking Points Memo last month that while Lynch was present at Jan. 6, he 'never entered the Capitol, left the grounds after a brief period, and did not commit and was never accused of any violation of law.'

There may be another factor to explain why Lynch came in to prosecute the Minnesota 15. At least 14 federal prosecutors have resigned from the U.S. Attorney's office in Minneapolis since the beginning of the year, largely over directives from Justice Department in Washington, D.C. to defend ICE and immigration policies and the refusal of the department to conduct a civil rights investigation into the killing of Renee Good.

Sinister Precedents

Peter Rachleff, a retired history professor at Macalester College in St. Paul, points out that the surveillance described in documents is not new for federal authorities, noting that the notorious J. Edgar Hoover, cut his teeth more than a century ago, spying on the anarchist movement in America. In 1924, Hoover became the FBI's first director, making subversion a prime focus.

Fast forward to 1941, says Rachleff, when the government went after the leaders of Teamsters Local 574, a militant trade union local in Minneapolis led by socialists, that won the historic 1934 truckers strike.

The union leaders were convicted and sent to prison on federal charges of sedition under the

Smith Act, much of which was later found to be unconstitutional.

Then came the massive crackdown against political dissent under McCarthyism in the late 1940s and early 1950s, followed by the spying against the civil rights movement including Dr. Martin Luther King in the 1960s, and the federal COINTELPRO spy and disruption tactics against antiwar, Black and radical groups, in the early 1970s.

Rachleff said he is surprised the Homeland Security targeted some of the mainstream organizations like the Minnesota AFL-CIO, but adds, "I'm not surprised they are going after the resistance movement to ICE."

Rachleff co-founded the East Side Freedom Library in St. Paul, which has become a hub for dialogue and activism in the Twin Cities in the last decade. He said that the latest spy revelations give the movement against authoritarianism a focus for supporting the Minnesota 15 and the Prairieland defendants, a group of activists in Texas, convicted on trumped-up terrorism charges and given shockingly long prison sentences.

"People who are victimized by the authoritarian government can become the center of the next stage of the movement for democracy and justice," Rachleff said.

August 2026

Source: **Against The Current.**

SOUTH AFRICA

Who is responsible for xenophobia in South Africa?

PAUL MARTIAL ·

Since this wave of xenophobia swept through the country, hundreds of spaza shops — small local grocery stores — run by foreigners have been looted and physical assaults have taken place, leading to the exodus of 25,000 people.

Social breeding ground

To explain these mobilizations of hatred, social misery is often rightly highlighted. Nearly two-thirds of South Africans live below the poverty line in what remains one of the most unequal countries in the world. Indeed, 10% of the population — the majority of whom are white — owns 93% of the country's wealth. The post-apartheid system, plagued by corruption and negligence, has proved incapable of meeting the aspirations of the population, while mass unemployment feeds despair.

Such a situation is ideal for organizations like Operation Dudula. The latter has made a name for itself through actions aimed at prohibiting foreigners from accessing hospitals. More recently, the March and March organisation, born in KwaZulu-Natal and led by former radio host Jacinta Ngobese-Zuma, continues to associate migrants with all the country's ills: unemployment, delinquency, violence and so on.

Political manipulation

Beyond this social stagnation, some politicians are stirring up hatred towards foreigners and supporting, including financially, Operation Dudula and March and March. This is notably the case with the Inkatha Freedom Party, whose electoral base is mainly Zulu, the former mayor of Johannesburg Herman Mashaba, founder of ActionSA, who claims to be a libertarian, as well as Jacob Zuma, a

former president of the Republic forced to leave power following corruption cases on an unprecedented scale. All of them are seeking to instrumentalize these mobilizations in the run-up to the local elections scheduled for November 2026.

While the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) are now calling for calm, their responsibility in this deleterious climate is immense, as illustrated by the crackdown on the Stilfontein mining site in January 2025. The authorities then starved 93 illegal miners to death while conducting a campaign insisting on their foreign origin. By dint of media hype, they had managed to banalise, for some of the public, contempt for the lives of these migrants.

Resistance organized

In response to these events, a front of 160 trade union, political, social, religious, customary and human rights organizations has formed to combat what is now being called "Africaphobia". Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), despite the many criticisms that can be levelled at some of their positions, have maintained, with a certain political courage, a line of solidarity towards migrants, in line with their proclaimed pan-Africanism.

As for the *Abahlali baseMjondolo* movement, which brings together several hundred thousand inhabitants of the townships, it has said: "Xenophobia will not fix broken toilets, unemployment, or housing. It will not ensure a fair distribution of land and wealth. It will not restore the dignity of the oppressed. A person is a person wherever they may find themselves. A neighbour is a neighbour and a comrade is a comrade wherever they may come from". [1]. May this statement be heard.

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from
l'Anticapitaliste.*

BRAZIL

The strategic stakes of Brazil's October elections in the international situation

ISRAEL DUTRA ·

Among all the geopolitical, social and electoral processes and phenomena that are currently taking place in the world, the Brazilian elections occupy a very special place. While the far right is setting up an international project with neo-fascist features, claiming to advance a project for the future and defending the genocide in Gaza, the Brazilian electoral campaign is taking on a strategic dimension. Trump must push ahead with his plan for a new national security strategy, "Donroe", as he has suffered a major defeat in the Middle East with the failure of the military aggression against Iran now confirmed.

Trump embodies a declining but more aggressive imperialism that is vying for spheres of influence with an emerging Chinese imperialism. To this end, he has mobilized a neo-fascist current with broad popular support and is acting in a coordinated manner, with Argentine president Javier Milei as the regional figurehead. After winning electoral victories, controversial though they were, in Peru and Colombia, Trump and Milei want Lula to be defeated in October at all costs. With Venezuela under trusteeship and Cuba harassed, the change of government in Brazil, which would tip South America's largest country into the blue camp, is a strategic goal for Trumpism.

The heart of the conflict: imperialist offensive and sovereignty

The U.S. government is deliberately acting against Brazil's sovereignty. In addition to the exorbitant tariffs, which impose a 37.5% tax on a wide range of Brazilian products, there are unequivocal signs of

interference, such as the classification of the CV and the CCP as terrorist groups, the extension of the national state of emergency declared against Brazil, as well as the suspicions put forward about the regularity of the elections and electronic ballot boxes.

This new escalation resulted in the revocation of the diplomatic visa of Brazil's ambassador to Washington, Maria Luiza Viotti, an unprecedented measure that was clearly a retaliatory measure against the Brazilian position.

Milei was a leading figure at the Flávio [Bolsonaro] convention. He spoke out against "socialism" and called for the defeat of Lula and the left on the continent, hoping for the victory of the opposition in the Brazilian election. Milei concluded his "tour" of South America with the inauguration of Abelardo de la Espriella as the new president of Colombia.

The question of sovereignty will be at the heart of the Brazilian electoral debate. Tech giants, such as Peter Thiel's Palantir (which set up shop in Argentina under Milei), act as a digital shock force in the service of the far-right project. One of their goals is to set up a techno-fascist experiment in the countries of the region, and this project also enjoys the enthusiastic support of Renan Santos and the Missão party in Brazil.

A victory for Flávio Bolsonaro would pave the way for a larger colonial offensive: control of land, ports, and many other national resources and infrastructure, while significantly strengthening U.S. interventionism in Latin America.

Independence or Trump!

A victory for Lula will serve as a "bulwark" against the right-wing and neo-colonial offensive. The Trumpist frenzy is aimed at controlling rare earths in Brazil, mining production, such as lithium in Argentina and Bolivia, as well as major waterways. The issue of the control of financial transactions, such as that of the Pix, is part of the general conflict and is becoming a central element in showing tens of millions of people how Trump's line, favourable to the interests of the United States, will worsen the living conditions of the majority of the Brazilian population.

It should not be forgotten that the vast majority of the Brazilian elite accepts this situation of subordination, despite the complaints and losses. The shameful statement by the Minister of Defence, José Múcio, that he would "open the doors" in the event of a hypothetical invasion by the United States must be fought, as it is the expression of a "fifth column" of traitors within the government itself. It is also important to remember that Múcio was one of the leading voices in favour of reducing the sentences imposed on the perpetrators of the 8 January coup.

It is fundamental to reconcile the struggle for sovereignty, for effective independence from imperialism, with the defence of democratic rights and a program that responds to the demands of the majority of the population. Flávio [Bolsonaro] embodies a project of regression in the living conditions of women and black and indigenous populations, who would be directly affected by his machismo, racist and predatory extractivism positions.

A victory for Lula would rebalance the balance of power on a continental scale. And it would pave the way for the defeat of Trump, who is already struggling in Iran and likely to lose the US midterm elections next November. That's the whole issue.

The strength of the PSOL

Beyond the defeat of the far right, the October elections will be about strengthening the PSOL and its parliamentary group, overcoming the exclusion

clause and sending a signal to the anti-capitalist left around the world. The PSOL's new dynamic, as its closest wing of the government is in the process of leaving the party, strengthens its political independence and gives it international legitimacy.

The Brazilian elections could reflect the shift to the left that certain sectors of the masses are currently taking. The rise of the DSA in the United States, where pro-Palestine candidates defeated the Zionist lobby in the Democratic primaries, is part of a dynamic that combines unity to confront the far right and the construction of a new pole to the left of the traditional parties. The victory of Doctor Abdul El-Sayed in the Democratic primaries in Michigan is not the least: he defeated the pro-Israel sectors of the party establishment, in a movement strongly embodied by Zohran Mamdani – the current mayor of New York – and which is spreading thanks to an increasingly radicalized fringe of the American population.

All other things being equal, Argentina's quest for renewal is reflected in the strengthening of the Left Front (FIT-U), which exceeds 10% in most opinion polls. This movement is accompanied by widespread mobilizations against Milei's policies of privatization and capitulation in the country, which are increasingly aggravating the already difficult economic situation of the Argentine working class. Around the world, Gen Z is in a fierce struggle, and polls indicate that the trend to embrace socialist ideas is growing among young people, including in the United States and other major countries.

A victory for Lula and the rise of the PSOL would constitute points of support to coordinate an international anti-fascist movement, combining the fight against the global far right with the defence of the sovereignty of the peoples. This is why we are participating in the organization of a new regional edition of the International Anti-Fascist Conference, which will be held next December in Argentina.

The order of the day is to take up this slogan everywhere: "Trump, out of Brazil and out of all of Latin

America!"

7 August 2026

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IRAN

Resumption of Bombing and Internal Crisis in Iran

BABAK KIA ·

The fragile ceasefire that came into force on 18 June, which opened a 60-day period of negotiations, was the subject of divergent interpretations from the outset. The main sticking point is the Strait of Hormuz, through which about 20% of the world's oil passes. Teheran intends to impose a payment for passage, while Trump refuses to leave control of this to the Iranian regime.

Breaking of the ceasefire

While Tehran had obtained guarantees from Washington to organize the funeral of former Leader Ali Khamenei, the Iranian army attacked commercial ships in the strait. The United States then launched a new bombing campaign on Iran's coastal regions.

Heavily militarized, these regions make it possible to control the strait and target American bases in the Gulf. The populations, especially Baluchis and Arabs, already among the poorest and most oppressed in Iran, are bearing the brunt of these bombings, without benefiting from the slightest protection from the regime.

While announcing to Congress the resumption of war, Trump indicated that he is reinstating the blockade of Iranian ports, thus seeking to economically strangle Iran.

Since 28 February, this confrontation has seen an alternation of phases of confrontation and negotiations. It has major economic consequences on a global scale, but also leads to an exacerbation of the crises in Iran and highlights the divisions at the top of the state.

Crises and developments in Iran

President Pezeshkian and Foreign Minister Araghchi want to reach an agreement with Washington to ease sanctions, increase oil exports and recover some of the frozen assets.

But the Revolutionary Guards control the circuits for circumventing sanctions, which are a source of considerable enrichment. They reject any normalization with the United States or any abandonment of the nuclear and ballistic programs.

Scenes showing Araghchi's exfiltration during Khomeini's funeral are eloquent. These ceremonies were an opportunity for the currents hostile to the negotiations to organize rallies whose participants treated Araghchi and Pezeshkian as traitors to the fatherland.

The regime could evolve towards a more traditional military-security dictatorship, while conceding some relaxations. This is reflected in particular in a certain tolerance of women's clothing "considered not to be in accordance with Islamic law" or in the acceptance of greater diversity in the public space.

The future of the peoples of Iran

However, these developments will not bridge the gap between the regime and the people of Iran. Moreover, the repression is a daily reminder of the brutality of the regime. The current difficulties, aggravated by sanctions and war, are also the consequences of more than forty years of despotism, savage capitalism, gender apartheid, structural corruption, the enrichment of the elites and the repression of combative sectors of society. Dictatorship, oppression of national minorities, falling real wages, inflation, unemployment, poverty, housing crisis and environmental destruction continue to worsen.

The January 2026 uprising confirmed that the vast majority of the population yearns for the end of the

Islamic Republic of Iran. The bloody repression, followed by the military intervention of the United States and Israel, interrupted this dynamic without making it disappear. Popular discontent is already resurfacing.

Workers, women, youth and national minorities have nothing to expect from the ongoing negotiations, nor from the US or Israeli armies. No one in Iran is counting on an internal evolution of the regime leading to freedom, equality and social

progress. The future of the peoples of Iran will not be decided in Washington, Tel Aviv or the ruling circles of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but through organization, social and democratic struggles, as well as solidarity among the peoples of the Middle East in struggle against imperialism, colonialism and despotism.

16 July 2026

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **l'Anticapitaliste**.*

USA

Revoking TPS: Trump Escalates Racist Assault

MALIK MIAH ·

On August 6 all legal work permits ended, Mass layoffs will occur, leading to Haitians losing their homes. Overnight thousands of legal residents will become "illegal."

Haitians waiting for hearings will be forced to wear iron monitors, a reminder of slavery.

Haitians, even children, are seen by the government as "the worst of the worst."

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) moved quickly to end TPS protections, even while the State Department says it is unsafe for anyone to travel to Haiti.

Trump does not care. His hatred for Black people, whether from Africa or their descendants in other countries of the world, is obvious, as is his goal to "Make America White Again."

Tens of thousands of Syrians living under TPS will also be impacted.

Origins of TPS

Haitians have been covered under Temporary Protected Status in the United States since January 2010, when Haiti was first designated for TPS following the devastating earthquake that struck the country.

As of 2026, many Haitian TPS beneficiaries had been living in the United States under TPS protections for about the past 16 years. The designation was extended and re-designated multiple times in view of Haiti's ongoing humanitarian, political and security crises.

Soon after taking office, the Trump administration said it rescinded the Biden administration's TPS ex-

tension because it believed TPS was being used far beyond its intended temporary purpose.

The DHS said it was "returning TPS to its original status: temporary."

The administration contended that repeated extensions allowed increasing numbers of Haitians to qualify for the program over time and described the system as having been "exploited and abused."

The DHS also said the move was part of President Trump's broader effort to reverse immigration policies it viewed as encouraging "illegal" immigration.

Critics of the decision — Haitians, as well as human rights and civil libertarian and immigrant rights leaders — argued that Haiti continues to face severe political instability, gang violence and humanitarian challenges, making it unsafe for many people to return.

The Haitian Community

People of Haitian descent in the U.S. number roughly 1.1 to 1.5 million people, depending on the definition and dataset used.

Of Haitian-born immigrants, in 2024 about 70% were naturalized U.S. citizens. With an estimated 852,000 Haitian immigrants, that works out to roughly 585,000 naturalized citizens.

The remainder were generally noncitizens with various statuses, including permanent residents (green card holders), TPS holders, parolees (their order of removal was stayed because of the country's instability), visa holders, and some undocumented immigrants.

DHS reports that 235,350 Haitians received green cards between 2010 and 2022.

Haitian immigrants and TPS holders are concentrated in a few major areas. South Florida's Miami-

Dade County, North Miami, Little Haiti, Fort Lauderdale and surrounding areas have some of the largest Haitian communities in the country.

In New York City, particularly in Brooklyn including neighborhoods such as Flatbush and East Flatbush, have long-established Haitian populations.

In Massachusetts Boston, Brockton, Randolph and nearby locations, and in New Jersey Newark, Irvington and surrounding areas have substantial Haitian communities.

In Georgia, the Atlanta metropolitan area has a growing Haitian community. Significant populations also live in parts of Connecticut and central Florida.

In Ohio, where Vice President JD Vance is from, he and Trump falsely claimed Haitians in Springfield were killing and eating residents' cats and dogs.

The Republican governor repudiated those attacks and said Haitians were hard working members of the community.

Imperialist Destruction

What the Trump government is doing, however, is not new. Hostility towards Haitians and Black people has long been a feature of U.S. imperialism. U.S. direct intervention in Haiti dates back more than a century.

The only successful slave revolt took place in Haiti in 1891 against France's colonial rule. Haiti gained independence in 1804, yet France demanded payments for the loss of slave property; those payments continued for 150 years. Needless to say, freed slaves received no reparations from France.

In the 20th century the United States, the new top imperialist power, took over from France in administering a neo-colonial relationship of exploitation and national oppression. This included a two-decade Marine occupation of the country from 1915-34.

The battle to defend Haitian refugees today is part of the Haitian people's broader struggle for their freedom.

Source: Against the Current.

LATIN AMERICA

The spectre of the far right is haunting Latin America

EDUARDO LUCITA ·

At the end of 2022, I published an article in this very column entitled: 'Latin America: The far right is already amongst us'. [1] Today, this fact is undeniable. Looking at the period 2023–2026, far-right victories can be seen in 13 of the 16 presidential elections held during that time. However, it is since Donald Trump took office as President of the United States 18 months ago that this political shift has intensified, with far-right candidates winning the region's last seven presidential elections.

Whether due to the simultaneity of these processes or the depth of the regressive reforms and structural changes they propose, one might consider this to be a new kind of political phenomenon that may not be merely episodic. In any case, its effects will be long-lasting.

A strengthened right wing

These new right-wing movements are far more radical and far-reaching in the structural changes they promise, in the dismantling of the democratic consensus achieved in the previous period, and far more conservative. They promote the most extensive deregulation of capital flows, the curtailment, if not the elimination, of social and political rights (the removal of protections for workers, women, peasants, indigenous peoples, the commons and nature; the dismantling of education and health policies; the dispossession of indigenous peoples and their identities; and the use of public debt as a justification for policies of permanent austerity). And they are far more market-driven. It is an all-out attack on working people and in favour of capital, seeking to establish a long-term, regressive balance of power

Junior partners of Trumpism

This is a group of leaders who have attained political power in their countries through liberal democracy by capitalising on popular frustrations stemming from previous periods and governments. All of them have adopted as their own—despite their differences and heterogeneity—the style, rhetoric and agenda of Trumpism (authoritarianism, racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-environmentalism, the reconstruction of patriarchy, and hatred as a form of politics).

This shift towards right-wing extremism is entirely in line with the US's New National Security Strategy (November 2025), which has been implementing a far more aggressive imperialist policy, launched under the pretext of combating drug trafficking and the indiscriminate bombing – without evidence and in breach of international agreements – of small vessels in the Caribbean. The military invasion of Venezuela and the abduction of the president and his wife (a member of the national parliament) on 3 January this year were a continuation of that offensive. At the same time, it threatened to annex Greenland until it secured the establishment of three military bases on the island, and to rename the Gulf of Mexico the Gulf of the Americas. He succeeded in getting Panama to expel Asian companies from the canal, forced Chile to suspend the project for a submarine fibre-optic cable from Concón to Hong Kong, whilst Argentina suspended the agreement to build a radio telescope in the province of San Juan...

Trump has realised that the era of unilateralism in the world has come to an end, and with it the US's role as a hegemonic power. He is therefore seeking to redraw the global map, reorganising it into spheres of influence and security dominated by the

major powers (the US, China, Russia), whilst re-treating to the Western Hemisphere (from the Arctic to Antarctica). Through this withdrawal, he aims to address issues he considers strategic: blocking China's access to the region, ensuring political stability for his allies (both subordinate and unconditional), and securing free access to the region's natural resources – which are essential for his value chains and the energy transition.

However, this retraction does not mean turning a blind eye to its interests in other regions of the world. On the contrary, it seeks to strengthen control over its 'backyard' so that, from there, it can implement a policy that addresses its strategic weakness in the face of an emerging power such as China. The Milei government, in a state of total subordination to the US, is at the forefront of this process and aspires to lead a regional bloc of countries aligned with Trumpist policies. The current diplomatic crisis with Brazil is an expression of this intention, whilst also forming part of the global China–US conflict.

Of course, much depends on the outcomes of the forthcoming elections in Brazil and the US, which may influence the region and, in particular, next year's presidential elections in Argentina.

The future hangs in the balance

Most of these electoral victories were decided in run-offs and by a very narrow margin, meaning that governments take office in deeply polarised societies, which casts doubt on future governability. So far, they have focused more on dismantling the achievements of the previous period and on altering the role of the state than on charting a course for the future.

The fact is that the extreme ultraliberalism they espouse faces serious difficulties in relaunching the process of capital accumulation and reproduction; they are increasingly dependent on foreign investment, which demands ever more concessions (tax breaks, legal guarantees and capital mobility) that undermine the sovereignty of peoples and nations.

Thus, these projects are caught up in the contradictions of the current situation, with the particularity that the long progressive decade established a baseline of social and democratic rights which workers and the popular sectors do not seem willing to relinquish without a fight (Bolivia, Chile and Argentina are examples of this resistance). However, workers' and popular struggles against these far-right forces and imperialist domination remain fragmented and scattered – not only at the level of individual countries but also on an international scale. This places solidarity and the combination of anti-fascist and anti-imperialist resistance with the defence of national and popular sovereignty at the forefront.

Faced with an utterly radical agenda from the far right and the failure of progressive movements—which lack the courage to transcend the limits of capitalism—a space is opening up for the ideas of anti-capitalism and socialism. We see this in New York and other American and European cities. We also see it in our own country with the rise in popularity and voting intentions for Myriam Bregman, the leading political figure of the Argentine left.

A perspective

At the end of last March, thousands of people from more than 30 countries, gathered "...to combat imperialist and colonial aggression and to coordinate the struggles of the peoples resisting them", met in Porto Alegre, Brazil, giving rise to the 1st International Anti-Fascist, Anti-Imperialist and for the Sovereignty of the Peoples Conference, seeking to share analyses, strengthen ties and agree on concrete actions.

This work will be continued by the Regional Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Fascist Conference of Latin America, to be held in Buenos Aires in December this year, followed by another in Mexico, possibly in March 2027.

The path of resistance and proposals has been mapped out, along which the anti-capitalist left can and must play a role by initiating debates and prac-

tical actions. It will be difficult to achieve, but not impossible.

4 August 2026

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **Huella del Sur**.*

This article is a summary of a longer piece that will form part of a forthcoming book.

Ceuta: the boundary of the right to have rights

MIGUEL URBÁN CRESPO ·

In fact, it is important to remember that mass arrivals by sea to the autonomous cities are far from new. In February 2014, some three hundred people attempted to swim across from Castillejos to Ceuta via Tarajal beach and were repelled by the Civil Guard, who used riot gear against those who were in the water, resulting in the deaths of at least fourteen people. But this massacre has by no means deterred attempts to migrate by swimming. Every year, dozens of people die anonymously on these border beaches, swelling the numbers that make the Mediterranean the world's largest mass grave. This time, at least, we know that around one hundred people have died in just under forty-eight hours: people, not data or numbers, as they are often treated in institutional and journalistic accounts.

People fleeing poverty – we cannot forget that we are facing one of the most unequal borders in the world. No one risks their life if they don't understand that they have no future in their own country. These deaths are directly linked to a border regime that criminalises the freedom of movement of impoverished people, turning Europe into a veritable fortress. This dynamic, as Tomasz Koniecz points out, is inherent to the crisis-ridden imperialism of the 21st century, which is no longer merely a phenomenon of resource plunder, but also strives to hermetically seal off the centres of superfluous humanity that the system produces in its death throes. Thus, protecting the remaining islands of prosperity constitutes a central element of imperialist strategies, reinforcing security and control measures that fuel a rising authoritarianism.

In this sense, we must contextualise the bellicose rhetoric of "barbaric invasions" that has been adopted by everyone from the right to certain sectors of progressivism, presenting the arrival of thousands of people as an "attack on territorial integrity" or even as an invasion. They thus avoid, at all times, acknowledging the social crisis that the situation reflects and instead call for a military, rather than a humanitarian, response. This situation is by no means new. A few years ago, the EU-NATO European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats did not hesitate to classify the migration flow from Belarus to Poland as part of a so-called hybrid warfare. A debate even arose within the Atlantic Alliance about whether Article 5 of the NATO treaty, which stipulates mutual defense, could be invoked in the face of such hybrid acts.

It is certainly paradigmatic of this bellicose rhetoric that, instead of ensuring safe passage for thousands of victims fleeing war, poverty, or climate change, European institutions and governments are responding by strengthening security policies and externalising borders. Because the first question in the face of this week's massive influx of people into Ceuta is clear: if there were safe and regular ways to enter Europe, would anyone risk their life swimming to Ceuta?

Since the first barbed wire fence was built in Ceuta in October 1995, following attempts by groups of migrants to enter, walls, fences and concertina wire have continued to be erected, condemning the autonomous city to become a kind of open-air prison for migrants who seem forced to remain stranded in transit – lost in transition – without a home to return to and with a destination that closes its doors to them. But we would be mistaken to think that the ultimate goal of all the mechanisms of

Fortress Europe is to prevent the arrival of migrants. Because Europe needs migrants.

Fortress Europe is, in reality, a strategy of exclusion from full citizenship that seeks to weaken a group—migrants—in order to further fragment the population as a whole. This is an operation inherent to the war among the poor, the class struggle of the second-to-last against the last, where competition between natives and foreigners for access to increasingly scarce resources—jobs and social welfare benefits and services—is paramount. The militarisation of migration routes, surveillance devices, the externalisation of borders, immigration detention centres, and the increasing curtailment of migration rights do not seek to prevent migrants from arriving, but rather to ensure that only those needed by the European production system arrive, but also that they are already broken, frightened, stripped of rights, aware of the fragility of their stay and the risks of not assuming their role in the secondary niches of European capitalism.

In fact, the humanitarian crisis that has unfolded in Ceuta in recent days has been exploited by the right wing, both domestically and internationally, with Meloni and Trump at the forefront, talking about a "pull factor" resulting from the regularisation of migrants in our country in recent months. Italy has even gone so far as to temporarily suspend the Schengen Area agreement with Spain regarding the free movement of people. A measure that, in practice, since we don't share a land border, will only be applied through additional checks on passengers arriving in Italy from Spain. Pure political propaganda from the far right to undermine policies expanding rights. Because Fortress Europe is not only built with razor wire, but also through a deliberate, calculated, and deliberately racist institutional policy that undermines the legal and social protections of migrants. This process results in migrants losing not only a specific set of rights, but their very right to have rights.

Thus, the regularisation of migrants – by granting them certain citizenship rights – clashes with the legal degradation policies of Fortress Europe,

which favour downward competition in the labour market. A widespread concept of "there is not enough for everyone" fosters exclusionary mechanisms that, as Habermas wrote, are characteristic of a "welfare chauvinism" and concentrate the latent tension between citizenship status and national identity, which the far-right Vox party has been appealing to lately.

Whilst some on the right and in progressive circles have pointed to the Moroccan monarchy and ruling class as the real culprit behind the images seen in Ceuta these days, by controlling migratory flows according to their own whims and interests, acting as the gendarme of the southern European border, everyone remembers May 2021, when the Moroccan government withdrew its border controls and allowed some 8,000 people to enter the city of Ceuta in just two days. On that occasion, it appears that the medical care provided to Brahim Ghali, leader of the Polisario Front, at a hospital in Logroño, Spain was the pretext that sparked Morocco's anger and subsequent retaliation. Tensions only eased after the Prime Minister modified Spain's historical position on Western Sahara and met the following year with King Mohammed VI of Morocco.

This time, the excuse for the Moroccan dictatorship's reprisals could range from Pedro Sánchez's trip to Algeria a few days ago to the negotiation of the new EU trade agreement, the processing of the Sahrawi nationality law in Congress, which grants Spanish nationality to Sahrawis – whose territory is currently claimed by Morocco— born when the African territory was still a Spanish colony or even Morocco's interest in annexing the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla with the support of Trump's United States. While I don't think we'll ever truly know the Moroccan government's motivations for neglecting its duties as the European border police during this period, what is beyond doubt is the immense power that Spain and the EU have granted to dictatorships like Morocco's by outsourcing border control.

Alongside the militarisation of the borders of Ceuta and, later, Melilla, the cooperation agreement on border control between the Spanish State and Morocco was signed in 1992, the first formal step in the externalisation of the borders of an EU member state. From that moment on, the Alawi dynastic dictatorship was hired to reduce by all means – the murder of fifty people at the Melilla fence in 2022 is the most palpable example – the number of people crossing the borders of Ceuta, Melilla and the Strait of Gibraltar.

But this externalisation of borders was far from free. Between 1995 and 2006, Morocco received €1.64 billion from the EU's Mediterranean-Europe programme (MEDA) for cooperation with third countries on the Mediterranean coast. In January 2007, the MEDA programme was replaced by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), without any reduction in funding: €722 million between that year and 2010. In addition to European funds, there were also substantial Spanish public funds and incentives allocated to this externalisation of borders in Morocco, often using development cooperation as a pretext for implementing projects or to hide budget items that actually served this other purpose.

Since it was decided to externalise European borders, Morocco has used and continues to use the migration issue as a pressure valve, tightening or

relaxing the control of its borders depending on the funds it receives or the political benefits it can obtain at any given time. It is certainly curious that the most frequent criticism from both progressives and the right is that Morocco is not fulfilling its part of the agreement that makes it the enforcer of our borders, or even that they are outraged that the Moroccan monarchy is using its role as manager of migration flows geopolitically. But no one questions the criminal policy of externalising borders, which not only represses people who decide to migrate, but also makes us complicit with the dictatorship and its policy of occupation.

It is still repugnant that, once again, with more than one hundred deaths on the back of our migration policy, the people who were crowded together in Ceuta continue to be treated as inconvenient problems that should be expelled or eliminated as soon as possible: subjects without rights. Therefore, it is essential to understand the current migration situation not only as a humanitarian crisis, but also, and above all, as a human rights crisis and, consequently, a political crisis. A crisis that questions who has the right to have rights in Europe and that challenges us all.

2 August 2026

*Translated by David Fagan for **International Viewpoint** from **Viento Sur**.*

UKRAINE

The Wrong Lever: Europe, Ukraine, and the Refugee Question

ADAM NOVAK ·

On 26 June 2026, the European Commission proposed extending the EU's Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) to March 2028, while excluding newly arriving Ukrainian men aged 23 to 60. [1]

The TPD confers rights: immediate residence in any EU country, labour-market access, healthcare and schooling, without the backlogs, possible detention and restricted permits that characterise standard asylum processing. The proposal removes these rights for new male arrivals, redirecting them into the slow, uncertain, individually assessed procedures that govern everyone else who seeks asylum in the EU.

About 4.4 million people displaced from Ukraine have temporary protection status in the EU. Most are women and children: adult men account for 27%. The proposal targets only those who have crossed the border irregularly since the restrictions came into force — fewer than 1,000 persons a month according to Frontex.

This is not the only pressure being applied. Several member states have been systematically reducing the social support that makes temporary protection much better than asylum seeker status. Germany has moved new beneficiaries from the standard citizen's benefit level down to the lower asylum-seeker payment rate. Ireland has cut weekly cash payments and capped state accommodation stays at 30 days. Norway has restricted payments to those in state dormitories. Poland has tied child payments to verified school attendance. Czechia removes benefits if Ukrainians don't find work within 150 days. Not easy when most adult arrivals are women accompanied by children or vulnerable dependents.

Czech journalist Saša Uhlová has documented the effects of this erosion over four years of reporting. Lawyers and doctors working unqualified jobs; elderly and chronically ill beneficiaries excluded from public support; social workers burning out as state provision shrinks. And unregulated landlords proposing accommodation in exchange for domestic and sexual services.

The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O'Flaherty, released an observations paper on the same day as the EC proposal warning that "policies promoting premature returns" and "reductions in social support" are undermining protection for displaced Ukrainians, noting that civilian casualties in 2025 reached their highest levels since 2022 and that "the current realities on the ground in Ukraine do not meet the conditions for a safe and dignified return."

Conscription is Ukraine's decision; refugee law is not the instrument to enforce it

According to EU Migration Commissioner Magnus Brunner, "this is what Ukraine has asked us to do, and this is what we are doing."

Ukraine has the right to decide its own mobilisation policy. But using the TPD — a mechanism of international protection — to enforce Ukrainian conscription on those already outside the country is a different matter.

The class dimension of who actually evades conscription is documented by Sotsialnyi Rukh, the Ukrainian socialist organisation: a medical exemption costs \$US 37,000; two Kyiv Oblast enlistment officers were detained in August 2024 having accumulated over \$1.2 million in bribes. Those crossing the Carpathians on foot or wading across the Tisza

into Romania are not, in the main, those who had \$37,000 available. Ukraine's oligarchs continue to move freely as they hide their cash and make their deals. For them, European doors are always open.

Not all EU member states have agreed to the exclusion. Slovakia and Hungary — both with large Ukrainian migrant populations, and almost no refugees and asylum seekers from Africa or Asia — oppose it. France, whose National Court of Asylum has recognised conscientious objection as a possible ground for refugee status, is also opposed.

The Commission's proposal requires a qualified majority of 15 of 27 states representing 65% of EU population; it is not yet adopted.

What deportation produces: the documented record on Russian asylum seekers

The human and political failure of EU asylum policy is most clearly visible not in the treatment of Ukrainian men but in the systematic rejection of Russian asylum seekers fleeing the war.

Germany has rejected 95% of applications from Russian men of military age since 2022. Germany's Federal Migration Office cites Putin's 2022 claim that mobilisation is "complete" — a claim that was false when applied and is false now: Russia's Criminal Code amendments of late 2025 removed judicial discretion over suspended sentences for deserters who left the country, meaning returned failed asylum seekers face near-certain imprisonment.

The Baltic states have adopted blanket restrictions. Finland now turns away asylum seekers, from any country, on its land border with Russia. Estonia refuses entry to anyone with prior Russian military service, regardless of desertion status.

The United States has provided a concrete demonstration of what deportation in these conditions produces. In December 2025, 64 Russian nationals were deported on a single flight to Moscow. All the men on board were handed military summonses on arrival; two were arrested at the airport — one anti-war activist charged with "justifying terrorism," one

deserter charged with abandonment of his unit. The deportation lists had been submitted in advance to the Russian consulate. Near-monthly deportation flights have continued since.

Meanwhile, over 1,800 people are imprisoned in Russia on politically motivated charges, and more than 1,288 face criminal prosecution specifically for anti-war activities. OVD-Info, the organisation that monitors these cases, was designated "extremist" by Russian authorities on 4 June 2026, meaning anyone inside Russia who supports it now faces criminal prosecution. It continues to operate in exile, maintaining the monitoring database that forms the evidential basis for most asylum cases.

The organisations doing what governments will not

The European Network for Solidarity with Ukraine (ENSU) demands "the right to asylum for Russian and Belarusian refugees, and asylum seekers from other conflict zones"; and opposes "reductions in the social benefits for Ukrainians under temporary protection [while ensuring] a fair and equal system of social benefit."

Connection e.V. and Pro Asyl in Germany have built the legal framework for conscientious objector and deserter protection. Connection e.V. is currently seeking church sanctuary for Nikita Zvezdov, a 19-year-old Russian deserter at risk of deportation.

Idite Lesom (Get Lost) operates through an anonymous Telegram bot to advise men inside Russia on avoiding conscription and to help deserters reach safety. Around 60% of those it helps remain inside Russia in hiding, unable to obtain the international passports needed to cross borders.

A Farewell to Arms (Proshchai Oruzhie), based in France and founded by Russian deserters, supports those who have reached Europe. Russie-Libertés in Paris works with deserters stranded in Kazakhstan and Armenia who cannot obtain EU entry visas.

The deserters.org network calls for recognition of desertion as an asylum ground across all EU member states, and for laissez-passer documents for

those without passports — covering both Russian and Ukrainian deserters.

What the policy should be

Temporary protection status should be maintained for all beneficiaries from Ukraine. The benefit reductions that are compressing that protection into a degraded form should be reversed rather than extended. Maintaining temporary protection for Ukrainian men does not weaken Ukraine; it maintains a population of qualified workers, carers and professionals in host countries who contribute to those economies and whose connections to Ukraine will matter for reconstruction.

The same collective, fast-track instrument should apply to Palestinians displaced by Israeli bombardment. There is, across European publics, significant sympathy for Palestinians and real anger at governments' half-hearted reduction of cooperation with a

regime whose conduct the International Court of Justice is examining for genocide. That political sentiment has not translated into policy. No EU government has activated the TPD for Palestinians, no mainstream politician is calling for it.

Russian and Belarusian nationals fleeing the war — deserters, anti-war activists, conscientious objectors — should be granted asylum, based on the documented reality of what Russia does to those it gets back.

Granting protection to Russian war refusers is directly damaging to Putin's war machine. Making Europe a genuinely hostile environment for the Russian war effort means taking in those who refuse to be part of it.

28 June 2026

*Source: **ESSF***

UKRAINE

In Kyiv, the street makes its voice heard

ALICE PLEY ·

Against Fedorov's ouster

This time, it was the dismissal of defence minister Mykhailo Fedorov that provoked anger. Appointed in January, the 35-year-old tech entrepreneur, who has been close to Zelensky since 2019, had reformed the supply of weapons, which had been opaque and conducive to corruption, and modernised defence through drones, advanced technology and data analysis, in order to thwart Russian plans and limit human losses. He had also launched limited-term contracts to allow rotation on the front. These measures made him very popular.

Ukrainians have therefore taken to the streets again to demand the return of Fedorov and the dismissal of the chief of staff, Oleksandr Syrskyi, a career soldier criticized for a strategy inherited from Soviet culture and unsuitable. For several months, voices in the army have been denouncing absurd decisions that have cost many lives. Statements by Fedorov and several generals suggest that the differences between the two men had forced Zelensky to make a decision.

But in Ukraine, resistance to the invasion is everyone's business and the population intends to influence decisions. The demonstrators make their placards with markers and scissors, comparing Syrskyi to a cheese — "syr" means "cheese" in Ukrainian. A giant flag runs through the square while groups chant the names of Fedorov or Drapatyi, a popular general.

Taras Bilous, a historian, member of the Social Movement and enlisted in the army, considers Fedorov better than his predecessors but de-

nounces the "wave of idealization" and criticizes the new contracts of engagement: mobilized for four years, he could not benefit from them and their implementation is not progressing. But the main thing is elsewhere: "If Syrskyi were to be removed from his post, it would be for the best. This is in fact more important". The street has once again achieved a victory, since on the evening of Tuesday, 21 July, Zelensky announced the replacement of Syrskyi by Drapatyi.

Against the increase in the metro fare

Taras Bilous called for people to join, a few hundred meters away, the mobilization against the increase in public transport fares. About fifty people gathered in front of the town hall, whose façade bore a huge banner demanding the release of the defenders of Azovstal. Organized by Social Movement, the Ukrainian Socialist League and the *Priama Diia* student union, the rally, thanks to its media coverage, attracted passers-by outraged by the decree of Mayor Vitali Klitschko.

The metro ticket has just jumped from 8 to 30 hryvnias, or from 15 to 60 euro cents, while the majority of inhabitants earn less than 35,000 hryvnias per month and education and health workers often receive only half of that. Tania, a paediatrician and non-activist, joined the rally: for her, too many sacrifices are being asked of the population. Transport workers were also present and point out that this increase will not improve their working conditions.

For Vitaliy Dudin, a member of Social Movement, this decree adopted without consultation threatens social cohesion, the mobility of the population and municipal democracy: while more than 50 people were killed in the bombings in the first week of July alone, imposing an additional burden on the population is unacceptable.

Despite the bombs, the sacrifices and a war that drags on, Ukrainian society does not bend and "continues to fight against the external enemy and attacks from within", says Svetlana, who returned to help in her native country after decades abroad.

23 July 2026

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **l'Anticapitaliste**.*

ITALY

The battle for the beaches in Italy

DAVE KELLAWAY ·

The right to take the sun and have a swim on a coastline that is the domain of the state should belong to everyone. This truly is a class issue and an expression of the capitalist control of resources and the resulting extreme inequality in Italy. Remember only a minority of the working class in Italy (and also in Britain) go on holiday in another country. For those families below a certain income the only possible holiday is to go to the local beach or go into the hills for a walk or a picnic.

At our local beach in Vietri Sul Mare on the Amalfi coast the lidos are run by local cooperatives. They hire local people and they have proper seasonal contracts. So they are not the worst. However you pay upwards of £30 a day for a parasol and two sunbeds. You pay more the closer you are to the water and whether it is a weekend or not. On a Sunday you are talking £50 at least and that is before buying a coffee or ice cream. Many workers in the South of Italy do not earn much more than 1100 euros a month after tax so you can see a whole sector of working people are excluded from the well maintained, cleaner private beaches.

Dire state of the 'free beaches'

When you find the five or ten percent of the beach that is the 'free beach' you discover that there are no showers, toilets and infrequent cleaning even though it is supposedly managed by the local council. Often it is close to a river inlet bringing dirty water or squeezed at the end of a long beach. Worst you often find unregulated cowboy entrepreneurs who rent out parasols and loungers. The other summer we had a stand up row with one of them who had moved our parasol so they he could squeeze in

a few more of his ones. In effect it is not a totally free beach.

In the whole of Italy well over 50% of the coastline is privatised but this underestimates the dominance because there are coastlines that do not have beaches or are urbanised or very inaccessible. In the Naples region the percentage is 70% which is similar to Emilia Romagna (Rimini area) or Liguria (Genoa). Each year the size and quality of the free beaches is reduced. In Vietri the local council is basically in hock to the cooperatives – to build up a decent public, free beach would mean cutting back and/or regulating the cooperative area and confronting serious local interests. In some regions organised crime is involved too – it is a good way of recycling money and the profit margins are very good.

One reason the margins are so good is the contracts – that are directly made with the Italian state which owns and manages the coast – have not been reviewed for many years. The local councils manage this process. In practice the same contracts have been renewed for decades and the beaches are run by the same families. However this type of procedure conflicts with EU rules about capitalist competition and the EU with the Bolkestein Directive has told the Italian government that it must change the system. The Italian government passed a law that has temporarily stabilized the contracts until 30 September 2027. Municipalities are legally required to launch open, competitive public tenders for all beach lots by this deadline.

Local councils could take back control

Local councils could at that stage decide how big the private lidos should be and could launch their own publicly controlled beaches. It is even possible now. The local mayor in Bacoli, Josi Della Ragione,

in the Flegrian Fields area north of Naples, has won national and international acclaim after he re-established public free beaches in his area with toilets, showers and a cleaning operation. After a lady had gone from the free beach to the private beach to buy a drink, when she asked to use the toilet she was denounced as a 'pezzente' – a piece of trash. Class hatred is alive and well. The mayor publicised this to broaden his campaign and local activists are calling him up from all around Italy. Borelli, a green left MP, is leading a campaign on this – he denounced the wall you can see in the image at the top of the page.

Reclaiming the natural beauty of these coastlines is another aspect of this struggle. For example there is a lovely promenade – built with public money – in Vietri Sul Mare but during the summer season it is inaccessible since it abuts the entrances of all the lidos. The beautiful view across the bay of Salerno becomes off limits for nearly 4 months of the year.

Managing the transition

A transition to more public ownership and control has to take account of local employment. One solution would be more cooperatives but operating to strict regulations. These could be managing the free beaches where there could be a choice between paying a reasonable price for your parasol or lounger but with plenty of space for people who want to bring their own. Amenities such as toilets and showers should be available free to both spaces.

This is a political fight because the balneari (the lido bosses) form a significant social base of hard right parties like the Lega (Salvini) and Brothers of Italy (Meloni). Salvini has been frequently photographed at his favourite lido, even deejaying. Organised criminal interests are sometimes involved. The national government may well try and

fix new laws that prevent local councils really taking back control. Campaigning for new, locally controlled free beaches organised on an ecological basis could be a vote winner for the official left opposition if they are willing to take on entrenched local interests. In places like Emilia Romagna that means the PD (Democratic Party) challenging a part of its traditional small business base.

Josi challenges the lido operators

As Josi, the Bacoli mayor says in an open letter on social media to the lido operators - referring to the fact that the concessions have now expired:

Dear former public beach concessionaire, listen to me carefully, You're right, I love the 'pezzente', the poor. I love them so much that we'll ensure over 80 per cent of our city's coastline consists of free beaches with proper amenities. Free for everyone. No more owners. But with new concessions for kiosks on organised public beaches, and beach establishments, awarded through public tenders. No favours, my friends. But on merit. And with clear rules: for bathers and for workers. In this way, we'll ensure more rights and greater protection for citizens and those who work on the beach. In this way, we'll free the seafront from unscrupulous profiteers. It'll be a revolution. Because your time is up.

No more bosses. Because the beach and the sea are not private property. They are for everybody. They are among our most precious assets. It is the end of an era and the beginning of a new one.

5 August 2026

Source: A*CR.

MOROCCO:

New escalation of repression in the face of rising resistance

MAROUANE ·

Marouane

1. The main manifestations of the new wave of repression

The main target of this offensive are the young people mobilised within the GenZ movement: there have been more than 5,000 arrests since the end of September 2025 and around 2,000 people were still detained at the beginning of April 2026. Prison sentences of up to fifteen years have been handed down, including against minors. In addition, three young people were killed with live ammunition by the Royal Gendarmerie in the Lakliaa region, near Agadir. The repression also affects the diaspora, with arrests at the airport for simple publications.

Several rappers have been prosecuted or convicted because of their songs or their critical positions on social networks. Jawad Asradi ("Pause Flow") was sentenced in November 2025 to three months in prison, suspended, Hamza Raid to six months in prison, suspended. In Fez, 20-year-old Souhaib Qabli ("L7ASSAL") was sentenced in March 2026 to eight months in prison. In July 2026, rapper and director El Mahdi Lyoubi ("Mehdi Black Wind"), known for his support of the GenZ movement, was arrested and placed in pre-trial detention. The crackdown is also targeting content creators and influencers, aiming to create a climate of surveillance and self-censorship on social media.

Attacks on freedom of expression

The independent press remains one of the government's permanent targets. Ali Lmrabet, a 66-year-old French-Moroccan journalist, is a historical figure in the independent press who was already imprisoned in 2003 and then banned from working for ten years. Arrested on 12 July 2026 at Tangier

airport on his return from Spain, he was placed in police custody and then referred to the prosecutor's office for "alleged dissemination of false information undermining constitutional institutions", on the basis of several wanted notices. He was released on 15 July as the defamation investigation continues. According to his own testimony, more than thirty arrest warrants have been issued against him by the public prosecutor's office.

Omar Radi is also one of the leading figures of the independent investigative press in Morocco, embodying the excesses of state repression against dissenting voices. After spending four years behind bars, he was released on 29 July 2024, but he continues to face systemic surveillance and pressure as well as a smear campaign on media outlets close to the Moroccan secret services that severely limit his freedoms.

The hardening of authoritarianism is accompanied by a growing repression of the media sector. The concentration of media ownership in the hands of capitalist groups linked to the government, the capture of public aid for their benefit and the resumption of control of the institutions responsible for supervising the profession reinforce political control over the media landscape. This offensive has resulted in the establishment of a provisional commission to manage the National Press Council, the revision of its legal framework and revelations of manipulation in the allocation of press cards, in disregard of professional criteria, all of which are intended to reduce the independence of the profession and the spaces for critical expression.

Critical artists are also targeted. In February 2026, cinema distributor Zineb Kharroubi was given a six-month suspended prison sentence. The young

cartoonist Yasser (22) was arrested in Morocco in mid-June 2026 because of his critical cartoons.

The right of association systematically flouted

The right of association is systematically flouted by the authorities. In addition to illegal administrative obstructions – refusal to issue deposit receipts, blocking the registration procedures of associations, their sections or the renewal of their bodies – there is also a ban on meetings, training, conferences and other associative activities aimed at reducing civic space and weakening independent organisations. These practices target a wide range of political, trade union, community and human rights organizations. Among the many cases identified are the National Association of Unemployed Graduates of Morocco (ANDCM), active since 1991, ATTAC CADTM Morocco, deprived of the renewal of its legal receipt despite its existence since 2000, as well as the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH), dozens of whose sections remain without a deposit receipt.

This policy also extends to international human rights organizations, whose activities are routinely banned or prevented in Morocco. Organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Transparency Morocco have been repeatedly restricted, while international observers and lawyers have been expelled on several occasions.

This situation led to the creation, in 2015, of the Network of Associations Victims of Prohibition (RAVI), which brings together organizations confronted with refusal of receipts, bans on activities and other forms of administrative repression. Its reactivation in 2026 testifies to the persistence, even the aggravation, of these attacks on associative freedoms. In this context, the RAVI organized a national demonstration in front of Parliament on 15 July 2026 to denounce these practices and demand the effective respect of freedom of association and assembly.

Despite the diversity of the profiles targeted, these cases have the same feature: the use of deliberately vague criminal qualifications, such as "attacks on institutions" or "dissemination of false information", making it possible to prosecute people with very different profiles.

Social movements in the face of increased repression

The repression of student mobilizations at the Ibn Tofaïl University in Kenitra since the beginning of 2026 has explicitly targeted the movement's trade union organization: ten students have been sentenced to two months in prison and 18 excluded. The latter staged an open sit-in in front of the Ministry of Higher Education in Rabat, which was harshly dispersed by police on 25 June 2026.

The struggle of workers at the Sicomec textile factory is systematically confronted with brutal repression every time they toughen their forms of struggle, whether in Meknes or Rabat, in front of the ministries concerned by their case. More than 500 workers were dismissed without compensation. For more than three years, they have been conducting a sit-in to demand respect for their rights and a just end to their struggle. The authorities responded to their demands with repeated police interventions aimed at breaking their mobilization and discouraging the continuation of their struggle.

The *Hirak* in Figuig is a popular mobilization carried out without interruption by the inhabitants of this oasis since 26 October 2023 against the transfer of the distribution of drinking water and electricity to a Regional Multiservice Company (SRM), which they consider a step towards the privatization of their water, a resource historically managed collectively. This movement was marked by a judicial repression targeting several of its figures. Mohamed Brahmi, known as "MoVo", was sentenced on appeal to eight months in prison on charges related to his involvement in the *Hirak*, while Halima Zaid was given a six-month suspended prison sentence and a fine for speaking at a demonstration. In May 2025, Mohamed Brahmi and Redouane Marzouki were arrested again fol-

lowing a protest before being acquitted. Despite this repression, the *Hirak* continues its mobilization through sit-ins and weekly marches organized every Friday.

For nearly two years, the inhabitants of the Oulad Rami village, in the rural commune of Sidi Aïssa Ben Slimane (El Kelâa des Sraghna province, Marrakesh region), have been leading a mobilization against the operation of a stone crushing quarry, which they consider a threat to their health, their environment and their livelihoods. After several sit-ins remained unanswered, the courts authorized the resumption of the operation. On 24 March 2026, the execution of this decision led to a violent intervention by the repressive forces, resulting in numerous injuries and several arrests among the demonstrators.

The diversity of the sectors targeted reveals a coherent strategy aimed at reducing all the spaces for social, political and cultural contestation. This new escalation of repression does not, however, constitute a rupture. It extends a long tradition of authoritarian management of social conflicts in Morocco.

2. A repression inscribed in a historical continuity

This sequence is part of a longer history of territorial mobilizations in Morocco. Among the most emblematic are Imider's fight against the exploitation of the country's largest silver mine, where residents have occupied the facilities supplying the mine with water since 2011; the *Rif Hirak* (2016-2018), triggered after the tragic death of Mouhcine Fikri and followed by a massive crackdown that led to hundreds of arrests and heavy sentences, including twenty years in prison for several of its main leaders, including Nasser Zefzafi and Nabil Ahamjik; as well as the *Jerada Hirak* (2017-2018), which arose after the deaths of miners in clandestine coal pits and was also marked by a major wave of arrests and convictions.

The movement of unemployed graduates is also one of the most enduring examples of this repressive policy. Organized since 1991 within the

National Association of Unemployed Graduates of Morocco (ANDCM), it remains active in several regions and continues to face an essentially authoritarian management of its demands, marked by police interventions, arrests and prosecutions against its activists. The persistence of this mobilization testifies to the extent of unemployment that affects a significant part of the young graduates in Morocco. Morocco's dependent economy remains unable to provide opportunities for an ever-growing number of skilled workers. This impasse has fuelled the mobilizations of unemployed graduates around the right to work for more than three decades. It also contributes to making these young graduates one of the main breeding grounds for emigration. For many graduates, emigration appears to be the only prospect in the face of long-term unemployment, precariousness and an attack on dignity.

While popular movements remain the main targets of this authoritarian management of social conflicts, tensions are now spreading to other categories of actors. The reforms undertaken by the government are also sparking mobilizations within organized professions, as evidenced by the tug-of-war that has been taking place since the beginning of 2026 between the legal profession and the Ministry of Justice.

The unprecedented mobilization of lawyers

Since June 2026, the legal profession has been engaged in an unprecedented conflict with the Ministry of Justice over Bill No. 66.23, which undermines the independence of lawyers, their organizational autonomy, their immunity as well as the constitutional guarantees of the exercise of the right of defence. After a first week of national strike (15-21 June), the movement was renewed in the form of an unlimited general strike, accompanied by the suspension of legal aid. Entering its sixth week at the end of July 2026, it has caused an almost total paralysis of the courts. At the same time, the profession has multiplied its protest actions, including a national sit-in in front of Parliament on

29 June, before announcing an escalation through regional mobilisations, an appeal to the Constitutional Court and an international advocacy campaign to bring the issue of the independence of the profession before the world congress of the International Union of Lawyers (UIA), scheduled to take place in Marrakesh in October 2026.

3. The political drivers of the authoritarian crackdown

Morocco is preparing to co-host the 2030 World Cup with Spain and Portugal. It also hosted the 2025 African Cup of Nations. These events are part of a broader strategy aimed at strengthening the country's attractiveness for foreign investment and tourism. In this perspective, the authorities seek to project the image of a stable, secure country with full control of its public order, which contributes to a toughening of the management of social protests and critical expressions. The generalization of control mechanisms and the strengthening of police powers are explicitly part of this logic of securing major events and flows, but also, more broadly, of guaranteeing a business climate considered favourable to investors, for whom security predictability and the absence of visible social protest are as important as macroeconomic indicators.

Security modernization accelerated by normalization with Israel

Since the December 2020 agreements, security and military cooperation between Rabat and the Zionist entity has moved to a global integration: transit of equipment for the occupying army through Moroccan ports, sale of intelligence technologies, cyber defence and surveillance drones. In addition, there is a rapid spread of so-called "smart" video surveillance in public spaces: several thousand fixed and mobile cameras were deployed in Rabat, Casablanca and other major cities for the 2025 African Cup of Nations. Presented as a tool for managing flows and "security", this infrastructure remains just as capable of being mobilised for social control and the recording of gatherings. This normalization extends to many other sectors —

economic, cultural, sports and so on. However, it continues to face massive popular rejection, initiated in particular by the Moroccan Front for the Support of Palestine and Against Normalization, which is leading to continuous demonstrations in the majority of Moroccan cities. Several sit-ins in solidarity with the Palestinian people have been violently repressed, including the most recent one held on Saturday, 18 July 2026 in Tangier. Meanwhile, several activists opposed to normalizing relations with Israel have been imprisoned or are facing legal proceedings.

The consolidation of authoritarian bourgeois power

The government coalition that emerged from the September 2021 elections brings together three parties — the National Rally of Independents (RNI), the Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM) and the Istiqlal Party — liberal, monarchical bourgeois and closely rooted in business circles and the workings of the political system. Their coalition pact is based on a voting agreement in the legislature guaranteeing systematic support for executive bills and extended coordination to local authorities, ensuring homogeneous management at all levels of the country.

This political architecture extends a structural characteristic of the Moroccan bourgeoisie, which traditionally prospers thanks to the support of the state, through rent and clientelism. The racketeering born of the accumulation of political and economic mandates encourages nepotism in the awarding of public contracts, licenses and access to land to family networks historically close to power. This distribution is carried out under political protection, with the approval of a regime that also keeps the economic weight of this same social base under control. The head of government Aziz Akhannouch has an estimated fortune of \$1.6 billion, or about 3.5% of the country's public external debt at the end of 2024. He is among the very biggest Moroccan fortunes (according to the Forbes ranking of billionaires) — having held the top spot several times. It is a family wealth that he has

strengthened since his appointment as head of government in September 2021.

4. A social offensive against the working classes

Beyond the attacks on public freedoms, the repression of the mobilizations is part of a more global offensive. It accompanies a neoliberal restructuring aimed at weakening social rights, making work more flexible and transferring the cost of crises to the popular classes.

Restriction of the right to strike

The organic law (No. 97.15) on the right to strike, adopted on 3 February 2025 after more than two decades of deadlock and published in the Official Bulletin on 24 March 2025, appears more as the result of pressure from employers than as the outcome of trade union demands. The leaderships of the main trade union federations, increasingly locked into the mechanisms of "social dialogue" and "social peace", are also largely discredited in terms of their ability to defend workers' rights or to obtain new gains. The General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM) has hailed this law as a step forward that has been awaited "for more than 60 years", which says a lot about the interests it serves. Indeed, the text severely restricts the exercise of the right to strike by imposing a notice period, the holding of a general meeting with a quorum, by prohibiting the occupation of workplaces and by providing for heavy financial penalties. It is also accompanied by the maintenance of the possibility of criminal proceedings against the strikers, in particular on the basis of article 288 of the Criminal Code relating to "obstruction of the freedom to work".

In addition, the CGEM is continuing its pressure in favour of extending the flexibility already introduced by the 2004 Employment Code. This orientation is reflected in particular in the generalisation of temporary work and the extension of contractualisation, including in the civil service, as well as a relaxation of the rules governing dismissals.

A regressive pension reform

A neoliberal-inspired reform project was presented by the National Commission in July 2025. This provides for the gradual increase of the legal retirement age to 65 for all schemes (compared to 60 in the private sector and 63 in the public sector today), the extension of the contribution period, the increase in contributions and the restructuring of funds around two poles. True to neoliberal recipes, this reform places the brunt of the adjustment on workers.

Public debt and structural austerity

The share of overall public debt in GDP rose from 56% in 2008, to 76% in the period 2012-2019 in the wake of the structural crisis of capitalism in 2008-2009, and then to 87% in the period 2020-2024 following the health crisis of the Covid pandemic. This increase is accompanied by a much more marked alignment of Morocco with the austerity policies advocated by the IMF and the World Bank, especially since the Covid crisis. It is reflected in increasingly restrictive debt service repayments, to the detriment of social spending — health, education, commodity subsidies — while subsidies and tax benefits granted to private capital continue, and in increased pressure for structural reforms (pensions, civil service reform, clearing, taxation, exchange rate liberalization) dictated by these two institutions.

This is happening at the same time as the infrastructure linked to major sporting events (stadiums, high-speed lines, airports) is mobilizing hundreds of billions of dirhams of public investment: hospitals and public schools are in chronic disrepair — this is precisely what the GenZ youth movement is denouncing. As a structurally dependent country, Morocco is suffering the repercussions of international crises. The Russian war against Ukraine, the wars in the Middle East and the tensions on the global energy and food markets have accentuated inflationary and budgetary pressures,

used by the government to make the working classes bear the cost of these crises.

5. Conclusion

This repressive offensive reflects less the strength of the regime than its desire to prevent a worsening of social protests in a context marked by the rise in the cost of living, the deepening of neoliberal policies and the accumulation of inequalities. The criminalisation of dissent thus accompanies a wider attack on social and democratic rights.

Despite the scale of this offensive, the mobilizations are not disappearing. Territorial movements such as that of Figui, workers' struggles, student mobilizations, youth protests and demonstrations of solidarity with Palestine testify to a persistent social mobilization that continues to find new forms of expression.

However, this dynamic is developing in a context marked by the deep discrediting of the leaderships of the main trade union federations, which are largely integrated into the mechanisms of "social dialogue" and "social peace", as well as by the organisational weakness of the radical left and its still limited presence in the main sectors of struggle. This double weakness today complicates the convergence of resistance and the construction of a balance of power on a national scale. However, the multiplication of mobilizations shows that authoritarian and neoliberal policies are not succeeding in sustainably containing popular aspirations for social justice and democratic freedoms, nor in preventing the emergence of new generations of activists and new forms of resistance.

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TUNISIA

Mobilizations amid water and electricity crisis in Tunisia

AKSSIL TUNISIE ·

On the other hand, no major protest movement had been observed so far in 2026, although the situation has not improved at all. On the contrary, the interruptions in the water supply have even increased, testifying to a form of normalization of this phenomenon that has been going on for more than five years in these regions. In the summer of 2026, several northern governorates were also affected, with no short- or long-term solution being provided.

The return of mobilizations

The July heatwave, combined with water cuts of more than a week in many cities and rural areas, prompted residents to protest and block roads. Many have lost some of their herds due to the extreme drought, while monthly spending on water trucking has risen sharply.

Some examples of protest movements:

- 25 June 2026: Demonstration and blockade of the road between Nefza and Ushtata (Beja governorate).
- 13 July 2026: demonstration at the Mellag bridge, on the road linking Jendouba to Kef.
- 21 July 2026: protest in the Cap Bon region (Ennachaâ and El Karmania areas, delegation of El Haouaria).

At the same time, rotating power cuts were put in place during the month of July 2026 to protect the national electricity grid from a total collapse ("blackout"), as consumption exceeded production capacities. These cuts have sparked great anger among citizens, causing significant economic dam-

age as well as the halt of many professional activities.

The celebrations of Republic Day, 25 July 2026, thus turned into a demonstration expressing the rejection of the existing regime. The authorities estimated the number of protesters at around 5,000 people. It should be noted, however, that this estimate is difficult to verify, as the Ministry of the Interior has installed, since the revolution, numerous filter barriers in the streets of Tunis in order to prevent large gatherings.

Therefore, several questions arise: what are the root causes of the water and electricity crises? Are the agreements concluded with the International Monetary Fund responsible for this situation?

Tunisia has experienced two periods marked by a strong influence of the International Monetary Fund on its economic and development policies. The first dates back to 1986, when, following the economic crisis and the fall in oil and phosphate prices, the country adopted a vast economic reform programme, a structural adjustment programme.

The second phase began in 2013, after the revolution, when Tunisia entered a new cycle of debt accompanied by reform programs related to financial and economic difficulties. This evolution has gradually made the IMF the central player in the orientation of the country's economic and development policies. Successive governments have thus given priority to the implementation of projects benefiting from IMF approval or financing.

The causes of the water crisis

Tunisia is located in an area with a predominantly semi-arid and arid climate. Its Mediterranean-type

rainfall pattern exposes all regions of the region to the most torrential rainfall on average every four years, affecting one or two regions each year. It is for this reason that old buildings are generally located on heights, sheltered from flooding.

Since independence, the Tunisian state has based its water policy on these climatic characteristics in order to guarantee the country's water needs. Between 1956 and 1989, a vast programme of construction of dams and hill lakes made it possible to build up an important hydraulic network, thus promoting the development of industry and modern export-oriented agriculture.

However, since their commissioning, these structures have never been the subject of complete cleaning or sediment removal operations. The few interventions carried out were limited to one-off maintenance work or the repair of certain equipment, without any overall treatment of the silting. From the beginning of the 2000s, however, the need for the desilting of the dams and hill lakes became urgent. However, the high cost of these operations, as well as the allocation of public resources to other priorities, considered more favourable to the interests of private capital, led successive governments to postpone this work.

This policy has led to a loss of more than 20% of the storage capacity of Tunisian dams (This official figure is nevertheless subject to caution: field observations suggest that this loss could be significantly greater, although it varies according to the location, age and characteristics of each dam). In addition, the lack of abundant rainfall each year accentuates this situation. During torrential rainfall episodes, a significant part of the storage capacity is already occupied by accumulated sediments, which greatly reduces the volume of water that can be retained. A considerable proportion of flood waters are wasted and discharged directly into the sea without being exploited.

Before and after the 2011 revolution, successive governments have not changed this policy, despite the accumulation of studies recommending the de-

silting of existing dams and the increase of their storage capacity.

The IMF's policy is quite different: it supports sea-water desalination, a solution that does not meet the country's basic needs, is very expensive and offers very low returns (this technique is only necessary on the island of Kerkennah). This has led to a catastrophic crisis in water supplies in all central governorates: Kairouan, Sousse, Monastir and Mahdia, where in some areas the water supply to dams has been cut off to farmers, while in others the flow has been reduced.

This has led to the loss of a large part of the agricultural crops in the last five years and has led many farmers to bankruptcy, often forcing them to sell their land (it should be noted that most of these areas suffer from a problem of high salinity of groundwater, which makes some farmers totally dependent on water from dams)

The causes of the electricity crisis

The electricity crisis has similar characteristics to the water crisis. Thus, electricity consumption has gradually increased over the years as a result of the development of Tunisian society. On the other hand, the production capacity of the Tunisian Electricity and Gas Company (STEG) has not kept up with this change in demand.

On the contrary, four natural gas-fired power plant projects, proposed between 2015 and 2020, have been frozen. The same applies to the nuclear power plant project, first presented in 2010 and reintroduced in 2015, which has never gone beyond the proposal stage.

Faced with this situation, the authorities have favoured the use of electricity imports from Algeria during periods of high consumption, gradually abandoning the logic of energy self-sufficiency. This orientation has been denounced several times by the union of officers of the Tunisian Electricity and Gas Company.

From 2017 onwards, successive governments have made the development of solar energy their main focus of energy policy, in particular in order to meet the expectations of international donors, as the IMF has supported the financing of these projects.

The influx of these financings has attracted the interest of many foreign and local companies, transforming the renewable energy sector into a particularly lucrative market. This is mainly based on the partial assembly of photovoltaic panels as well as the import of essential electronic equipment and high-voltage lithium batteries.

To better understand this development, it should be recalled that two 10 MW photovoltaic power plants were authorised in Tozeur in 2017 and 2018, before coming into service in 2021. On the other hand, in the private sector, five generation licenses, representing capacities between 50 and 200 MW, were granted in 2018 without any of these projects having entered the production phase. Similarly, six other licences, with a capacity of between 50 and 800 MW, were issued in 2022, none of which have yet reached the production stage.

Despite the importance of the energy transition policy and the reduction of pollution that it brings to the environment, what is being put in place in Tunisia constitutes pushing the Tunisian state towards increasing indebtedness and dependence on the IMF, which has become the official decision-making body and the real determinant of the Tunisian state's development policy.

In addition, these projects were handed over to the private sector as a gift to generate more profits, despite the fact that the National Company had applied to be awarded these projects; However, this request was rejected and its role was limited to purchasing the energy produced by these plants and extending a grid to the desert in order to connect the plants (the company lost more than \$15 million in extending the grid to one of the private plants, when the project developer abandoned the latter). These policies systematically aim to bankrupt the

National Electricity and Gas Company in order to place it under the tutelage of international financial bodies.

In addition, repeated power cuts during the exceptional heat wave caused considerable economic losses. The poultry sector was particularly affected, with the death of tons of poultry, while large quantities of food stored in shops were destroyed. In addition, there has been an increase in deaths among the elderly or those suffering from chronic diseases, accentuating the population's discontent and fuelling a climate of high social tension. This situation illustrates the failure of the policies carried out so far and revives the debate on the need for a change of regime.

The deterioration of the situation in Tunisia is mainly the result of a combination of two factors. The first is the influence of the International Monetary Fund on development policies, which reflects a new form of colonialism and economic domination. The second is the role of private capital, both domestic and foreign, which relies on public funds to make quick and guaranteed profits.

This mixture of unlimited capitalist greed has made the economic and social situation unbearable for the people. This is why we are witnessing waves of legal and illegal emigration.

The Tunisian model not only reflects the inability of liberal politics, or even traditional capitalism, to find concrete solutions, but has become a reactionary force that opposes progress and freedom.

After a succession of economic crises and failures of public services, the streets have risen up again, which refers to the resumption of the momentum of the revolutionary process in the long term. That is why the socialist and progressive forces must unite and close ranks in order to seize power in the revolutionary explosion.

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BALKANS

The Same Enemy Is Driving Protests Across the Balkans

ALEKSANDAR MATKOVIĆ ·

I've been following the recent protests in Albania but from a particular angle: as a participant in a similar wave of mass protests in Serbia. In 2024, I got three months of death threats after I published a scholarly article exposing controversial economic data related to a German-backed lithium mining project that threatened to tear up the Serbian countryside. Since some of the threats were written in German and followed a visit by that country's then Chancellor Olaf Scholz, the case drew international attention. It is still under United Nations investigation and was covered by the *Guardian*, which helped draw attention to the massive statewide protests and subsequent repression in Serbia at the time. Previously, I was involved in internationalizing Serbia's lithium struggles, linking activists and local communities from Portugal, Chile, Spain, Germany, and elsewhere with those in Serbia under what became known as the "Jadar Declaration." It was these international links that triggered the threats in my case.

So, there's good reason to speak up about what's happening in Albania after the last month of protests against a destructive luxury resort project backed by Jared Kushner. Surely, not everyone shares this view. Decades of nationalism and war have created deep divisions between Serbia and Albania. Yet there are important similarities. Both governments are currently facing backlash from their citizens over ties to foreign-led development projects. This marks a shift in both countries: citi-

zens are no longer identifying with their own states. Instead, both societies are experiencing a growing divide between citizens and state structures, which repress their own populations in defense of projects led by US and other global elites.

Like Serbia, Albania has experienced brain drain. It lost more than a million citizens through migration during the post-1991 transition to capitalism. Official UN estimates suggest that over 43 percent of the population now lives abroad. Both countries face mounting environmental conflicts, while political opposition is either ineffective or, in Albania's case, sometimes aligned with extractive industries, while trade unions remain weak. Both countries are also becoming increasing focuses for US capital. Already prior to the Zvërnec luxury resort scheme, Kushner was involved in a real estate project in Serbian capital Belgrade proposing redevelopment of the General Staff Building — a partially destroyed site, until now preserved as a memorial to the 1999 NATO bombing. Plans to transform the site into a luxury development, reportedly linked to the Trump network, provoked public outrage and led to the project's withdrawal.

Kushner's trajectory in the Balkans is emblematic of a broader transformation of US hegemony in the region, which some have now dubbed "Trump's Balkan doctrine." In Serbia, the United States was the third largest international investor in 2024 and signed a landmark Energy Cooperation Agreement with its government. In May, a previously announced €2.6 billion hydroelectric Đerdap 3 project was even publicized by the US Embassy in Serbia. Similar dynamics appear in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where American investments used to be €6.1 million in 2022. However, this is expected

to surge, as the United States has brokered a €1.5 billion deal with Bosnia and Croatia to construct a liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipeline connecting the two countries — a key target for US LNG exports. The company set to do the construction is AAFS Infrastructure and Energy, a Donald Trump–linked US-based enterprise now officially endorsed by the Bosnian state.

The same approach is now changing Albania, where US investment previously rose from approximately \$100 million in 2020 to over \$300 million in 2023. This is also expected to surge, as the United States seeks to position Albania as an LNG hub through a \$6 billion project in cooperation with Greece. Thus, US energy investments are changing the Balkans as a whole.

This is in line with the strategy encoded in the "Western Balkans Democracy and Prosperity Act" passed by the US Congress in October 2025. The same strategy features US attempts at removing Chinese and Russian influence and explains why, subsequently, Serbia's Russian-owned oil sector has faced sanctions, contributing to supply instability and pressure on the national currency. This reflected a broader strategy of restricting energy flows among China's partners, from Venezuela to Iran. In this context, the Balkans is now embedded in shifting patterns of US hegemony.

It is only within this context that Kushner's \$1.4 billion Albania project must be understood. And it is not without precedent: Peter Thiel has also expressed intentions to build a Mediterranean city populated by IT specialists and a racially exclusive elite, where capital is explicitly prioritized over democracy and human rights. The expansion of US capital in the region thus signals not only increased investment but also increased power over the Balkan states; a broader Pandora's box of projects is emerging, some of which are deeply unsettling.

In fact, the Balkans are once again transforming into a site of geopolitical competition between major powers, potentially destabilizing Europe. This is

another structural reason why intra-Balkans solidarity will become more widely important.

Citizens of Albania and Serbia are therefore justified in questioning whether their states function as agents of their citizens or as intermediaries for global capital, enforcing its conditions on their populations. The citizens of Bosnia are doing the same. Even though protests in Bosnia are still localized, in past instances they did spread across the country, as in 2014. In all three cases, the Balkan states increasingly appear as vehicles for foreign capital and its fantasy projects while repressing their own citizens.

Beyond the Fragments

Historically, the Balkans have been marked by fragmentation shaped by both national conflicts and competing external influences. These divisions have made the region vulnerable to extractivism. Overcoming them is thus essential if any pan-Balkan strategy — politically or economically speaking — is to emerge in response to what increasingly look like proxy resource conflicts.

Issues such as mining and ecological degradation transcend national borders and create material interests that can potentially be articulated across them without relying on the states that are backing devastating projects. In this sense, we are witnessing an opening in the region. Previously, isolated, nationally bounded movements were unlikely to succeed against transnational forms of power. For Serbia, Bosnia, and other Balkan countries to support Albanian protests is thus not only a moral claim but a strategic necessity.

If the Balkans is to avoid becoming another peripheral zone for elite megaprojects and a proxy for clashes between extractivist superpowers, we need to do more than think in terms of the nation-state. In fact, this also opens up space for rethinking the Balkans itself. Recently, the Regional Alliance to Defend the Nature of the Balkans, a network of over thirty organizations across the region that also includes the Alliance of Ecological Organizations of Serbia, expressed its full support for environmental

activists, local communities, and citizens in Albania. There have also been limited instances of cross-border activism between Bosnia and Serbia's local communities when it comes to the struggle against lithium mining. So, the perspective of integration, one might say, is opening up.

However, the obstacles to deeper society-wide cooperation remain substantial. Bosnia, Serbia, and Albania all have weak opposition forces that are unable to channel this energy or, in some cases, are even opposed to it. If a new political opposition emerges with an alternative vision, and if they can articulate it effectively — which the student movement in Serbia certainly had the potential to do in some regards — such cooperation could reshape the

Balkans. At the very least, the current moment may be creating conditions for the Balkans to assume a new role.

Finally, we cannot ignore an old idea. The proposals for Balkan federation were conceived a hundred years ago out of the fear that the region as a whole might be subordinated — like the process that is currently under way. This confronts the Balkans with an alternative. The region may again become a resource colony, as many protesters fear. Or else it can avoid this fate by choosing the path of solidarity and mutual support. To do that, it has to recognize what's at stake.

6 July 2026

Source: **Jacobin**

ARGENTINA

How social media invented the 'world's most racist country'

MARTÍN MOSQUERA ·

What do you make of the global anti-Argentine backlash?

It was quite a striking phenomenon. For a few days, Argentina even appeared on social media as the world's most hated country, above even the United States. To some extent, none of this should be too surprising. Football stirs up intense national rivalries, and social media amplifies them within an ecosystem dominated by aggression and fake news. But it soon escalated to another level.

What began as a fairly typical reaction to sporting competition grew to encompass a large part of the international media. The right wing revived the old portrayal of the Argentine as a cheating barbarian. After Argentina's defeat to Spain in the final, for example, Conservative British newspaper *The Telegraph* ran the headline "Football 1 — Criminals 0". The match stopped being a sporting contest and became a moral confrontation between Spain's supposedly civilised style of play and the Argentine's inherent violence.

Even more surprising was the coverage by progressive or liberal Western media. *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *El País* — to varying degrees and with different nuances — ran a narrative portraying the tournament as a struggle between a white, racist Argentina and the multiculturalism embodied by European teams. This approach differed from, yet complemented, the conservative one. While some denounced Argentine barbarism, others framed Argentina as expressing racial supremacy.

The scene was, to say the least, paradoxical. When the campaign reached its peak, the semi-final lineup featured three teams from Global North nations,

with long colonial histories and well-documented contemporary problems of racism, pitted against a team from a Global South country. Yet a section of the international progressive movement presented support for Spain, England or France as an anti-colonial and anti-racist stance against Argentina.

I think this was a pretty characteristic case of our time. Within a few days, a completely delusional image of Argentina collectively emerged. Perhaps it can be summed up by Samuel L Jackson's comments, which portrayed Argentina as "one of, if not, the most racist country in the world" and suggested Black people should not support its national team. Jackson is an actor genuinely committed to civil rights living in a country whose history of slavery and segregation still casts a shadow, where deep-rooted traditions of white supremacy persist and hate crimes are common. His words illustrate the extent of the campaign's distortion.

This was an extremely powerful global cultural apparatus that built on a campaign of harassment originating on, and amplified by, social media. A Global South society such as Argentina has little capacity to influence global public discourse. Countering a narrative of that magnitude proved practically impossible. There were critical voices, but they were a minority and failed to achieve comparable reach. Among those voices were, in fact, many of the very people on whose behalf the campaign supposedly spoke — from Afro-Argentine organisations to Latin American migrant groups. They described experiences very different from the caricature circulating abroad.

I believe the start of all this was far more prosaic than later political rationalisations. The raw material of our behaviour — all of ours — is emotion.

Reasons tend to come later, as an alibi or disguise for our passions. And at the heart of this lay a very intense emotion, reignited in the context of the World Cup.

The starting point was many people's irritation at the Argentine national team's latest progress, having "endured" its supporters' arrogance after the 2022 World Cup win in Qatar. There was, quite simply, an emotional rejection of the prospect of another Argentine victory. In Spain, this was likely compounded by the long-standing hostility towards Lionel Messi from a significant section of Real Madrid supporters. For years they had built a sporting and media culture centred on rivalry with the Argentine player who starred for FC Barcelona.

In Latin America, there was a pre-existing anti-Argentine sentiment, linked to its arrogant reputation. Added to this was the frustration of huge nations with far larger budgets and populations. Mexico has a long history of footballing disappointments, while Brazil is enduring the longest World Cup drought in its history, just as its main regional rival enjoys a run of success. Brazil was, in fact, one of the most active focal points of the campaign.

Football is an extraordinary catalyst for emotions and, during a World Cup, it combines with that enigmatic and powerful force of modernity known as national sentiment. The origin of the anti-Argentine phenomenon was largely a mixture of sporting rivalry and wounded pride at the prospect of another Argentine victory. This was all amplified by technology designed to reward aggression and outrage. Social media, and particularly X under Elon Musk's leadership, functions as a machine to amplify such rhetoric.

Three political rationalisations were built upon this emotional foundation. The first was alleged FIFA favouritism towards Argentina, a conspiracy theory with very little substance. Any favourable refereeing decision was presented as proof of a plot, while mistakes that disadvantaged Argentina or benefited other sides were ignored.

FIFA's lack of transparency is no surprise to anyone, and was exacerbated by Donald Trump's influence at a World Cup hosted in the US. That closeness was laid bare when the president intervened to have US player Folarin Balogun's suspension lifted. Somali referee Omar Abdulkadir Artan's exclusion was also outrageous, as were highly controversial refereeing decisions, such as those in the match between Croatia and Portugal, with the Croatian Football Federation lodging a formal protest. None of this benefited Argentina. The tournament confirmed the extent to which FIFA is riddled with commercialisation and corruption.

The second issue was the link between Javier Milei's far-right government and Trump and [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu. This Argentine government alignment is a real political orientation, the consequences of which are borne by the country's population. However, its use in the anti-Argentine campaign was selective and misleading. For example, attention was drawn to Messi's participation in an official meeting between Inter Miami [for whom he plays in the US] and Trump — a reprehensible act. By contrast, far more personal encounters — such as [English player] Harry Kane golfing with Trump or [Portuguese player] Cristiano Ronaldo's private visit — did not provoke the same outcry.

While the Argentine national team was condemned for this alleged political closeness, gestures pointing in the opposite direction were ignored. Alongside the beautiful image of Lamine Yamal celebrating with the Palestinian flag [which occurred during FC Barcelona's celebrations of its league title, not the World Cup — FF], Argentina staged one of the tournament's few acts of political defiance. Following the semi-final against England, several players unfurled a banner stating "The Falklands are Argentine", defying an explicit ban by FIFA that was even backed by Milei's government. The gesture tapped into a deep-seated popular sentiment and exposed the players to potential sanctions. It also caused unease within Argentina's ruling party,

which reacted with hostility. It was a brief but powerful act.

The third theme was racism. On this point, the backlash found a nobler and far more effective justification. The campaign stopped presenting itself as a footballing rivalry, and instead as a moral struggle against a country portrayed as white, colonial, racist, violent and deceitful.

This is not to say Argentina is free from racism. Racism exists, alongside other forms of discrimination and inequality. Various racialised groups, including indigenous peoples, people of African descent and regional migrants, suffer from prejudice and exclusion. And football is one arena where these manifest themselves in an unpleasant and exaggerated way. But reality bears little resemblance to the image constructed by this campaign.

It was truly surprising to read increasingly delusional posts written by people I know, many of whom I am close to and who are intelligent and well-educated. They shared easily debunked fake news making generalisations they would never accept if directed against other peoples. It was also disturbing to observe the growing aggressiveness in language. A Marxist activist among my contacts on X even called for Iran to bomb Buenos Aires. He clearly was not serious, but it showed just how normalised collective hostility became.

The experience was eye-opening. We could observe from the inside how the networks of hate that fuel the far right operate. It all begins with an intense emotion. Then, some true facts taken out of context and mixed with falsehoods were shared within a community that only listens to whatever confirms their preconceptions. In a very short space of time, a completely imaginary reality was constructed and intelligent people were persuaded to repeat it with conviction.

It is not an exaggeration to speak of this as hate speech. It exhibited several characteristic features: it stemmed from heightened emotion, spread via social media, was fuelled by fake news and half-truths, and attributed moral characteristics to an

entire population. As is often the case, such stigmatisation had consequences beyond social media, with incidents of aggression against Argentines in Spain, Mexico and Brazil. So far, these have been isolated cases, but they show such narratives are never harmless.

Most strikingly, a section of the left and the global progressive intelligentsia — primarily in Europe and the US — provided the campaign with respectable language and a political justification.

I would say it was hate speech disguised as progressive discourse. A perfectly understandable football rivalry was transformed into a moral condemnation of an entire population, and a section of the international progressive movement granted it political legitimacy.

What is the situation regarding racism in Argentina?

Racism exists in Argentina, but it is not the exceptionally racist society portrayed during this campaign. Both statements must be acknowledged.

There is discrimination against indigenous peoples, people of African descent and migrants from the region. There is selective police violence and a football culture that includes very strong racist and xenophobic expressions. For a long time, moreover, the official narrative portrayed Argentina as a purely white and European nation, downplaying the population's ethnic and racial diversity.

But if you look beyond impressions and viral incidents to examine institutions, social history and comparative studies, the international caricature starts to crumble.

To begin with, Argentina established one of the most advanced civil rights systems in Latin America. It was the first country in the region to recognise same-sex marriage and full adoption rights for same-sex couples. Its Gender Identity Act allows people to change their registered name and gender without judicial authorisation or medical or psychiatric requirements, and was regarded as globally pioneering legislation. It also recognised

migration as a human right and established a relatively open system, granting foreigners access to public services.

Nor did Argentina implement anything comparable to the wall between the US and Mexico or the European border regime in Ceuta and Melilla, where migration containment policies have led to deaths and serious human rights violations under both conservative and social democratic governments. I raise this not to downplay Argentine racism, but because Spain was presented as the embodiment of a multicultural and integrated society, in contrast to a closed and supremacist Argentina. This requires us to brush aside a large part of European reality.

Milei's government is attacking a considerable part of that institutional framework and promoting a more restrictive and punitive policy. So far, however, its ability to dismantle it has been limited. Its offensive constitutes a regression precisely because there is a particularly advanced tradition of civil rights.

Argentine history also presents significant structural differences. The Assembly of Year XIII was a political assembly convened in Buenos Aires during the Río de la Plata independence movement in the early 19th century. It did not completely abolish slavery, but decreed that the children of enslaved women should be born free and limited the slave trade. Definitive abolition was enshrined in the 1853 Constitution. The US, for its part, abolished slavery in 1865, but maintained legal racial segregation under the Jim Crow laws for almost another century.

The Río de la Plata region's economy never had a structure centred on slavery comparable to Brazil or the US south. This was not because the Argentine elites were anti-racist; they were openly racist. The difference came from a different economic and social structure. But that difference had historical consequences.

Added to this was a powerful egalitarian tradition. Historians of very diverse persuasions have linked

this to labour migration's politicisation, the trade union movement's strength and the mestizo working classes' integration into political life, particularly during the Peronist era [under President Juan Peron between 1946-55]. They also point to the unifying role of state education and a highly active and densely organised civil society.

This egalitarianism coexisted with racism, but helped to mitigate some of its effects. It also helps explain Argentina's relative position compared with societies plagued by far deeper racial inequalities. Argentina has enormous material and symbolic inequalities. At the same time, there is a strong cultural norm against the open assertion of superiority based on birth, a phenomenon widely documented and studied by political scientists and historians. This tension forms part of the country's history.

Available comparative studies do not support the image of Argentina as a racist outlier either. In the World Values Survey, which asks whether people would object to having neighbours of a different race, Argentina usually ranks among the countries with the lowest levels of declared racial prejudice. Its results are generally better than much of the region and comparable to European societies with low levels of intolerance. Depending on the question, Argentina usually ranks close to Spain or Britain, and frequently above France.

The Project on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America provides another comparison. The study examines the relationship between skin colour and socio-economic status in several countries across the region. Its findings show that racial hierarchies permeate all Latin America, albeit to varying degrees, and the gaps associated with skin colour are particularly pronounced in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. This does not disprove the existence of racism in Argentina, but it contradicts the image of Argentina as an exception, contrasting with neighbouring countries which, in reality, exhibit very deep ethnic and racial inequalities.

In much of Latin America, ethnic and racial inequalities are deeper and more visible than in

Argentina. Brazil has very pronounced racial divides in both living conditions and exposure to incarceration and police violence. Mexico faces deep inequalities that particularly affect the indigenous population and, to a lesser but nonetheless documented extent, Afro-Mexican communities. In other countries in the region, being Indigenous or Afro-descendant is closely linked to poverty and social marginalisation.

France and Britain, for their part, have abundant evidence of discrimination in the labour market and police treatment. Spain has significant racism against African migrants and a border policy associated with serious human rights violations.

In response to the claim that Argentina is more racist than the major Latin American societies or France, Spain or England, the immediate question should be: according to which indicator? Comparative studies of attitudes do not support that conclusion. Nor do civil rights organisations. Ethnic and racial inequalities are considerably more pronounced in other countries in the region, while several European societies face widely documented problems of institutional discrimination.

This does not allow us to draw up a definitive ranking of racist societies. But it allows us to dismiss the caricature circulating during the campaign. There is no serious evidence to suggest that Argentina is a racist anomaly compared with those countries. On several indicators, the available evidence points in the opposite direction.

How, then, did the external image of a particularly racist Argentina come about? I believe there were two decisive factors.

The first is, precisely, football. Stadiums are one place where Argentine racism manifests itself in the most exaggerated way. Racist chants have become normalised within the local football culture. Furthermore, Argentines who regularly travel to the World Cups are not a sociological cross-section of the country. They largely belong to the upper-middle and upper classes, among whom classism

and racism are expressed in a particularly crude manner.

The second factor is the difficulty in recognising Argentina's diversity when it does not take the phenotypic and categorical forms seen in the US. Argentine society is profoundly mixed-race, although this mixed heritage has been obscured for decades by an ideology of whiteness. From the outside, this ideology is often taken at face value. Argentina once claimed to be white, and its critics chose to believe it.

Argentine categories of race and class do not correspond to those in the US either. The word *negro*, for example, can function as a racial category and a classist insult, but also, and very often, as an affectionate form of address. This makes it essential to consider the context. One example was the English Football Association's sanction on [Uruguayan player] Edinson Cavani for writing "gracias, negro" to a friend [on social media]. An affectionate use of Río de la Plata Spanish was interpreted as a racial slur. An affectionate use of the term ended up being sanctioned because an English institution transposed its own code regarding racial language into a different linguistic context.

The challenge lies in avoiding two oversimplifications. The first is the long-standing local denial of racism, based on the idea that, since there is no racial division here identical to that in the US, there is no discrimination. The second is the opposite caricature, which portrays Argentina as a supremacist anomaly and ignores its diverse, mixed-race population, as well as the egalitarian tradition reflected in many of its institutions.

International comparison allows us to reject an empirically false claim without downplaying Argentina's real problems of racism. Moreover, this falsehood has negative political consequences worth examining. Argentina — neither in its institutions nor in the main international attitude studies — does not appear to be more racist than other Latin American countries or the major European

powers that spearheaded this campaign. In several indicators, the exact opposite is true.

What do you think of the role of the global progressive intelligentsia?

It was one of the most disappointing aspects. A large section of progressive European and American intelligentsia replicated precisely the Eurocentric attitude that Anglo-Saxon departments of decolonial studies claim to denounce: they spoke from a moral high ground without bothering to understand the specific history or social reality of the country they were condemning. In doing so, they turned a Global South society into the object of scorn, rendering the racism characteristic of their own societies invisible.

An excellent article, "Against Geopolitical Football Moralizing," published by *Jacobin* in the US — one of the few major left-wing media outlets that openly opposed this wave, and an article that *Revista Jacobin* translated — highlighted a fundamental point: many of these interventions did not seek to understand an unfamiliar reality, but to force it into pre-established Global North categories.

The authors put it better than I ever could:

Racial inequalities in our country do not, and could never, fit the US pattern. Seeing them as lesser versions of the US fits the very definition of "imperial," the practice of "ruling over" a multiplicity of otherwise disparate cultures. This "ruling over" disregards specificities, ignores alien ways of seeing, and generally expects all this diversity to be subordinate to this monolithic dominant view. This is not an exclusive feature of right-wing ideologues; it sadly extends to some of those who would in other contexts denounce empire.

Argentina's racial history cannot be understood as an incomplete or flawed version of the US experience. Turning a particular national history into a universal model and forcing other societies to recognise themselves in it is an act that can ultimately be considered imperial.

Historically, the US organised its racial system around plantation slavery and, later, legal segregation, within a relatively binary classification between whites and Blacks. Brazil followed a different trajectory, characterised by an enormous slave economy and more gradual hierarchies of colour. Argentina's development took a different course, characterised by the reduced economic centrality of slavery and a process of miscegenation whose visibility was subsequently overshadowed by the demographic and symbolic weight of mass European immigration. Added to this was rendering invisible people of African descent and Indigenous peoples, and a tradition of social integration that coexisted with concrete forms of discrimination.

Applying, even implicitly, a US-imported binary racial classification leads to scrutinising the faces and skin tones of Argentine players to decide whether they are Black enough. Failing to fit a stereotypical image of Blackness, the national team is then declared white. Yet the Argentine national team is mixed-race and socially from below, composed overwhelmingly of players from working-class homes in the provinces and urban outskirts. Society, for the most part, identifies with them because of their backgrounds and recognising a shared sense of belonging, not because they represent a fantasy of white purity.

The Argentine national team is also multicultural, although its diversity does not match the expectations of a US university department. It reflects internal migration, as well as diverse ancestry fostered by grassroots institutions such as neighbourhood clubs.

There was also a clear asymmetry in the criteria applied. Argentina was subjected to an absolute moral scrutiny, while Spain, France and England were exempt from any historical or contemporary assessment. Their colonial histories and contemporary violence against migrants and racialised populations were overlooked.

Is Spain a multicultural society and Argentina a racist one? Spain is a society with a significant mi-

grant population, and Lamine Yamal, as well as an exceptional player, has taken courageous political stances, championing his humble origins and expressing support for Palestine. Many Argentines saw in him something of Diego Maradona, probably the footballer who most openly stood up to FIFA and adopted recognisable political and popular causes.

But we also saw the Spanish team captain celebrating with his supporters shouting "For the king and for Spain", when the very idea of Spain is associated with subordinating Catalan, Basque and Galician national identities. In Spain, there is also systematic violence against African migrants and a xenophobic right wing that still feeds on the cultural legacies of the Franco dictatorship. France is characterised by widely documented discrimination against people of African and Maghreb origin. In Britain, there are racial disparities in living conditions and significant inequality in incarceration rates and police treatment.

This is not about defending one's own country by replacing one stigma with another. It is, quite simply, highlighting the arbitrariness of a Western intelligentsia that turned those societies into emblems of multiculturalism and anti-racism while subjecting Argentina to an absolute moral judgement.

None of this makes those societies inherently racist. That is precisely the standard that should also apply to Argentina. Societies are contradictory, shaped by power relations and internal conflicts. They cannot be reduced to a moral essence derived from a football team.

Yanis Varoufakis's comment was a particularly telling example of such simplification, although the list is, regrettably, very long. Varoufakis celebrated Spain's victory by asserting football had triumphed over its own commodification, and Spain's collective brilliance prevailed over Argentine individualism.

But why should Argentina represent commodification and Spain its transcending? The Spanish

Football Federation is one of the richest and most powerful football industries in the world, dominated by clubs such as Real Madrid and Barcelona. Argentina, by contrast, occupies a peripheral position, training players who are snapped up by European leagues. Turning the subordinate pole into a symbol of the market, and one of its main centres into an emblem of resistance, shows how sporting preference was arbitrarily imbued with political content. It also reveals considerable ignorance, both on the structure of world football and the relations between the Global North and South — something one might expect considerably more from a figure of Varoufakis's intellectual and political stature.

It is also arbitrary to equate Argentina with individualism simply because of Messi. It is true the national team benefited from a providential figure, historically comparable only to Pelé or Maradona. But the Argentine team of recent years is deeply collective, built on solidarity among its players and subordinating its star players to a common project. What matters, however, is not the discussion about football, but the distortion of reality shared by prominent figures from the European intelligentsia. Varoufakis's comment says far less about Argentina's style of play than the need to turn a sporting event into a moral and political victory, in an irresponsible manner contributing to the global harassment of a country.

This is not necessarily a case of bad faith. Rather, these were irresponsible acts that say much about our times. A person of intellectual authority must be particularly careful when speaking about a society they do not know. They cannot turn intuitions formed from viral posts into generalised assertions about the history and character of a people. Prestige increases that responsibility, because their words lend legitimacy to behaviours that subsequently spread in a far more aggressive manner.

There was also a form of political ventriloquism at play. People spoke on behalf of various racialised groups in Argentina, but those groups were rarely heard. Many of these voices rejected the in-

ternational caricature without denying real problems of discrimination in Argentina. However, they received far less attention than the opinions of foreign celebrities. This so-called anti-racism once again placed international cultural centres in the position of explaining a Global South society, rather than those who live in it.

A truly internationalist intelligentsia should be less quick to judge and have a better understanding of the national histories on which it comments. It should also resist irresponsibly spouting opinions and the narcissistic stage presence social media fuels. Anti-racism loses its power when it becomes an arbitrary distribution of moral certificates, and it becomes outright imperial when it transforms Global North categories into the universal yardstick by which Global South societies must be judged.

Why does this campaign constitute a political problem, and not merely an unfair portrayal of Argentina?

Because the problem goes far beyond the country's international reputation. My concern is not to defend national honour or to demonstrate any supposed moral superiority on the part of Argentines. The serious issue is that a section of the left and the international progressive movement has adopted the tactics of a hate campaign and presented them as a form of anti-racism.

This mechanism harms, first and foremost, those fighting racism in Argentina. Racialised communities have been confronted with an external caricature bearing little resemblance to their actual experiences. The right can now exploit this exaggeration to deny the real problem. If it is absurd to claim that Argentina is the most racist country in the world, then, they will say, any accusation of racism is false. Extreme moralising ultimately provides them with an alibi.

The campaign also divides peoples who should be allies. Latin American societies are marked by spe-

cific problems of racism, but also by histories of workers', indigenous, democratic and anti-colonial struggles. Turning football rivalries into a moral contest between peoples is politically disastrous, particularly amid the far right's rise and renewed US pressure on the region.

The underlying problem is what sort of left is taking shape when it can so readily participate in campaigns of national stigmatisation. Internationalism is hollowed out when solidarity between peoples is replaced by a competition to prove who occupies the morally correct position. Racism must be combated and denounced wherever it appears. But a left that cannot distinguish between combating racism and stigmatising a people ends up pushing people who are neither racist nor right-wing towards reactionary positions. The far right has been very adept at exploiting this experience of moral humiliation.

Internationalism has always meant building solidarity between different peoples based on an understanding of their histories and the structures that pit them against one another. A campaign that turns marginalised people into a collective object of hatred destroys that bond.

That is why it must be clearly denounced. Argentina is not free from racism, but no form of racism is combated by stigmatising a nationality. Criticism from abroad is legitimate, but must be based on facts and on a historical understanding capable of applying symmetrical criteria. Solidarity among oppressed peoples is far too important to be subordinated to moralising and the logic of social media.

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SPANISH STATE

Reflexions on the Spanish Revolution of 1936

ANDY DURGAN ·

The democratic failure

The social, economic and political polarisation in the Spanish State in the years prior to the Civil War and the consequent failure of bourgeois democracy determined the outbreak of both the armed conflict and the revolution. [1] The electoral victory of the Popular Front in February 1936, instead of opening a new stage of social reforms, highlighted the inability of republican democracy to defeat the dominant classes determined to avoid any challenge to their power. The victory of the Popular Front unleashed a new wave of mobilisations by the working masses, both urban and rural, which the Republican government, as in 1931, attempted to repress. For its part, the right wing abandoned any hope of destroying Republican democracy from within and opted for a military coup.

The future of the Republic itself depended not only on its right-wing enemies, but also on the workers' movement. In the case of the socialists, the revolutionary faction, led by Largo Caballero, refused to repeat the experience of 1931-1933 and insisted that the PSOE (social-democratic Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) not participate in the new government, leaving the republicans with the task of "finishing the bourgeois revolution." This schematic vision of Marxism meant that Largo Caballero and his followers lacked a strategy for seizing power and remained passively waiting for the Republicans to pave the way for a socialist government. In contrast, the more social democratic faction of Indalecio Prieto, supported by the Communist

Party of Spain (PCE), defended the need to return to a coalition government to complete the Republican reformist programme. It was this latter position that was adopted by the socialist movement in the midst of the Civil War. The left wing of the PSOE, having lost part of its base to Stalinism—especially the Socialist Youth (FJS), which would unite with the Union of Communist Youth to found the Unified Socialist Youth (JSU)—was overtaken by events and ended up accepting the same position as its social-democratic rivals.

On the eve of the Civil War, the anarcho-sindicalist National Confederation of Labour (CNT) continued to wield considerable influence within the Catalan labour movement—the most important on the Iberian Peninsula—and maintained a significant presence in Andalusia, Aragon, and the Valencian Community. Furthermore, in Asturias and Madrid, where socialists had historically held a majority within the labour movement, the CNT possessed a considerable strength. [2]

Activists and union leaders were divided between anarcho-sindicalists and various more purely anarchist sectors, the most important being the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI). All these tendencies shared a common characteristic: apoliticism. However, weakened by repression and ideologically divided, during the first months of 1936, the CNT adopted a less intransigent position in its relations with the political left, which can be considered a prelude to its direct participation in the government during the war.

In the February 1936 elections, in order to secure the release of its thousands of imprisoned members, the CNT did not promote an abstention campaign, as it had done in 1933, and its "freedom of the vote" was a factor contributing to the Popular Front's victory. In May 1936, the CNT held its

Fourth Congress in Zaragoza, a landmark in the CNT's history, both ideologically and for its apparent call for workers' unity. Shocked by the repression of the Asturian commune in October 1934, the delegates advocated for a revolutionary alliance with the social-democratic General Union of Workers (UGT) as a first step toward social revolution. But the Congress also revealed the limitations of the CNT's political openness. While there was a long and abstract debate about the nature of libertarian communism, there was no discussion of the current situation or the threat of a military coup.

The newly formed POUM (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification) also advocated workers' unity, but through the reorganisation of the Workers' Alliances that had played a key role in the revolutionary movement of 1934. The POUM contrasted the Workers' Alliance, as an essential element for overcoming capitalism, with the Popular Front, a political alliance subordinated to petty-bourgeois republicanism.

At the same time, it insisted on the need for a large revolutionary party, a missing element that doomed the 1934 movement to failure. The new party hoped to win over the most radical sectors of the socialists, especially the youth. The fall of the Federation of Socialist Youth under Stalinist influence in the spring of 1936 dealt a fatal blow to that hope.

Revolution

The revolution that erupted in response to the military uprising in July 1936 marked the end of the revolutionary cycle that had begun with the Bolshevik victory in 1917. In just a few days, as Andreu Nin would say, the working class, arms in hand, had resolved "the fundamental problems"—the agrarian problem, the Church problem, the Army problem, and the Catalan problem—that "the liberal bourgeoisie" had failed to resolve in five years. The working class was not fighting for a democratic republic, but for a socialist revolution. [3]

The cornerstone of this revolution was the collectivisation of industry and land: a unique experience of popular self-management in the history of the labor movement. In many cases, the takeover of companies or land was a spontaneous process, with the subsequent support of workers' organisations. [4] Urban collectivisation went further in Catalonia, where, under the CNT's control, half of Spain's industry at the time was concentrated. In the Valencian Community, collectivisation was also widespread, especially in agriculture. Besides those in Valencia, the best-known agricultural collectives were those organised by anarchists in eastern Aragon. And although the presence of the CNT militias in the area was important for its development, the initiative was often local, especially in towns where the establishment of libertarian communism had been declared during the anarchist uprising of December 1933. Agricultural collectivisation also spread through Andalusia and Castile.

The revolution also meant the widespread occupation of urban space, with the seizure of buildings and their conversion into headquarters for anti-fascist organisations, schools, hospitals, and community restaurants. Furthermore, for many women, the revolution and the war meant "a break" from their "traditional confinement to the home and gave them, for the first time, collective public visibility." [5] They first entered political activity by joining anti-fascist women's organisations en masse, working in factories and, in a minority of cases, participating in the armed struggle.

At the heart of all resistance to the uprising were the workers' organisations, and not only where the social revolution was strongest. Trade unions and workers' parties organised militias to fight the rebels throughout the Republican zone. In the summer of 1936, there were approximately 150,000 militiamen fighting on various fronts. Beyond the revolutionary centres of Catalonia and the Valencian Country, in other areas trade unions intervened in industry, establishing different forms of workers' control.

The Popular Front in the face of war and revolution

Faced with the rebels' military superiority, heavily supplied by the fascist powers, the main parties of the Popular Front—Republicans, Socialists, and Communists—argued that it was necessary to present the war as a defense of bourgeois democracy in order to maintain the support of the middle classes and to secure military aid from Western democracies, primarily Great Britain and France. This position meant suppressing, or at least concealing, the social revolution underway in a significant part of the Republican zone.

Both at the time and in historiography, it was considered that the middle classes, or at least a sector of them, were represented by the left-wing republican parties. The fact that these parties played a central role in the republican governments of 1931 and 1936 has reinforced the idea of their political importance. However, their social and electoral base was ephemeral. Outside of Catalonia, the only place where it had massive support (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, the Republican Left of Catalonia or ERC), the social base of left-wing Republicanism was quite limited, basically among the urban petty bourgeoisie and very specific sectors such as teachers.

The electoral results during the years of the Republic clearly illustrate the limitations of their support. In 1931, excluding Catalonia, 111 left-wing Republican deputies were elected in coalition with the PSOE and the Radical Party, and in 1936, 129 were elected as part of the Popular Front. In 1933, without being part of a state-level coalition, they only obtained 14 seats (compared to 21 in Catalonia), 9 of them thanks to local agreements with the Radicals and 5 due to the support, also local, of the PSOE. [6]

Internationally, the Republic's seemingly natural allies—the liberal democracies, with the notable exception of Mexico—not only abandoned the legitimate government by refusing to send it the weapons necessary for its defense, but also promoted the farce of a policy of "non-intervention" that

resulted in the near-total isolation of loyalist, republican Spain. The participation of Germany and Italy in the Non-Intervention Committee was the clearest example of the cynicism of this infamous policy.

In reality, neither France nor Great Britain had any interest in supporting a seemingly weak government in a context of significant political and social radicalisation. The French Popular Front government, cornered by the ruling classes, the military leadership, and British imperialism, quickly abandoned any intention of sending arms to the Republic. The British government considered Manuel Azaña, Prime Minister of the Second Spanish Republic (1931–1933 and 1936), organiser of the Popular Front in 1935 and the last President of the Republic (1936–1939), to be the "Kerensky of Spain" and, when the Civil War began, believed that "Bolshevism" was about to seize power. Statements among its ministers abounded regarding how Franco was the best option to protect British imperial and capitalist interests. [7]

Stalinism

With the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and Stalin's rise to power, the communist parties had become completely subordinate to Moscow's political needs. The Comintern's shift towards the Popular Front policy was primarily driven by the need to contain the threat posed by Nazi Germany to the very survival of the USSR. This threat made it urgent to create an international alliance with democracies, especially France, against the fascist powers. Thus, the Popular Front became the national expression of Soviet foreign policy. The uniform adoption of this new orientation by communist parties during this period was not based on any analysis of the sociopolitical situation in each country.

However, in contrast to the disastrous previous line that had identified socialist parties with social fascism and considered them the greatest danger to the working class, the Popular Front was in line with the need to confront the threat of the extreme

right and led to a surge in the influence of communists in many countries, including the Spanish State. With the outbreak of war, the PCE became the most powerful political party in the Republican zone. By mid-1937, it had reached 300,000 members—ten times more than before July 1936—while the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia or PSUC) —its Catalan branch—had more than 50,000 and the Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas (Unified Socialist Youth or JSU, the party's youth group), around 250,000.

This surge in influence was due to several reasons. The staunch defense by the communists of the Popular Front attracted newly politicised people to the party who opposed the military uprising and fascism, including sectors of the petty bourgeoisie frightened by the excesses of the revolution and the attacks on private property. By advocating military centralisation and strict discipline, the communists also gained the support of many professional soldiers who had remained loyal to the Republic. But above all, military support for the Republic from the USSR contributed to the rise in the prestige of the PCE.

One factor, which is often overlooked in explaining the growth of communist influence, was the enduring image of "the party of the Russian Revolution" and their self-identification as revolutionaries. The fact that the PCE, despite its commitment to the defense of republican democracy, spoke of the need for a "democracy of a new type", a "popular revolution" and a "national revolutionary war" was a reflection of the political and social realities in the republican zone. The widespread use of Soviet imagery and revolutionary methods to mobilise the population of Madrid in November 1936 is another example of the seemingly confused relationship between communists and bourgeois democracy. Hence, it was not difficult to conclude that the Popular Front was a necessary tactical interlude, a preliminary phase, to the establishment of socialism. Such ambiguities help explain the appeal of Stalinism to a significant sector of the Federación

de Juventudes Socialistas (Socialist Youth Federation or SYF) which joined the PCE. [8]

Ultimately, only the PCE (and, in Catalonia, the PSUC), with its discipline and Leninist structure, and not the liberal and reformist sectors, was able both to end the social revolution underway in the republican zone and to politically direct the war effort of the Popular Front.

Anarchism in the face of power

After the defeat of the military uprising in almost two-thirds of Spanish territory, power was exercised by countless committees, many of them from the Popular Front, with the direct participation of the CNT. In Catalonia, the committees reflected the influence of the revolution. Largely referred to as "revolutionary" or "anti-fascist" committees, their composition depended on the local strength of the various organisations. Generally, their members were appointed by their organisations; few were elected by the local population. [9]

To overcome the lack of coordination and the fragmentation of power in the first weeks in the Republican zone, different types of committees were organised at the regional and provincial levels, almost all supported by Popular Front organisations at the local level, with the addition of the CNT. Their autonomy and radicalism varied depending on the location. The most important of these was the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias (CCMA) in Catalonia. The Catalan government, unable to manage the situation, proposed to the workers' and republican forces the creation of a unified committee to coordinate the fight against the rebel forces. Thus, on July 21, the CCMA was formed with a Popular Front majority, although the decisions of the new committee reflected the strength of the revolution. [10] In addition to military organisation, the CCMA took the first steps to control the economy, blocking the bank accounts of people who had supported the uprising and taking measures to help worker-owned businesses continue to pay wages.

Throughout much of the Republican zone, committees were formed which, like the CCMA, effectively held power during the first weeks of the Civil War. The political orientation of most of these committees reflected the influence of the Popular Front organisations. However, the situation was so polarised that in several places they acted in a markedly radical way, as happened with the committees of Cartagena, Gijón, Málaga, Valencia and, above all, with the Council of Aragon, organised in October and dominated by the anarchists.

But because the power of the committees, which remained completely fragmented, failed to consolidate, the revolution could not fully succeed. Given this reality, the future of the revolution depended on the CNT, which doubled its membership during the war, reaching 1,500,000 members. For the anarchists, the revolution was a reality in the sense that, in much of what would become the Republican zone, the working class controlled the streets, the factories, and the land. However, the workers' organisations did not control communications, foreign trade, or banking. Above all, with the organisation of the People's Army in the autumn of 1936, they lost control of the key element of the war and the revolution: the armed forces.

Faced with the vacuum left by the near disintegration of the Republican State, the dilemma for the anarchists soon arose. As early as July 21st, at the regional plenary session of the Catalan CNT, the day after the defeat of the military rebels in Barcelona, Juan García Oliver, one of the most influential leaders of radical anarchism, stated that the CNT had two alternatives: "to go for broke," which would mean establishing "an anarchist dictatorship," or to collaborate with the other anti-fascist forces. Since "a dictatorship" was anathema to the anarchists, and given the significant presence of other forces (especially the socialists), particularly outside Catalonia, they opted for "collaboration." Thus, almost from the beginning, the anarchist leaders were caught in the ambiguity of their advocacy for revolution and their practice of collaboration with the state. In reality, the dichotomy was

not between "dictatorship" or "collaboration", but between workers' unity, beyond the anarchist ranks, for the seizure of power or subordination to the Popular Front which, sooner or later, would mean the end of the revolution.

Opposed to creating another state, they ended up collaborating with the existing state, or, to be more precise in the case of the Spanish state in 1936, with the reconstruction of the Republican state. In early November 1936, with the military situation becoming increasingly critical, four anarchists joined the Republican government.

The counter-revolutionary process within the republican zone reached its peak with the street fighting of early May 1937. [11] A week later, the formation of a government headed by the moderate socialist Juan Negrín, without the participation of the anarchists, represented the definitive strengthening of the bourgeois state and the suppression of the most revolutionary sectors, especially the POUM, victims of a fierce campaign of slander by Stalinism. The last bastion of the revolution was the Council of Aragon, controlled by anarchists, which was dissolved in August. In February 1938, the CNT, by then fully committed to collaborating with the Republican State, returned to the government.

Was a revolutionary alternative possible?

It is necessary to consider whether there was an alternative to the Popular Front's approach of waging war in defense of democracy at the cost of social revolution. The Republican government's military strategy rejected the use of unorthodox or revolutionary tactics, partly due to the Republican government's need to maintain control of the political situation in its zone and to present itself to the world as a liberal government. However, given the enemy's great material advantage, the Republican government's adherence to an orthodox military strategy had little chance of success.

The idea that the Popular Front, and the annihilation of the revolution, was only a "practical" posi-

tion due to the military needs of the Republic is a fallacy.

The Popular Front policy, especially its subordination to imperialist interests, had military consequences. For example, the withdrawal of the naval fleet from the Strait of Gibraltar from the outset, under pressure from the British government, left the way clear for the rebel forces to move thousands of troops from North Africa to the Iberian Peninsula. And the refusal, in order not to harm the interests of French imperialism, to declare the independence of Morocco and support a nationalist insurrection in the fascist rear, also favoured the rebel forces.

An alternative strategy would have included the mass mobilisation of the population (as would be the case during the Battle of Madrid in November 1936), a defensive, positional war, and the use of more limited, lightning raids, combined with guerrilla warfare, thus avoiding massive clashes between two armies with markedly unequal capabilities. At the same time, measures such as the declaration of Morocco's independence and military support for the Moroccan independence movement, or the declaration of land distribution to peasants, could have contributed to undermining the enemy's rear. [12]

Of course, it's impossible to know whether a strategy of revolutionary war could have succeeded, although the defense of Madrid is illustrative in this regard. Furthermore, the international situation, in which both communist and social democratic parties wielded considerable influence, was far from favourable. It is impossible to know what impact the existence of a revolutionary power in Spain would have had on the labour movement beyond its borders. The precedent of 1917 raises the possibility that it could have acted as a catalyst and, consequently, led to other political currents having a greater influence on the class struggle.

War and revolution

Often, the historiography of the Civil War presents the division among anti-fascist forces as a division between those who wanted to prioritise the war (communists, republicans, and socialists) and the CNT and the POUM, who put the interests of the revolution before those of the war: a division between war or revolution. It was never like that. Both the CNT and the POUM advocated the need to wage war and revolution simultaneously, to wage a revolutionary war. The two were intrinsically linked. The POUM, above all, had a clear military policy that proposed the creation of a revolutionary army, taking as a model the Soviet Red Army during the Russian Civil War. But such an Army could not be built without a revolutionary government based on democracy from below, in committees of workers, peasants and militia. [13]

The POUM maintained that, to consolidate the revolution, at least in Catalonia, the working class needed to seize power. However, without the CNT, such a goal was impossible. Convincing the CNT, or at least part of it, of this soon became the main political concern of the POUM, but, as has been seen, it had to overcome the conviction of the anarchists that any form of revolutionary power or state would inevitably lead to a dictatorship.

Ultimately, the great absence in the Spanish revolution was the existence of a revolutionary organisation with the necessary strength to lead the seizure of power. There were a number of obstacles preventing the POUM, the "only party of the revolution" according to Andreu Nin, from becoming such an organisation. Beyond its own mistakes, its lack of a base outside Catalonia and its short history—it had been formed just a year earlier—were difficult obstacles to overcome. And without political leadership, the revolution was doomed to defeat.

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INDIA

Hinge, Not Pole: India in a Fragmenting Global Order

SUSHOVAN DHAR ·

What is emerging is often described as 'multipolarity', as if a more balanced order were taking shape. But this language obscures the central dynamic: not the disappearance of hierarchy, but its reorganisation under intensified inter-imperial rivalry. Trade, finance and technology are no longer governed primarily by the imperatives of market integration. They are increasingly subordinated to strategic competition, evident in export controls on advanced technologies and efforts to restructure supply chains. The shift is not from globalisation to fragmentation but from relatively open circuits of accumulation to more managed, politicised interdependence.

Trump's second term should be understood in this light—as an accelerant rather than a rupture. The turn toward protectionism, supply chain restructuring, and economic nationalism predates his return, rooted in the long crisis of profitability and the strategic challenge posed by China's rise. What has changed is the explicitness with which major powers are now willing to weaponise interdependence and redraw the terms of global integration.

In this context, the question is not simply which state will dominate the emerging order but how different states operate within it. It is here that countries such as India assume a particular significance: not as alternative centres of power, but as actors navigating—and seeking advantage within—the fractures of a recomposing global hierarchy.

Why India Matters Now

India's growing centrality in global economic and geopolitical debates is not simply a function of its

size but of its place in this order. With a large domestic market, a substantial workforce, and an expanding digital and infrastructural base, India emerges as a potential site for the partial reorganisation of global value chains, reflected in the rapid expansion of electronics assembly and Apple's shift of part of its iPhone production to India. The search for alternatives to China has elevated India's profile, but meaningful relocation of production remains limited.

At the same time, India occupies a distinctive geopolitical space. It is neither integrated into Western alliance structures nor aligned with China. Its participation in groups like the QUAD [1] and BRICS [2] is a condition of its relevance, not a contradiction.

This duality—economically attractive to global capital and politically mobile across geopolitical divides—has made India an increasingly important interlocutor. It is courted by the United States and its allies, while simultaneously maintaining ties with Russia and projecting itself as a voice of the Global South. In moments of systemic transition, such positions become more important.

Yet it would be misleading to read this prominence as evidence of an impending transition to Indian hegemony, or even to a stable multipolar equilibrium in which India emerges as one pole among others. India's importance lies less in reordering the system than in how it operates within it. It is not simply rising; it is positioning itself within the constraints and opportunities produced by an increasingly fractured global order.

India as a Hinge State

India's current role is best understood not through "non-alignment" or alliance formation, but as that

of a hinge state. India today moves across blocs, unlike the non-aligned posture of the Cold War, which sought to maintain distance from them. However, it refrains from making binding alliance commitments. This reflects an effort to extract material and strategic gains from a context in which major powers are competing to secure partners, markets, and influence.

Following the war in Ukraine, India sharply increased its imports of discounted Russian oil, with Russia becoming its largest supplier in 2023, much of it refined and re-exported to Western markets as petroleum products, even as Western sanctions sought to isolate Moscow. These purchases also helped stabilise domestic energy prices and supported economic growth. Simultaneously, India deepened its strategic partnership with the United States through the QUAD—an Indo-Pacific strategic grouping—while broader Western security initiatives such as AUKUS have taken shape alongside it. It has expanded defence cooperation and positioned itself as a critical node in efforts to reconfigure supply chains away from China. What appears as inconsistency is strategy. India leverages geopolitical tensions without fully committing to any single camp.

This hinge function extends beyond energy and security. India actively courts investment, promoting itself as an alternative manufacturing destination through state-led initiatives such as production-linked incentive schemes. At the same time, it continues to participate in BRICS, endorsing projects even as its integration into US-led capital circuits deepens. The coexistence of these orientations is not transitional but constitutive of its current role.

To describe India as a hinge state is to recognise a specific mode of insertion into the global order—one that relies on movement between centres of power and the capacity to translate systemic fragmentation into strategic advantage.

The Limits of Autonomy

The language of 'strategic autonomy'—India's claim to act independently of competing blocs—overstates the freedom implied by its hinge position. Its capacity to manoeuvre is real, but exercised within structural constraints. The hinge can pivot—but only within the frame that holds it. This room for manoeuvre is also subject to pressure, as the United States increasingly links strategic partnership to expectations around trade, technology, and sanctions compliance.

India's growth remains tied to global circuits of capital, technology and demand. Its appeal as an alternative manufacturing hub rests on low labour costs and state-led incentives; its industrial base remains uneven, with strength in areas such as pharmaceuticals and services but gaps in advanced manufacturing, and its integration into global value chains depends on imported components, foreign investment, and external markets. Efforts to attract supply chain relocation, whether in electronics, pharmaceuticals or semiconductors, yield partial gains but fall short of a structural transformation.

Ambitions of digital sovereignty coexist with reliance on external capital and infrastructure. Partnerships with US firms and alignment with Western technology ecosystems have enabled expansion in sectors such as digital services and telecommunications but also reinforce asymmetric dependencies in areas such as advanced manufacturing, chip design and critical technologies. This is not autonomy but negotiated insertion.

Sustained growth rates of around 6–7% coexist with persistent inequality, agrarian distress, and a labour regime characterised by informality and precarity, with over 80% of employment remaining informalised. Much of India's comparative advantage in global production continues to depend on the reproduction of low-cost labour under conditions of limited social protection. The uneven distribution of the benefits of its geopolitical positioning raises the question of whether "national" strategic gains translate into broader social advancement.

Finally, India's expanding international role is accompanied by the consolidation of political power domestically, with increasing centralisation and repression of dissent. These shifts underpin India's capacity to present stability to global capital and act decisively in geopolitical negotiations. Autonomy at the level of the state can thus coexist with deepening asymmetries within society.

Implications for the Global South

India's trajectory as a hinge state raises broader questions about the possibilities facing the Global South. Its ability to navigate between competing blocs, extract concessions, and maintain a degree of strategic flexibility may appear, at first glance, as a model for other postcolonial states seeking to avoid subordination within any single bloc. Yet such a reading risks mistaking a structurally specific position for a generalisable strategy.

India's ability to act as a hinge is closely tied to its size. Few states possess the strategic location that allows India to be simultaneously courted by multiple centres of power. For smaller and more economically vulnerable countries, the fragmentation of the global order is more likely to narrow the space for manoeuvre—pushing them toward selective alignment or dependent integration.

This may deepen differentiation within the Global South. While some states are able to leverage inter-imperial rivalry to secure investment, technology transfers, or diplomatic concessions, others face intensified pressures to conform to the strategic and economic priorities of dominant powers.

The fragmentation of globalisation does not automatically translate into greater autonomy for the Global South; it may instead produce more complex and differentiated forms of dependency, mediated through regional powers and hinge states.

Conclusion

India's emergence as a hinge state does not herald the arrival of a new, stable multipolar order. It reveals the character of the transition underway. What is taking shape is not the displacement of hierarchy, but its reconfiguration through intensified rivalry, selective decoupling, and uneven forms of interdependence. States like India matter less for transcending the system than for how they operate within its fractures.

The hinge can move. But it does not determine the door.

17 April 2026

Source : **CADTM**.

NICARAGUA

The Ortega-Murillo Dictatorship Was Not Born of the Revolution

MÓNICA BALTODANO ·

Acknowledging shared responsibility for the emergence of the Ortega-Murillo dictatorship does not diminish the responsibility of Orteguismo: the political system and practices built by Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo, as distinct from Ortega the individual.

Every 19 July, the same debate returns. The Ortega-Murillo dictatorship insists on presenting itself as heir to the Sandinista Popular Revolution. At the same time, part of the opposition accepts that narrative and ends up reinforcing it by asserting that the current regime is nothing more than the logical consequence of the 1979 revolution.

Both versions are profoundly mistaken.

The dictatorship that oppresses Nicaragua today was not born of the Revolution. It was born of the progressive concentration of power, the abandonment of democratic principles, and the ethical degradation of a section of the leadership that ended up betraying the ideals it claimed to represent. The Revolution did not engender this dictatorship. It was engendered by the seven deadly sins of politics.

Memory too can be hijacked.

The insurrection that culminated on 19 July 1979 was not the exclusive work of a vanguard, still less of a small group of leaders. It was a national rebellion against a regime that had exhausted all legitimacy. Peasants, students, workers, business people, people of faith, intellectuals and citizens with no political affiliation all took part. Thousands of young people even gave their lives to make it possible. As with great historical events, the Revolution

became possible only once it had become inevitable.

Reducing that feat to the figure of Daniel Ortega is one of the greatest falsifications of Nicaragua's recent history. One need only look at who actually led the Revolution and where they are today. Many of its historic leaders broke with Ortega long before April 2018. They were persecuted, imprisoned, stripped of their nationality, or forced into exile. Others died in prison under persecution by the very regime that now claims to appropriate their legacy.

Rosario Murillo understood years ago that memory, too, is a space of power. That is why she systematically displaced the historic protagonists and built a political apparatus made up, in many cases, of people who never took part in the struggle against Somoza [1] — including some former collaborators of the overthrown regime. The irony is devastating: those who fought one dictatorship ended up persecuted by another that speaks in their name.

Revolutions can defeat a dictatorship without yet having built a democracy.

The 1979 Revolution grew out of a broad national consensus and extraordinary popular participation, expressed in the National Literacy Crusade [2], community health programmes, agrarian reform, and an exceptional flourishing of culture, education, music and poetry. It also sowed a far more active citizenry, which after the 1990 electoral defeat would find new expressions in feminist, environmental, municipalist and citizens' rights movements.

None of this means turning the Revolution into a perfect process. That would be as false as the offi-

cial narrative. Every revolution has its light and shadow. So does Nicaragua's.

Its history cannot be analysed while ignoring the war promoted by the Reagan administration, the armed aggression of the counter-revolution [3], or the enormous tensions the new government faced. But nor can its own errors be concealed: human rights violations, repression against Indigenous and peasant communities, restrictions on public freedoms and, above all, the growing concentration of power in a small group of commanders. It was perhaps there that one of the most important lessons history left unresolved began to take shape.

Responsibility, however, does not end there either.

After the 1990 electoral defeat, Nicaragua had the opportunity to build a solid republican democracy. But economic policies that deepened inequality, the failure to heal the wounds of war, and the absence of genuine national reconciliation fed the resurgence of caudillismo [4] under the populist figures of Arnoldo Alemán and Daniel Ortega. At the same time, credit must be given to the democratic commitment of governments such as those of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and Enrique Bolaños [5], who never imprisoned or persecuted their adversaries for political reasons.

History shows that authoritarian populisms, whether of the right or the left, thrive when democracies fail to respond to the population's needs. It was on that fertile ground that Ortega reappeared. And once that process was under way, too many actors chose to accommodate themselves to it.

Sixteen years later he returned to the presidency. But the regime he built no longer represented the continuity of a revolution; it represented the triumph of the true sins that made the new dictatorship possible: caudillismo, corruption, the arrogance of absolute power, the greed to perpetuate oneself in government, the cult of personality, lying turned into state policy, and impunity as a system.

None of these ills was born in 1979. They grew over decades until they produced the regime that op-

presses Nicaragua today.

Liberals, Social Christian sectors, conservatives and Contras struck pacts. Big capital prioritised the stability of its business interests. Important sectors of the religious hierarchies legitimised the new strongman. International bodies played down the signs of institutional deterioration, and part of the international community even went so far as to present the Nicaraguan model as an example of governability.

Meanwhile, Ortega dismantled democratic guarantees one by one, captured the electoral system, subordinated the other branches of the state, and prepared the establishment of a family regime [6].

This is why it is intellectually insufficient to claim that the current dictatorship is simply a consequence of the Revolution.

No.

It is also a consequence of the pact with Arnoldo Alemán [7]; of institutionalised fraud; of business silence; of religious complicity; of international indifference; of the errors of democratic Sandinismo itself; and of the collective failure to defend republican institutions in time.

Acknowledging that shared responsibility does not diminish the responsibility of orteguismo. It explains it. It allows us to understand how a society can lose its freedoms gradually, until one day it discovers that almost all of them have disappeared.

The April 2018 Rebellion showed, however, that democratic memory was still alive. Barricades, marches, territorial organising and even old slogans reappeared as the expression of a citizenry that once again said enough [8]. It involved young people who had not been born in 1979, alongside former Sandinistas who once again confronted another dictatorship. The struggle ceased to belong to an ideology and returned to belonging to the nation.

That may be the greatest lesson of our recent history.

Dictatorships do not always erupt through a coup d'état. Many are built slowly: they concentrate power, destroy institutional checks and balances, normalise corruption, and feed on complicity and silence. That is an uncomfortable truth, but an indispensable one if we want to offer the new generations an honest account of our history.

The 1979 Revolution may be remembered, as Ernesto Cardenal [9] put it, as a lost revolution. Others consider it a betrayed revolution. Perhaps both claims contain part of the truth. What history cannot accept is that the Ortega-Murillo dictatorship be presented as its inevitable outcome.

Revolutions do not inevitably produce dictatorships. What produces them is the absence of limits on power; the abdication by institutions of their role; fear turned into a form of government; and the decision of too many people to accommodate themselves rather than resist.

That was the true seed of orteguismo.

The lesson for new generations is not to renounce the ideals of social justice and freedom that mobilised thousands of Nicaraguans in 1979. It is to understand that no cause, however noble, justifies the concentration of power in a single man or a single family.

Because democracy rarely disappears overnight. It is lost slowly, every time a society tolerates someone placing themselves above the law.

And it is also recovered slowly, when a people decides that fear will no longer govern its destiny.

In exile, July 2026.

17 July 2026

*Translated and annotated by Adam Novak for ESSF from **Confidencial Digital**.*

UNITED STATES

Colonialism, conquest, extermination, white supremacy, the roots of Trump's policy

PATRICK LE MOAL ·

The day after his election, US President Donald Trump issued an executive order on 29 January 2025, "Celebrating America's 250th Birthday", and set up a political task force within the Department of War to organize, outside of all the committees composed of historians, a "unifying, patriotic, and family-friendly event" to celebrate the United States' place in the world among "the powers of the earth... to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them". The planned big concert will not take place, as the main artists contacted have refused to participate in a partisan event.

Trump wants to justify his current imperialist interventions, his discourse on the dangers facing white America by relying on the imaginary of conquest and colonial history. "Trump's arguments and semantics call for a long-term reading, free of the most immediate strategic issues: it is a question of taking seriously, as a hypothesis, the filiation of which he claims [...] U.S. imperial practices [...] must be seen as the crux of an identity, expressing itself again today in a striking way – destabilizing the world and stunning Europeans." [1]

This new form of US imperialism no longer claims to defend freedom and democracy, but affirms its desire of "restoring peace through strength for a new golden age of America", as the Pentagon's National Security Strategy published on 23 January 2026 says. This document, in which the word democracy does not appear once, shows that there are no longer permanent allies or enemies – only the law of the strongest and American interests count.

Trump wants to join in history the great presidents who have won or conquered land. It is no coincidence that his inaugural speech referred to President McKinley, who was at the initiative of building a U.S. colonial empire at the end of the 19th century, from the Philippines to Puerto Rico and Cuba, as well as to Theodore Roosevelt or Franklin Delano Roosevelt. To measure what is at stake, it is therefore essential to look back at the constitutive history of this country.

Celebrating the Independence of 1776... Or the conquest of 1492?

This celebration of the independence of July 4, 1776 is being prepared by public prayers and Bible readings organized with great pomp, which put forward a historical narrative centred on Christianity, the civilizing mission of the West on the American continent.

It began very early, without any particular ceremony, on 23 March 2026, with a political gesture that is far from trivial: the installation of a statue of Christopher Columbus near the White House. It was built from the fragments of a statue dismantled and thrown into the water in Baltimore during the 2020 mobilizations of the Black Lives Matter movement. Because since 2020, Christopher Columbus is no longer celebrated everywhere as a hero: states and cities have chosen to remove his statues from the public space, to no longer celebrate Columbus Day, to replace it with a day dedicated to Indigenous peoples, Indigenous Day. To combat this development, an article of the executive order for the 250th anniversary aims at "protecting American monuments from vandalism" and

specifically cites the depredation of the Christopher Columbus memorial fountain.

The colonial conquest of land and the extermination of Native American populations began with the arrival of the first settlers in America, more than a century before independence. Convinced that they were a chosen people, the colonists appropriated the land of those whom they saw as savages incapable of cultivating it and which was therefore rightfully theirs. In the first colonies, in New England and Virginia, colonization took place in a bloodbath, which was added to devastating epidemics.

This exterminating conquest is celebrated in the United States during the Thanksgiving holiday, which celebrates the first harvest of the Mayflower colonists in 1621. This holiday totally obscures the genocide of the Amerindians and recounts a myth of poor Britons, religious dissidents in search of a place to practice their religion. In reality, this boat was chartered by London merchants to participate in colonization, to seek their fortune in the "new world". Let us never forget that while the majority of these settlers were poor, not all of them were: there were migrants who arrived to make their fortunes and dominate from positions of economic strength in Britain.

How did the 13 colonies become the current USA?

How did the 2.5 million white Anglo-Saxons (who exploited 500,000 enslaved people) who emancipated themselves from the British metropolis in 1776 become the leaders of the world's leading power in less than two centuries? There is of course the conquest of the West erected into mythology, the genocide of the Amerindians, but the expansion was also to the detriment of the European imperialist powers present on the American continent.

Although populated by immigrants, the United States is the first nation in history to be freed from European tutelage, with one particularity: the notion of empire is consubstantial with its creation. The new country created is not the final goal, but

the starting point for the construction of an empire that Thomas Jefferson calls the "Empire of Liberty," a country in which territorial expansion is both necessary and natural. For example, as early as 1775, the United States tried to integrate Canada into its project and engaged in a war of conquest, which it lost. This extension continued through several channels.

Buying land

40% of the current territory of the United States was simply bought from foreign powers. Louisiana, a territory from New Orleans to the present-day Canadian border, representing 22% of the land area of the United States, was purchased from France in 1803. In 1867, it was Russia that agreed to sell Alaska, 18.7% of the United States' land area. The last acquisition was that of the Virgin Islands, sold by Denmark in 1917.

But there have been other attempts to buy land that have failed, such as Texas in 1827, 1829 and so on. Greenland has also been the subject of multiple acquisition processes, in 1867, 1910, 1946, repeated in the 50s, recalled in 2019, so far without success. The first offer to purchase, in 1867, was part of an overall plan to bring the entire northern part of the continent into the United States. During the Second World War, the United States became the "protecting nation" of Greenland and obtained the right to build military bases there: during the Cold War, the Thule base in the Arctic was essential.

It was, and still is, a framework for the main objective, Canada, through the purchase of Alaska and Greenland. Trump is only taking up this objective in an attempt to make history by achieving it. Beyond the island's mineral resources, he has made it a national security priority. As a result of global warming, traffic in the Arctic is steadily increasing, and Alaska, Canada and Greenland have a key strategic position for controlling the flow of trade and military control of these routes.

Several tripartite meetings involving the United States, Greenland and Denmark have been held

since January 2026 during which the US government has presented three demands: the possibility of stationing its troops indefinitely (it has even begun to inspect sites likely to host American bases), a right of veto on investment agreements between Greenland and foreign countries and cooperation for the exploitation of the island's resources. Trump's envoy who arrived on 17 May is the same person who, upon his appointment, said he was honoured to serve to make Greenland part of the United States.

Annexations

In 1787, the United States adopted the Northwest Ordinance, which allowed its nationals who settled in a new territory outside its borders to then integrate it into the United States. This predatory economy was to be one of the levers of territorial expansion. It allowed the annexation of Mexican Texas. The Anglo-Saxon American settlers who settled there wanted to keep slavery on their plantations at a time when Mexico abolished it and imposed the emancipation of all slaves brought into the country, including those who escaped from neighbouring states such as Louisiana. The United States sought to buy Texas, but the Mexicans refused. The American colonists rebelled and declared themselves independent of Mexico after defeating the Mexican army, then asked for the annexation of Texas to the USA, which was obviously accepted with glee in 1845, giving an advantage to the slave states.

There were also "simple" annexations, such as those of Florida or lands conquered on the colonization front against the Native Americans in the West. They were adorned with motivations such as a divine mission, the expansion of Christian civilization, this "manifest destiny", which would lead to genocide. Violence was at the heart of this conquest, in all its aspects, as illustrated by the seven land runs organized between 1889 and 1895 that made available to tens of thousands of white settlers, on a given day, the land stolen from the Native Americans: the best to the first! For exam-

ple, in April 1889, 10,000 settlers settled around the area that is now Oklahoma City and created in one day the city that would become the capital of the state of Oklahoma.

Wars of conquest

In 1812, while the United Kingdom was at war in Europe against Napoleonic France, the United States invaded the English-speaking areas of Canada. This war of conquest, known as the "emancipation of Canada," lasted three years but was a relative failure. And if, in 1846, the United Kingdom ceded three states, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, the main objective, Canada, remained British.

It is in line with this history that Trump has declared his desire to see Canada become the 51st state of the United States, using "economic force" if necessary. Beyond the declarations, there are meetings of the US administration with a secessionist movement in the Canadian province of Alberta that seeks to obtain its independence. This province is the fourth most populous in the country (about 4 million inhabitants) and produces 84% of Canada's oil.

In the south, the integration of Texas into the United States in 1845 led to a war with Mexico in 1846, which the latter quickly lost. This was a great achievement for empire building. In 1848, Mexico was forced to cede nearly half of its territory, all the provinces west of Texas, New Mexico, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, California, and part of Colorado. In addition to all this, there was an expansion in the Pacific, in 1867 the annexation of the desert island of Midway, then in 1897 Hawaii. In half a century, through annexations, wars and purchases, the United States of the 13 original colonies had tripled its surface area, and in 1890 proclaimed the end of the colonization front.

White supremacy consubstantial with conquest

As soon as the American Civil War ended in 1865, the army invaded and controlled Native American

territories, massacring and starving the population. Fifteen years later, all the surviving tribes were locked up in the reservations. More than 90% of the Native American population, estimated at 850,000 people when Christopher Columbus arrived, perished during the conquest, a veritable genocide: only 50,000 survivors remained at the time of the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890.

To populate and whiten these immense territories inhabited by Native Americans, Latinos and enslaved African descendants, a massive immigration of European populations was organised from the 1840s onwards, which would grow throughout the 19th century. Between 1819 and 1840, 750,000 immigrants arrived. Between 1840 and 1860, 4 million, and even 25 million between 1880 and 1920. From 1921 onwards, quotas were introduced favouring migration from Western and Northern Europe in order to maintain the hegemony of the white Protestant population in the face of the increase in the share of Catholic, Jewish and non-white minorities. Racial segregation, the official doctrine of "separate but equal," was institutionalized in the United States from the end of the Civil War (Jim Crow laws from 1877) until the mobilizations of the 1960s.

Struggle against European imperialists central

The confrontation with the European powers is not new. This is the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine, as enunciated in 1823 in a message to Congress: "In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy so to do. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense.... With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling

in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."

It was a time when the European powers began their colonial conquests in Africa and Asia. European creditors were threatening to intervene to recover their debts in Latin America. The United States thus asserted its hegemony over everything south of its territory, this time without territorial conquest. It would involve support for military dictatorships, various *caudillos*, and if necessary dozens of armed interventions in Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Guatemala, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras and Haiti.

From the Monroe Doctrine to the Roosevelt Corollary

When the United States had acquired a power that allowed it to build a military apparatus, to equip itself with bases elsewhere than on the American continent, it put forward another, lesser-known imperial theory, the "Roosevelt Corollary", set out in a message to Congress in 1904. At this time, the United States was expanding outside the American continent. They annexed Hawaii in 1898, and set up the Pearl Harbor naval base there. They won a war against Spain that allowed them to annex Puerto Rico and occupy Cuba and the Philippines, countries in which they pursued a "classical" colonialist policy.

Theodore Roosevelt went further than Monroe, extending the "right" for the United States to intervene beyond the American continent "until some method is devised by which there shall be a degree of international control over offending nations". The United States thus arrogated to itself the right to decide whether a nation makes "good use" of its independence and under what conditions it can exercise an international police right: "Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United

States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power".

The National Security Strategy, a new imperial era

The current proponents of MAGA are in the imperial, racist and conquering lineage of the 19th century, of the Monroe and Roosevelt doctrines, to which they constantly refer. The plan of the US National Security Strategy published on 6 December 2025, presented as a "Trump corollary to the Monroe Doctrine", is enlightening.

It reaffirmed the importance of remaining the strongest country economically and militarily and of "the restoration and reinvigoration of American spiritual and cultural health", an America "that looks forward to a new golden age". To do this, we must put an end to "American strategies since the end of the Cold War": we must end America's "willingness to shoulder forever global burdens" betting on globalism and so-called "free trade" [which] have tied U.S. policy "to a network of international institutions, some of which are driven by outright anti-Americanism and many by a transnationalism that explicitly seeks to dissolve individual state sovereignty." It pronounced the death warrant of the international institutions that emerged from the Second World War. The United States is equipping itself with the means to counter the rising power that is China, with all possible means, without any brakes.

China, referred to as "the other side of the world", is the designated adversary. The United States "cannot allow any nation to become so dominant that it could threaten our interests. We will work with allies and partners to maintain global and regional balances of power to prevent the emergence of dominant adversaries. As the United States rejects the ill-fated concept of global domination for itself, we must prevent the global, and in some cases even regional, domination of others."

This is about much more than US dominance over Latin America, it is about stopping foreign actors' incursions into the US economy while maintaining "secure and reliable supply chains and access to critical materials". The United States no longer wants to support the world order on its own, and therefore it will not be "equally attentive to all regions", with a readjustment of its military presence according to its priorities.

Two regions are excluded. The Middle East, in which the US has a heavily armed colonialist military presence, a kind of gigantic American aircraft carrier that enforces imperial order in the area, Israel. It is enough "that the Strait of Hormuz remain open, that the Red Sea remain navigable, that the region not be an incubator or exporter of terror against American interests or the American homeland, and that Israel remain secure." And on the other hand, Africa, in which it is enough to join forces with "capable, reliable states".

In the Western Hemisphere, the US must be "pre-eminent" and expand its network, discouraging its members in various ways from collaborating with others. Europe, which remains "strategically and culturally vital for the United States [...], one of the pillars of the global economy" must therefore be vassalized, while financing its defence itself. It must adapt politically to the current US worldview to avoid a "civilizational erasure" (some countries eventually becoming "majority non-European"), aligning itself with "healthy nations".

Two obsessions are present: mass immigration and the rejection of the "disastrous "climate change" and "Net Zero" ideologies that have so greatly harmed Europe, threaten the United States, and subsidize our adversaries."

Regarding Russia, which is almost absent from the document, one idea dominates, that of rejecting "NATO as a perpetually expanding alliance". Both the United States and Russia have an interest in the destruction of all coordination between the European powers, and the destruction of their democratic model. Some to be able to vassalize them

more easily, one by one, the other to take back part of the USSR's zone of influence. As long as Putin's Russia limits itself to this perspective, it is not perceived by the US as a competitor or a threat. This is what fundamentally explains their attitude to the Russian imperialist aggression against Ukraine.

Finally, the Indo-Pacific region, which accounts for nearly half of the world's GDP, "is already and will continue to be among the next century's key economic and geopolitical battlegrounds" The document analyses Chinese advances, without explicitly mentioning the major Silk Road programme, the aim of which is to secure the movement of goods outside the traffic lanes totally controlled by the United States. It only insists on the need to "rebalance global trade relationships".

It is in this part that the sound of boots is heard, the need to build "a military capable of denying aggression anywhere", which is the usual way of the dominant to express their desire for an offensive. The question of Taiwan, because of its "dominance of semiconductor production" but also because it "splits Northeast and Southeast Asia into two distinct theaters. Given that one-third of global shipping passes annually through the South China Sea, this has major implications for the U.S. economy." The message is very clear: hands off Taiwan, our strategic interests are at stake.

"If the doctrine is the basis of a singular conception of space, breaking with the European order, it is because the Western hemisphere has no precise delimitations. The doctrine can thus be seen as a process of despatialization of sovereignty, the latter no longer being indexed to a sovereign state territory within its borders. It is now the 'rights and interests' of the United States that delimit the space of its prerogatives." [2]. This conquering ideology aims at the construction of a space, called the Western Hemisphere, in which U.S. capital and military have secure and unconditional access to the resources and markets that are necessary to strengthen it.

It is based on three pillars. An internal white supremacist policy of reconquest through the mass expulsion of immigrants. A marginalisation of Europe. An appropriation of new land, resources, wealth to be the strongest in the confrontation with China, by reviving the expansionist version of the spirit of the "border" to use the founding myth of the United States.

The American empire in crisis is all the more dangerous in its desire to move quickly to reconstitute its power in the face of China through dispossession and domination.

How to counter this imperial offensive?

We are at the beginning of this new imperial offensive by the United States. In order for it to move forward, it is necessary, from the point of view of the United States, that the world order that emerged from 1945 be abolished, that we return to the era of empires, of conquests, of the right of the strongest without any mask, with regard to everyone. The forms it will take will depend both on the reactions of the other empires involved, and mainly on China, and on popular reactions, particularly within the United States itself.

We must fight, denounce, mobilize against all these imperial machinations of the United States that seek to dominate and vassalize the entire Western Hemisphere, and reopen an era of empires on a global scale. The challenge is to achieve the existence of a vast popular movement of the exploited and oppressed masses against all imperialist aggressions, wherever they come from, here from the United States, there from Russia, from Israel, or from China. In this great confrontation that is being organized, we have only one compass, the right of peoples to self-determination, while remaining independent of the bourgeois governments of the different countries.

July 2026

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **Inprecor**.*

CLIMATE

Climate events provoke tensions in the Arab world

LUIZA TOSCANI ·

Forest fires are raging in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Syria. The number of deaths due to fires continues to rise in Algeria. In addition, there were fires in residential buildings in Algeria (an orphanage: 11 dead and nineteen injured), in the West Bank, fires in warehouses (Dekawane, Lebanon), shops (Misrata, Libya), electricity stations (Samawa, Iraq) and fires due to attacks during conflicts (Sudan, Kuwait, Bahrain). Water is scarce everywhere, and this year is marked by massive power outages (Iraq, Tunisia, Yemen, Libya) which in turn lead to water supply problems, particularly in Tunisia. In Libya, the authorities have announced the closure of wells in the Great Artificial River, due to the lack of power, which augurs well for water supply problems.

Daily struggles

From Mauritania to Yemen, via Morocco, Iraq, Gaza, Syria or Libya, the people of the region are in the streets, demanding drinking or irrigation water, or electricity. Each year, this movement is accentuated as summer approaches, but this year it has taken a step ahead and gained momentum.

The struggles for water and electricity are led by the people, by neighbourhood, by city or village. From sit-ins to demonstrations, from blocked roads to the investment of public buildings, people are demonstrating where they live, with the exception of the marches of tens of kilometres by Moroccan populations from isolated localities to larger cities, or the rallies before the presidential palace in Nouakchott in Mauritania. Religious processions turn into demonstrations in Iraq. Roads were

blocked because of their importance: the Route of Hope in Mauritania, the road leading from Egypt to Sudan. [1] These demonstrations are generally peaceful, but have turned into clashes in Iraq where the security forces have used weapons and injured many demonstrators, leading in turn to new protests forcing the authorities to release those arrested.

These struggles are not long-lasting, but are repeated as the days go by. There are attempts to organize (in Qamechli in Syria, in Kut in Iraq). Struggles for water are supported by the FTDES in Tunisia or the AMDH in Morocco, and are sometimes initiated by political parties in Mauritania.

The mattress revolution

Yemeni men spent nights on floor mats in the streets demanding electricity⁶ in several districts of the governorate of Aden or Lahij and for several days in a row in June⁷, breaking with these mass sit-ins, with, on the one hand, their tradition of confrontation with the authorities in the past years, and with the unprecedented mobilization of Yemeni women in 2025. [2] This method, also imposed by the heat wave, has spread to Iraq where a group of men has just repeated the experiment, again to demand electricity.

The protesters

Because the nocturnal demonstrations only involve men, who make up all the demonstrators in Iraq or Libya (in these two countries day and night), in Iraq, a mother of children broke this state of affairs by setting fire to a roadblock on a road alone to demand her share of electricity.

Everywhere else, women demonstrate during the day and often lead water struggles. And some of the

demonstrations are only female, in Morocco or Tunisia. Everywhere else, diversity reigns. And often children are on the front line, as in Gaza.

Demands for water and electricity are sometimes coupled (Tunisia), or combined with others: standard of living or an end to the increase in fuel prices (Syria), payment of wage arrears (Yemen), corruption (Iraq), dismissal of officials (Iraq).

It is very rare for such struggles to start in the workplace. This was the case in Egypt where workers at the Al Raqaba solar power plant project (Aswan governorate) demonstrated at their workplace following the death of a worker and the discomfort of other colleagues, due to heat stress (48° in the shade), to demand suitable working conditions (water, toilets, medical clinic) and salary increases. Workers at the Ortho-Group textile company in Beni Hassen, Tunisia, protested in the streets against the power cut.

The lack of water and electricity is dragging other social categories into the protests: florists in Morocco, entrepreneurs in Syria, restaurateurs, industrialists.

Shortages of water and electricity for years have led to the emergence of new professions: private electricity suppliers or water deliverers by tanker trucks. However, the latter rose up in 2026, the former because of the interruption of fuel delivery (Syria), the latter because of fuel prices (Jordan).

"The future is not a question of luck or weather"

Fifteen years after the outbreak of the revolutionary process, it is not uncommon to hear familiar slogans: "The people want... water... electricity". Demonstrators in Syria carry placards signed

"Thouar 2011", or "the revolutionaries of 2011", or claim to be part of the revolution.

Faced with these daily mobilizations for almost two months, the authorities have had no adequate response, while some administrations have had to close, such as those in the city of Tripoli (Libya) because of the lack of electricity.

The populations have only been entitled to silence, closed doors, or punctual responses (such as sending tanker trucks) or promises to warn the populations in advance of future breakdowns! These measures are intended to temporarily calm the discontent, to gain time rather than to anticipate the future, not to mention the conspiracy theory dear to the Tunisian president, who has come out of silence to accuse "plotters lurking in the heart of the state" of sabotage rather than admit the dilapidation of the networks or structural failures. Tunisian MPs have asked questions about the repercussions in terms of deaths and deterioration of the state of health of patients due to the cessation of medical equipment in hospitals or at home. Others ask about the status of water desalination projects. But emergency measures are absent, as the demonstrators in Tunis on 25 July understood well, taking up the slogans of 2011, "Get out" and "Freedom, Dignity".

In conclusion, this enlightened statement by Ikram Ben Said: "A blackout is exactly what a nation looks like when it stops planning its own future with its own people [...] The future is not a matter of luck or weather. It is about what we will build while waiting, deliberately, together, with our eyes open". [3]

26 July 2026

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SOUTH AFRICA

The 1976 Uprising and its enduring significance

SALIM VALLY ·

OVER TIME, JUNE 16 1976 HAS come to be celebrated primarily as a moment of resistance against the forced imposition of Afrikaans in schools in Soweto. That injustice was undoubtedly one catalyst for the uprising. Yet to reduce this watershed moment to a single cause is to miss its deeper meaning, its true contributions to the liberation struggle, and its lasting relevance for our own time. [1]

No event of historical importance can be understood apart from its wider context. In this brief reflection, I merely point to several key and yet neglected dimensions of the uprising: its internationalism; its engagement with the national question; its reinforcement of worker struggles; its embrace of collective leadership and rejection of personality cults; its nonsectarian character; and its emphasis on praxis.

A globally conscious youth

The Black Consciousness organisations and the youth of 1976 were deeply influenced by other liberation struggles. They drew inspiration from the independence struggles in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique, as well as from popular resistance against US imperialism in South America and Asia. Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* were widely circulated and read in the townships. Students were also keenly aware of the struggles of African Americans and other oppressed peoples around the world.

This internationalist consciousness found explicit expression in protests against the visit of US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, in 1976. On September 18, 1976, the *New York Times* reported

that students in Soweto had demonstrated against Kissinger's three-day visit, during which he held talks with Prime Minister John Vorster. The newspaper noted that many young protesters were killed: "The shooting began after students carrying placards denouncing Mr. Kissinger gathered in schoolyards in the black township, singing black protest songs." One placard called Kissinger "a murderer"; another read: "Kissinger, get out of Azania—don't bring your disguised American oppression into Azania".

Unity beyond apartheid's racial categories

The apartheid regime sought to divide the oppressed majority through the Bantustan policy, the Group Areas Act, and even the spatial segregation of townships such as Soweto into so-called 'Zulu' and 'Sotho' sections. Yet the students of 1976 mounted a determined challenge to these divisions. The slogan "One Azania, One Nation"—baptised in blood—resonated as a revolutionary cry. Consider the names of the young people and the places where they fell: not only Soweto, but also Manenberg, Elsies River, Montagu, Mamelodi, Alexandra, Gugulethu, Mossel Bay and Athlone. Unlike the crass racial and tribalistic identity politics of today, the youth of 1976 refused to see themselves through apartheid's imposed categories. They were not 'minorities', nor 'Zulu', 'Coloured', 'Indian' or 'Xhosa'. They were simply the oppressed united in struggle.

Moreover, though many township residents had arrived from neighbouring countries and lived 'illegally' in South Africa, they were accepted and respected by their communities. For instance, Sibongile Mkhabela (née Mthembu), one of eleven young people accused of leading the uprising, was the daughter of a Mozambican father who was a

pillar of strength in the community; as were many others from Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and elsewhere.

Strengthening worker struggles

The 1976 uprising followed closely on the heels of massive urban worker strikes that had begun in Durban in 1973, and spread across the country; similar strikes even took place in Namibia before that. By 1979, the apartheid regime was forced to amend labour legislation to grant Black workers the legal right to form and register trade unions. Crucially, many of the key shop stewards who built that union movement had been active participants in the 1976 uprising.

The students who confronted the apartheid state, together with the workers of 1973, ushered in an unprecedented wave of struggle against racial capitalism. They demonstrated that the system was not impregnable and could be challenged. They showed that resistance could be conducted in a non-sectarian way. They proved that even schoolgoing youth could join the fight, and that the struggle was never confined to Soweto alone, despite what some accounts of June 16 suggest.

The events of 1976 laid the foundations for a far broader challenge to the racial capitalist state; it reached even greater heights in the 1980s as workers and community organisations joined forces.

Collective leadership and the defeat of fear

The students of 1976 broke the climate of fear that had subdued older generations after the violent persecutions of the 1960s. They succeeded in bringing organisations together, especially through collaboration with their families and the worker organisations to which those families belonged. They cultivated a new corps of radical organic intellectuals rooted in grassroots organisations, and they placed a premium on collective learning and shared leadership.

We remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The most fitting memorial is neither statues

nor empty rhetoric, but the urgent work of building a better country than the one we inhabit today. For many young people, 32 years into democracy has become a nightmare.

Post-apartheid capitalism has failed to deliver on its promises—and, by its very nature, it cannot. Too often, young people are blamed for being undisciplined, lazy or lacking in the 'right skills' or entrepreneurial spirit. We seldom blame the system itself: the structural unemployment that forecloses any prospect of gainful employment for so many; the billboards, television screens and print media that bombard the youth with the seductive elixir of consumer goods; a social order in which human relations mean nothing unless they are commodified. All in a climate where corruption has embraced those once lionised by the makers of official history, and where struggle 'icons' have become affluent overnight.

A polycrisis born of racial capitalism

Who can deny that the country is in the grip of a polycrisis engendered by racial capitalism? The evidence is everywhere: levels of inequality, unemployment, poverty, food insecurity, ecological degradation, poor quality education, inadequate healthcare, soaring energy, transport and food costs, and the crushing burden of debt that most people must endure daily, through no fault of their own. Even the middle classes are not spared. Who can argue that narrow elitist and corporate interests and their corruption do not rule the day? Who can ignore the utter desperation that fuels the psychosocial trauma, genderbased violence and other forms of social dysfunction we witness daily?

Lessons for today: xenophobia and internationalism

The lessons of June 1976 are also vital for the struggle against contemporary xenophobia. Opportunistic politicians exploit the current crises to blame, scapegoat and attack 'foreigners', rather than confronting the real causes of inequality, poverty and unemployment.

The uprising reminds us of the importance of internationalism and the linking of struggles. The same crude oil extracted from the Niger Delta, the minerals of the Congo and the coal of South Africa fuel the machinery of Israeli occupation and genocide. This connects the dispossession of Palestinian lives and land directly to the exploitation of African resources by big corporations, African elites and warlords.

The logic and violence of racial capitalism, colonialism and extraction are not confined to any single place or time. They operate across borders, binding Africa, Palestine and other sites of struggle into a shared history of resistance.

Palestine stands today as a global front against colonialism, imperialism, fossil-fuel capitalism and white supremacy. It is incumbent upon all of us—solidarity activists, climate justice advocates, anti-racist and anti-imperialist organisations, and faith-based groups—to actively support the Palestinian liberation struggle and their right to resist. The genocide in Gaza is a harbinger of worse to come if we do not organise and fight back vigorously, including through the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against apartheid Israel. The empire and its global ruling classes are willing to sacrifice millions of Black and Brown bodies, and working-class people everywhere, so that they can con-

tinue accumulating capital, amassing wealth and maintaining their domination.

Colombian President Gustavo Petro recently observed:

Genocide and barbaric acts unleashed against the Palestinian people is what awaits those in the Global South. What we see in Gaza is the rehearsal of the future.

The youth of 1976 understood that freedom is indivisible. They risked everything, not for statues or hollow commemorations, but for a world in which human beings are no longer reduced to commodities, ethnic labels or disposable labour. Their legacy demands nothing less from us today: to see our struggles as linked, to reject the divisions that power imposes, and to build a genuine liberation for all.

That is the true significance of 1976—and the unfinished business before us now.

Steve Biko understood this when he argued:

The great powers of the world may have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look but the great gift still has to come from Africa — giving the world a more human face.

4 June 2026

Source: **Amandla**.

FEATURES

In-depth analysis from International Viewpoint's Features section



Class struggle today: Fragmentation and the crisis of political form

SUSHOVAN DHAR · 17 August 2026

Yet this verdict rests on a fundamental confusion between the visibility of class struggle and its structural necessity. Rather than transcending class antagonism, capitalism has shifted and restructured the battleground. What has weakened is not the antagonistic relationship between capital and labour, but rather the political and organisational forms through which that antagonism was once legible, durable and effective.

The present crisis of class politics is therefore not a crisis of absence but one of recomposition under adverse conditions. To understand class struggle today, one must begin from this reorganisation, rather than from nostalgia for lost forms or retreating to cultural explanation.

Neoliberalism and the reorganisation of class relations

Neoliberalism, often mischaracterised as the state's retreat in favour of markets, has entailed a profound reorganisation of state power, aimed at reshaping class relations. It has resulted in flexible employment, diluted welfare systems, tightened migration regimes and commodified public services.

Far from withdrawing, the state has become deeply involved in organising the grounds for accumulation and disciplining labour. This overhaul has altered the form of class struggle, which is dispersed from the point of production across a wider social terrain: housing, debt, care, health, education, borders and policing. To insist on this point is not to deny the continuing importance of workplace struggles, but to recognise that exploitation and domination are now organised across the whole of

social life. The question is not whether class struggle exists, but why it so often fails to accumulate into a durable political force.

Informalisation is often treated as a descriptive condition: the absence of contracts, regulations or security in labour markets appears either as a residue of underdevelopment in the Global South or a contingent erosion of previously stable employment in the Global North. However, this is not merely a labour market restructuring; it is a mode of class rule. [1]

In much of the Global South, informal work is not marginal or transitional but the dominant form of proletarian existence. Historically, formal jobs have never functioned as a universal norm capable of anchoring social reproduction. [2] Employment has long been episodic, multi-sited and interwoven with household survival strategies, petty commodity production, migration and debt. Neoliberal restructuring did not introduce this condition; it consolidated it.

Informality today is structured through state policy, with urban planning regimes criminalising street vendors, while selectively tolerating them. Welfare systems regulate populations without ensuring rights, and control is exercised through policing and regulation rather than labour law. Migration regimes create a large, necessary workforce that remains in a legally precarious situation. Informality represents regulation without protection, rather than a lack of regulation.

In the Global North, informality takes a different historical form but serves a similar function. Here, it appears to be a process of regression: subcontracting chains, bogus self-employment, zero-hour contracts, platform jobs, and the expansion of mi-

grant and racialised labour regimes. Often portrayed as technological disruption or labour market flexibility, the reality is a deliberate dismantling of the wage norm.

The institutional compromises that once stabilised employment relations — collective bargaining, welfare entitlements, and employment law — were hollowed out and the risks of reproduction shifted back to households and individuals. This fragmentation strategy hampers collective bargaining and shifts social costs to communities, which in turn undermines workers' collective power.

Despite localised protests and workers' mobilisations, workers lack organisational cohesion. Informalisation fragments not only employment relationships but also time, space and legal status. Work becomes intermittent, dispersed across sites and often criminalised or semi-legal, raising the costs and risks of sustained organisation. Under such conditions, collective action is repeatedly forced into short cycles of mobilisation, which makes accumulation structurally difficult rather than politically misdirected.

Class struggle sans wage norm

Even though class struggle always extended beyond the workplace, for much of the 20th century, the wage relationship functioned as its principal organising axis. Stable employment, identifiable employers, collective bargaining and legally recognised unions provided the material and institutional basis on which conflict between labour and capital could be generalised.

Today, wage relationships can no longer serve as the primary point of political aggregation. Workers confront not a single employer but a dispersed set of intermediaries, algorithms, municipal authorities and welfare offices. The classical strike, while it persists, is losing its capacity to function as a universal weapon.

This transformation does not depoliticise workers; it displaces the sites of struggle. This displacement multiplies conflict zones without providing a com-

mon institutional or organisational anchor. Struggles emerge simultaneously across housing, welfare, care and employment, yet there is no mechanism capable of linking these sites into a unified resistance. The result is not depoliticisation, but a dispersion of political energies across disconnected fronts.

The growing centrality of struggles over social reproduction is also reflected in the expansion of what has been described as a "connected" workforce across care, education, health and service work. [3] Far from representing a sphere insulated from capitalist domination, this workforce is increasingly subject to the same imperatives of control, deskilling and rationalisation that historically transformed industrial work. Now, managerial techniques and digital systems systematically measure, script, and reorganise practices of care, emotional engagement and human connection — long treated as informal, feminised or naturalised capacities.

This change does not elevate reproduction above class conflict; it intensifies it. As capital seeks to extract value from labour that is inseparable from human interaction, struggles over workloads, staffing ratios, time and professional autonomy become central forms of class antagonism. The politicisation of care is not a cultural shift but a material consequence of accumulation's deepening penetration into the conditions of social reproduction.

Care work is exemplary rather than exceptional. Similar processes impact education, logistics, platform services and public-sector work, as they increasingly subject relational and temporal capacities to measurement and control. The expansion of such work indicates not a shift away from class conflict, but capital's extension into domains previously partially shielded from direct valuation.

Identity, difference and class recomposition

The fragmentation of contemporary class struggle is often attributed to the rise of identity politics. Struggles around race, gender, caste, migration,

sexuality or nationality appear as key, diverting attention from exploitation and undermining class unity. Proponents of identity politics treat class as merely one identity among others, no longer capable of providing a central unity for political action. These positions misidentify the problem by transforming a structural condition into a cultural dispute.

Of course, identity plays a crucial role in stratifying work and governing inequality in capitalist societies, rather than being a mere ideological construct. It helps segregate workers based on gender, race, caste, citizenship and legality, resulting in hierarchies that support capital accumulation and control. For instance, migrant workers can be deported, women's work is often relegated to caregiving or flexible roles, and racialised or caste-affected individuals frequently occupy the most hazardous and marginalised types of work. Capitalism, as a totalisation of all exploitation, absorbs identity as a fundamental mechanism of class rule, rather than merely a superficial marker of difference. [4]

The problem, therefore, is not identity as lived experience or the basis of resistance, but as a political form detached from mechanisms of generalisation. When struggles remain confined to particularised grievances, they become intelligible to power precisely because they do not threaten the organisation of accumulation as a whole.

Identity-based struggles are integral to class struggles, as they act as responses to special forms of domination, such as gendered violence, racialised policing, caste oppression and exclusionary citizenship practices. However, it is useful to examine the political forms through which these identity struggles manifest. Under neoliberal conditions, such struggles tend to be individualised and mediated through NGOs and legal frameworks, shifting the focus from collective opposition to issues of recognition and inclusion. Despite the recognition of differences, the underlying structures that perpetuate inequality remain largely unchanged.

This form of mediation represents a deliberate governance strategy that manages social conflict while upholding existing accumulation. NGOisation continues not merely due to political naivety but because it aligns with the project-based, depoliticised logic of neoliberal governance. Operating within donor frameworks and administrative mandates, these forms stabilise survival while neutralising antagonism, mostly replacing confrontation with management and collective power with representation.

By interpreting structural domination as personal or group grievances, it restricts the potential for broader struggles, making identity a marker of vulnerability instead of a foundation for collective strength. This leads to a paradox where, despite the proliferation of identity struggles and heightened visibility, class dynamics remain static. The working class appears divided, not due to new differences, but because of a lack of political organisation.

We must acknowledge the critical role identity conflicts play in class formation, rather than dismissing them as mere distractions from class issues. Without a process of recomposition, differentiation solidifies hierarchy, turning identity into a tool for reorganising class power rather than a means of challenging it.

The contemporary prominence of "middle-class" identity — celebrated in the Global South and mourned in the Global North — should be read not as evidence of class transcendence but as a politically-induced formation that channels status anxiety and inequality away from capital and toward fragmented, often reactionary, forms of social identification.

A renewed class politics cannot resolve this impasse by appealing to an abstract unity or by demanding that particular struggles subordinate themselves to a pre-given class agenda. Class unity is not a sociological fact; it is a political achievement. It must be constructed across differentiated positions produced by capitalism itself. This re-

quires recognising identity struggles as diagnostic — revealing where exploitation, dispossession and coercion are most concentrated — while insisting that their political horizon cannot remain confined to recognition or representation.

Recomposition, in this sense, does not mean erasing difference. It means organising across difference. Feminist struggles point toward the deconstruction of care and socialisation of reproduction. Migrant struggles raise questions of borders, labour discipline and imperial hierarchies. Anti-racist and anti-caste movements expose the coercive apparatuses that manage surplus and informalised workforce. When generalised in this way, identity struggles deepen class politics rather than fragment it.

Political accumulation and political form

The above analysis points to a paradox that defines the present conjuncture. Class antagonism is widespread and often acute. Informalisation, dispossession and coercive governance generate recurrent waves of struggle across labour markets, communities and territories. Yet these struggles rarely accumulate into durable challenges to capitalist power. Mobilisation is frequent; transformation is rare. The central problem confronting the left today is therefore not the absence of struggle, but the absence of political forms capable of accumulating it.

Political accumulation refers to the capacity to preserve struggles beyond their moment of eruption, generalise demands across sectors, and sustain pressure over time. It is distinct from mobilisation. Without accumulation, even intense and repeated struggles fail to alter the balance of class forces.

This problem cannot be explained by a lack of militancy, consciousness or moral commitment. Nor can it be reduced to repression alone. It is rooted in the structural conditions; namely, the fragmentation of labour, the displacement of struggle from the workplace to multiple sites of reproduction, and the differentiation of the working class along lines of identity, legality and access to resources. These

conditions generate antagonism while simultaneously undermining the mechanisms through which antagonism can be generalised.

Political accumulation requires mediation. [5] It depends on organisations and institutions capable of linking struggles across sectors, translating local conflicts into general demands, and sustaining confrontation with capital and the state over time. Under contemporary conditions, such mediating forms are weak, absent or politically misaligned. The result is a proliferation of struggles that remain episodic, sectoral or symbolic.

One response to this impasse has been electoralism. Faced with fragmented movements and declining organisational capacity, many on the left have treated electoral success as a shortcut to power, substituting representation for organisation and policy programs for social forces. Yet electoral strategies detached from class organisation confront a hostile state apparatus and organised capital without the capacity to reshape the balance of forces. When electoral openings close, as they often do, the underlying weakness of accumulation is brutally exposed.

This substitution is visible even in the most sophisticated contemporary debates on working-class "dealignment," particularly in the United States, where extensive empirical work documents declining electoral support for social-democratic parties among working-class voters across racial lines. While such analyses rightly reject culturalist explanations and emphasise material grievances, they nonetheless treat electoral realignment as the primary horizon of class politics — reducing recomposition to a problem of messaging, candidate selection or policy delivery.

The intensity of this debate is itself symptomatic of the deeper organisational vacuum: where durable forms of class organisation are weak or absent, electoral alignment becomes the proxy through which the crisis of political accumulation is interpreted.

A second response has been movementism, the valorisation of spontaneity, horizontality and continuous mobilisation. This orientation correctly recognises the limits of institutional politics and the importance of struggles beyond the workplace. But without durable forms of coordination and strategy, it tends to confuse intensity with power. Mobilisations erupt, generate visibility and then dissipate, leaving organisational capacities no stronger than before.

Recent debates within the workers' movement reflect this impasse. Proposals that emphasise leverage at logistical "choke points" in supply chains — ports, warehouses, transport hubs — implicitly recognise that capitalist power is no longer concentrated at a singular workplace or wage relation, but dispersed across networks of circulation and reproduction. This shift usefully directs attention to the material infrastructures through which accumulation is organised under contemporary capitalism.

Yet the strategic limitation of such approaches lies not in their diagnosis of where disruption may occur, but in their inability to resolve the problem of political accumulation. Disruptive capacity, even when precisely targeted, does not in itself generate durable organisation or generalisable class power. Without mediating forms capable of linking episodic disruption to sustained collective strategy, logistical leverage risks reproducing the same pattern that afflicts contemporary mobilisation more broadly: intensity without accumulation, confrontation without recomposition.

A third form of mediation is NGOisation, particularly prevalent in contexts of informalisation and state retreat. NGOs often stabilise survival, provide services and articulate grievances in the language of rights and inclusion. But precisely because they operate within narrow institutional mandates, they tend to depoliticise conflict. They manage vulnerability rather than confront accumulation, translating structural antagonisms into technical problems or individual cases.

These responses differ politically, but they share a common limitation: they substitute partial forms of mediation for the hard work of class recomposition. None resolves the problem of accumulation because none reconstructs the organisational capacities needed to confront capital and the state as class actors.

The weakness of political form is therefore not accidental. It reflects the historical disarticulation of the workers' movement, the erosion of parties rooted in class organisation, and the absence of new forms capable of operating across new labour regimes. Where such forms do exist, they are often confined to specific sectors or moments, lacking the capacity to generalise.

This does not imply that political form can simply be reinvented at will. Forms emerge from struggle, but they also shape its trajectory. The challenge today is not to replicate inherited institutions — unions, parties or fronts — as they once existed, but to develop forms of organisation capable of linking production and reproduction, formal and informal labour, citizens and non-citizens, without collapsing these differences into abstraction.

Crucially, the state cannot be treated as a neutral instrument awaiting capture. It is a central site of class power. Political accumulation therefore requires strategies that confront the state as a terrain of struggle, and not merely an arena of representation. Without sustained pressure from organised social forces, state power reproduces existing class relations, regardless of electoral outcomes.

The persistence of fragmented struggle alongside weak accumulation has produced widespread frustration on the left. This frustration often expresses itself either as cynicism toward politics or as impatience with organisation itself. Political accumulation today demands recomposition across fragmented social relations. It requires forms of organisation that can operate at multiple scales, endure beyond moments of mobilisation, and articulate a general antagonism without erasing difference.

This is a demanding task, and there are no shortcuts. But without confronting the problem of political form directly, class struggle will continue to erupt without converging, and mobilisation will continue to substitute for power.

Recomposition should be viewed as a historical process rather than simply an organisational design. It unfolds unevenly, is characterised by conflict, failure and partial advances, and is influenced by shifting relations between production, reproduction and state power. Any sustainable class politics

will arise from these contradictions, rather than from simplistic solutions.

There is no blueprint for this task. Political forms cannot be designed in abstraction from struggle, nor can they be improvised without regard to the conditions they must confront. What can be said is that the problem facing the left today is not the absence of class antagonism, but the absence of forces capable of organising it at scale and over time.

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Source: **Links**.

Modern counter-revolution and fascism

NORBERT HOLCBLAT · 17 August 2026

There are many terms to describe the period we are going through. In a recent text, historian Quin Slobodian and writer Ben Tarnoff list many of them: "A range of competing visions and frameworks have been proposed. We have heard of state capitalism, disaster capitalism, platform capitalism, chokepoint capitalism, vulture capitalism, spiderweb capitalism, archipelago capitalism, asset manager capitalism, surveillance capitalism, and even crack-up capitalism. Theorists have suggested that we live in an age of neofeudalism, techno-feudalism, techno-libertarianism, techno-authoritarianism, techno-populism, techno-fascism, end times fascism, neofascism, neoliberal fascism, post-neoliberalism, paleo-populism, neopatrimonialism, hyperpolitics, and geoeconomics." [1] For their part, these two authors propose "Muskism" (which would merit discussion).

The number of these terms perhaps reflects a form of dismay in the face of something whose trajectory is poorly perceived, and each of them undoubtedly has its share of truth, but often emphasizes a particular aspect. It seems preferable to focus on the substance and dynamics of current processes beyond their particular features. The expression used by the American jurist and philosopher Bernard E. Harcourt to characterize Donald Trump's presidency, a "modern counter-revolution", seems the most appropriate for this objective. [2]

A counter-revolution is indeed on the agenda, not only in the United States but to varying degrees in a large part of the planet. It is characterized by the obsession with erasing all or part of the social and

ideological gains of the post-World War II period to the 1980s, as well as the emancipatory aspirations that persist. And some do not hesitate to wave the banner. Pro-Trump activist Christopher Rufo told the New York Times in April 2025: "What we're doing is really a counter revolution. It's a revolution against revolution." (quoted by Bernard E. Harcourt). At the gigantic far-right demonstration on 13 September 2025 in London, Tommy Robinson, its main organizer, also declared: "We are the counter-revolution." [3] In another and older register, this proclamation by the libertarian Murray Rothbard in 1992: "We shall break the clock of social democracy. We shall break the clock of the Great Society. We shall break the clock of the welfare state. We shall break the clock of the New Deal. We shall break the clock of Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom and perpetual war. We shall repeal the 20th century." [4] It is noteworthy that Argentine President Javier Milei has named one of his three dogs after Rothbard (all named after neoliberal economists whom he considers to be inspirations).

In France, in the same vein, in 2007 we had the declaration of an employers' leader: "Today it is a question of getting out of 1945, and methodically undoing the program of the National Council of the Resistance!" [5] These references, and others would be possible, justify Bernard E. Harcourt's assessment: "President Trump's actions during the first hundred days of his second mandate are the latest episode in a vast and coherent modern counterrevolution with a longer historical arc and a broader global reach." For Harcourt, this counter-revolution has been underway in the United States for several decades, particularly since the presidency of Ronald Reagan.

Counter-revolution? Of course, there is no revolutionary danger for the propertied today (at least in the states of the "North"), contrary to the context of the great reactionary wave which, from 1918 to the 1940s, swept through Hungary, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Romania, among others. then Austria and Germany again, then Spain and finally France thanks to the defeat of 1940 (even if, from the beginning of the 1920s, the revolutionary upsurge following the Russian Revolution weakened). A wave that gave birth to reactionary and dictatorial regimes, but each with its own characteristics, particularly in the modalities of accession to power, the institutions and the balance between references to tradition (and compromise with the former political personnel) and the rags of rupture, or even of "revolution" (one of the last avatars being the "National Revolution" proclaimed by the Pétain regime). Despite their diversity, these regimes could all be described as fascist at the time (even if, more recently, historians insist on their differences). In the 1970s, the military dictatorships of Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay were often denounced as fascist, above all because of their repressive character, while the characterization of the Greek dictatorship (1967-1974) has been the subject of debate.

Today, it is true that components of the MAGA current in the United States (Christopher Ruffo, Steve Bannon, Elon Musk in his own way...) and the European far right consider the evolution of the family, the legalization of abortion, the rights of LGBTI, immigration and the mixing of populations, ... not as societal transformations or the fruit of struggles between social sectors, but as the result of a revolutionary conspiracy of the "wokeists" and the conspirators of the "great replacement". A conspiracy, in the face of which it would be urgent to react to the risk of definitive alteration of "white and Western civilization". Even if this is not the dominant analysis in the circles of the various powers, these fantasies can be more or less taken up and instrumentalized by various political currents to broaden their base in order to serve their

counter-revolutionary aim because, if the revolution is not a near horizon, the counter-revolution does not need to wait for an imminent revolution; it can act preventively, by cancelling past gains and repressing resistance, as Richard Donnelly observes in the above-mentioned text on Tommy Robinson. Especially in a context of systemic crisis such as the one capitalism is going through. It should be noted, however, that as far as the "South" is concerned, things must be nuanced: from the "Arab revolutions" to the recent movements in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Madagascar... Popular insurrections have indeed overthrown governments but have not, to date, been able to put in place alternatives to the ruling classes that have retained their hegemony through the military or the new powers that have emerged from "civil society". In some of these countries, however, the revolutionary cloud continues to be fraught with threats and, for example, in Egypt, Field Marshal al-Sisi is certainly aware of this.

The Russian sociologist and activist Ilya Budraitskis, for his part, distinguishes between counter-revolution and what he calls "anti-revolution": "Anti-revolution tries to prevent an imaginary revolution [...] This imaginary revolution that is looming has no obvious roots in society and does not have an apparent political subject with a strong will [...]. But this imaginary revolution leads a full-fledged existence in the consciousness of the leaders of the state. And it has been described by experts in dozens of documents". [6] If we transpose this analysis outside Russia, we find, in France for example, that leaders and their media as well as certain intellectuals denounce day after day spectres that are supposed to endanger all social life: "wokeism", "Islamic separatism", the "savagery" of young people in the urban peripheries and so on. The police forces, not only constantly monitor these phenomena and individuals potentially considered "suspects", but are preparing to repress all "excesses". Like some of the MAGA themes mentioned above, all of this is largely part of the "imaginary revolution". Budraitskis' problematic has founda-

tions and explains why the "anti-revolution" can be more progressive than the counter-revolutions we have known. However, it seems preferable to stick to the term counter-revolution, which has more historical and political resonances.

So counter-revolution, but modern counter-revolution that uses all the new technologies to build a despotic world with regard not only to bourgeois liberal democracy but to the process of production and work, as Juan Carbonell described it with regard to AI. [7] Marx applied the term "despotic" both to the process of production ("factory despotism") and to certain states such as the Bismarckian German Empire. We can therefore think that to characterize the modern counter-revolution in its different dimensions, the expression "techno-despotism" would perhaps be the most appropriate.

Everywhere, we can see to varying degrees a shrinking of traditional bourgeois liberal democracy, a rise in police repression and surveillance techniques as well as militarization, attacks on social gains, increasingly exacerbated racism, identity and nationalist discourses. To borrow an expression from Claude Serfati about France, states are "becoming radicalized". [8] And this is the case in Europe, including when "centrists" and social democrats are in power. In some countries (Poland, the United States and so on), there is a proliferation of discourses, pressures, and even legal decisions calling into question the right to abortion.

These elements are combined with the characteristics of the economic regime: the deployment of new technologies, the appearance of giant firms interpenetrated with the state and whose position of strength allows them to collect rents, the decline of trade union movements, the explosion of inequalities and so on. Relativization, ignorance (or even open denial for Javier Milei and Donald Trump) of ecological perils, of their increasingly immediate implications for humanity and of the urgency to act. But also the unprecedented deployment of the empire of the commodity with a race for innovations that allows firms to counteract the downward pressure on the rate of profit, innovations that citi-

zens must swallow not only in a spirit of imitation but because they become indispensable to daily life (in synergy with the policies of states to destroy local public services).

Finally, contrary to the "democratic" discourse in vogue in the European Union, the counter-revolution has an essential social dimension. The so-called "illiberal" regimes carry out neo-liberal reforms – of the same ilk as those in "democratic" countries – such as the reform of working hours in Hungary, the postponement of the retirement age in Russia, the relaxation of employment legislation in Turkey and so on.

Several questions are being asked today: What are the driving forces of the counter-revolution? How does it relate to the economic situation? Is this counter-revolution fascist? And of course, how to deal with it, but that is not the subject of this contribution.

1. The driving forces

Until relatively recently, the responsibility for authoritarian tendencies and pressures was attributed, by most of the press and a good number of political scientists, to far-right forces "outside the system", often described as "populist", a convenient term to put them on the same level as more or less radical left-wing forces, also qualified as populist. These populists rely on the real or perceived resentment of the "people" towards the elites, the establishment as well as their underlying nationalism. In a number of countries (particularly in Europe), the growing interchangeability of political parties and the convergence of their policies offer the far right the opportunity to seduce voters by positioning itself on the margins of the consensus.

There is no doubt that there exists in various popular categories what Trotsky described as "counter-revolutionary despair", reinforced in today's world by the retreat of collective organization that favours the atomization of individuals and/or their withdrawal into reactionary identities (racial, religious or other). Or to put it another way, "the far right is

winning the battle for leadership from frustration to reactionary radicalization". [9]. Especially since it knows how to make effective use of the internet and social networks. But would pressure from below and from "non-system" groups sum up the current evolution?

In a book on Brexit published in 2021, two French sociologists challenged the current interpretation of the result, which sees it as the result of the divide between the winners and losers of globalisation. They show how important capitalist sectors, in fact a part of finance: investment funds and hedge funds, financed the Leave campaign. Their conclusion is clear: if a large fraction of the popular classes was opposed to the European Union (EU), the financing of Leave shows, according to them, that "the winners from globalisation did not lose to its losers, it was the winners who did not agree with each other". [10] They explain their approach as follows: "... a critical part of the social sciences has analysed Brexit and the election of Trump from the perspective of the social geography of the vote and the resentment of the white middle and popular classes from deindustrialised, discriminated against and relegated sectors, against urban elites, winners from globalisation, often connected to each other on a regional or global scale. We do not oppose these analyses, but we must not only understand these two historical events, Brexit and the election of Trump, from the perspective of the voters' reasons for acting. [...] We thought we had to go and see what was happening on the side of the dominant, to understand what their interests were, in the case of Brexit, as in the election of Trump. [11] The "second finance" saw European regulations as an obstacle to their free activity and its actors were in favour of an authoritarian libertarianism. The trend is the end of neoliberalism. Some of the researchers' conclusions (which Marlène Benquet developed in a more recent book, *La finance aux extremes*, 2026) are debatable both on the two poles of financialization and on the end of neoliberalism, but their work has had the merit of showing that political developments are not only

the product of the manipulation of crowds by demagogues but the conscious choice of fractions of capital.

Their approach has been taken up by some analysts of Trumpism, see in particular "The Capitalist Interests Behind Donald Trump", Vladimir Bortun, *Jacobin*, 24/02/2026¹⁴. He points out that while it may very well be that Trump is only there for his personal enrichment and that of his family, Trumpism encompasses a coalition of capitalist fractions as well as fractions from the subordinate classes.

Various economic sectors thus appear to be increasingly favourable to powers that do not claim to regulate them and increase their tax rates, even if they are nationalist and authoritarian: the most speculative finance, the fossil fuel industries, the arms and surveillance sectors and, finally, the large groups of new technologies. Other sectors, sensing the wind, are ready to accommodate reactionary discourse, the prospect of systematically anti-union policies (whereas in Europe the unions often functioned as "partners" in the system of industrial relations), or even breaches of current democracy with its limits. The Medef (the main French employers' organization) has significantly decided to invite Javier Milei to its annual meeting (he finally declined the invitation). In the United States, Elon Musk or Peter Thiel (Palantir, he recently established himself in Milei's Argentina) do not hide their reactionary and authoritarian activism. In India, Narendra Modi is supported by the main capitalist sectors.

States and elements of the ruling classes are therefore the main actors in the current processes. As for states, they can be active actors while sometimes distancing themselves from far-right currents, such as Emmanuel Macron proclaiming himself "progressive".

Various arguments are used by states to justify the race towards authoritarianism, surveillance of populations and militarization: the terrorist danger, the disruptions created by strikes and demonstra-

tions, the alleged invasion of migrants (although the "great replacement" and "remigration" still remain appendages of the extreme right, even if this theme permeates more widely), drug trafficking, petty crime, and, in Europe, Russian activities. Laws and regulations are piling up year after year. The French government has just added a new mechanism to the already extensive panoply of exceptional regimes with the "state of national security alert" which could be decreed for two months, before going before Parliament.

Donald Trump's second election and his behaviour undeniably represent a factor of acceleration. Especially since he is returning to power with elements of a program and teams not linked to the Republican Party leaders. But everywhere, the political right is "moving rightwards" (Trump's stranglehold on the Republican Party with the reining in of critics is an illustration of this) and the extreme right, yesterday marginalized, are increasingly frequented by the dominant circles of capital. All the more so since, in Europe, those of these forces that are in a position to come to power have given pledges on two subjects: the European Union (EU) and support for Israel (the denunciation of this country's policy being now assimilated to anti-Semitism, supporting it becomes proof of non-anti-Semitism). In Italy, the Meloni government reconciles authoritarianism (with the adoption of several "packages" of security measures) and a neoliberal economic line.

However, even in the states most advanced on the path of counter-revolution, the political leaders are still subject to the electoral process (except in China, which does not fall under this type of analysis) - the defeat of Viktor Orbán in the Hungarian parliamentary elections has shown this. In 2020, two American political scientists defined this type of regime by the term "competitive authoritarianism". [12] In such a system, a party comes to power through a more or less democratic electoral route and then erodes the system of checks and balances. The executive fills the civil service and key appointments – including the judiciary – with loyalists.

The media, academia and non-governmental organisations are then attacked to reduce public criticism and influence voters in favour of the ruling party. The rights of the opposition parties and those of citizens are being eroded. This type of regime, which tends to spread, persists in part because a truncated and manipulated form of multi-party system can be more manageable internally and more "presentable" internationally than a one-party system. But competitive authoritarianism can have several degrees: if Viktor Orbán lost the elections, it is almost unimaginable that this would be the case for Vladimir Putin and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is currently doing everything to avoid it.

A case of reduced rights that is now extreme must be mentioned: that of states whose institutions are considered democratic by the mainstream but where some inhabitants are reduced to the status of second-class citizens. This is the case of Narendra Modi's India for Muslims and Christians, who are considered to be less legitimate peoples than Hindus. With the support or at least the tolerance of the authorities and the police, they are the object of permanent suspicion and violence. To characterize this situation, the researcher Christophe Jaffrelot uses the expression "ethnic democracy". This qualification has long been used for Israel: non-Jews (mainly Palestinian Arabs) have, de facto and partially, been deprived of rights and, since 1948, have been considered less legitimate and discriminated against. This situation was proclaimed by the law of July 19, 2018: "The State of Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people, which exercises its natural, cultural, religious and historical right to self-determination. The realization of this right to national self-determination in the State of Israel is reserved for the Jewish people alone." In the occupied territories, discrimination and oppression are even more obvious. Beyond these two emblematic and modern cases, other states, to varying degrees, discriminate against sections of their population.

All in all, even in states commonly described as "democratic", the slope towards authoritarianism

exists. Executives are increasingly resorting to clientelism, directly politicizing the civil service, strengthening the forces of "order", reducing the rights of demonstration and spaces for protest as well as academic freedoms, stirring up racism while the freedom of the media tends to be eroded according to the goodwill of the capitalist groups that control them. Moreover, the spectre of war is being raised everywhere, well beyond the real wars (the impact of which is not negligible).

The counter-revolution therefore seems above all to be led by the state apparatuses, in conjunction with an extreme right that is not necessarily directly represented in power. The various states are more or less directly advanced in the process: Britain, for example, is less so than France, itself behind the United States, and especially India, Russia, Turkey or Israel. But in France, the accession to the presidency of the Republic of Marine Le Pen or Jordan Bardella (Rassemblement national) would greatly accelerate the process towards authoritarianism and the "nationalization" of social rights, especially since the constitution of the Fifth Republic gives the president much more weight than, for example, an Italian head of government such as Giorgia Meloni.

These developments on the states and the insistence on counter-revolution may lead to a debate with analyses centred above all on the far right and neo-fascist forces. We will come back to this.

2. How do the counter-revolution and the economic situation fit together?

In a November 2019 text entitled "The end of neoliberalism and the rebirth of history", the Nobel Prize in Economics winner Joseph Stiglitz points out that "At the end of the Cold War, the political scientist Francis Fukuyama wrote a celebrated essay called 'The end of history?'. Communism's collapse, he argued, would clear the last obstacle separating the entire world from its destiny of liberal democracy and market economies. Many people agreed. Today, as we face a retreat from the rules-based, liberal global order, with autocratic rulers

and demagogues leading countries that contain well over half the world's population, Fukuyama's idea seems quaint and naive." [13]

The theme of the end of neoliberalism is in vogue, especially in France; the economist and journalist Romaric Godin writes in a recent book: "The neoliberal project was that of a democracy framed by capitalism, accepting the rules deemed necessary for accumulation. [...] The crisis of neoliberalism marks the opening of a period of separation for the democracy-capitalism couple." However, the author is also cautious, explaining that democracy and capitalism are not intrinsically linked and that democracy is only acceptable to capitalism if it maintains the consensus necessary for its functioning. Faced with the crisis of neoliberalism since 2008, "the option that is emerging is that of an authoritarian state that suppresses protests, ensures social stability and protects the interests of capital." [14] For Godin, the current phase is that of a new state capitalism in which the state, in the service of capital, replaces the market to facilitate accumulation.

It is true that, since the crisis of 2008-2009, capitalism has been increasingly on a drip from states but, even if it does so with a certain caution, the link between neoliberalism and democracy highlighted by Godin is highly debatable. Other authors have a contrary point of view and rely on a multi-decade history. We will cite a work with a clear title: "The Choice of Civil War". [15] Another history of neoliberalism, the first chapter of which is devoted to Pinochet's Chile, to the policies praised by Friedrich Hayek, another "Nobel Prize" in economics and inspiration for Margaret Thatcher. The authors review the long history of neoliberal thinkers since the 1930s and the complacency of some (with more or less reservations) towards the fascist regimes of the time. For them, "we are living in the moment when neoliberalism is secreting from within a specific political form that combines anti-democratic authoritarianism, economic nationalism, generalized competitionism and expanded capitalist rationality. This original government

tality fully assumes the absolutist, authoritarian and (if necessary) dictatorial character of neoliberalism without resembling historical fascism." Two points are important in this analysis: first, the authoritarian turn does not call into question neoliberalism but is part of the continuity; secondly, we find ourselves faced with something other than "historical" fascism (we will come back to this).

Sounding the death knell for neoliberalism seems premature. For the time being, the ruling classes are on the offensive, calling into question more or less head-on, "zone" by "zone" and state by state, everything that reduces the freedom of capital. One of the first texts enacted by Donald Trump on 20 January 2025 withdrew the United States from the global agreement on minimum taxation of multinationals, which is not very painful for them. Trump is pursuing a destructive action by the supervisory and regulatory authorities; he is also a promoter of cryptocurrencies. In Europe, layoffs are raining down in industry and cuts in public services are increasing, while in many capitals speculation and rising rents are pushing the popular classes out. Admittedly, the policy of states is now more openly introduced into trade and, to a lesser extent, into international investment and even into the encouragement of certain activities (first and foremost in the field of AI), but this does not mean the end of globalization but the struggle of the various imperialisms to set the conditions and/or defend their "share of the pie" in this "capitalism of finitude". [16] This in a context where the United States wants to maintain its pre-eminence against China. As for new technologies, they lead to renewed forms of interweaving between private activities and the state; as Slobodian and Tarnoff write, far from being libertarian, "a core principle of Muskism is public-private fusion; the use of the state as funder, enabler, and backstop for high-risk, high-reward ventures—what we call state symbiosis. One can see this clearly in SpaceX, Starlink, and Tesla. Musk is a stalwart critic of bureaucracy and certain kinds of regulation but certainly not the state as such. On the contrary, he has consistently

instrumentalized the state as a source of power and profit. He does so by promising to help governments fulfil their sovereign functions through reliance on his infrastructures: a dynamic we describe as sovereignty-as-a-service". [17] The symbiosis of the state and digital firms is reinforced by the military factor: the many examples of collaboration between these firms and the armed forces and police show that "far from techno-libertarian fantasies according to which large technology companies are autonomous from the state, there is a military-digital complex". [18] Moreover, Palantir, despite Peter Thiel's libertarian tirades, lives largely in symbiosis with states and their armed and police forces.

3. Can this counter-revolution be described as fascist?

Trump and the various far-right currents present themselves as forces of rupture with respect to the famous Thatcherite acronym TINA ("There is no alternative"): this has a certain echo in a context of rising inequality where "those at the bottom" feel despised while the lefts of capital (Democrats in the United States, Social Democrats in Europe) appear at best to be powerless. at worst as co-responsible for the situation. As it is not a question for the far right nor (of course) for the radicalized traditional right to really attack inequalities and the power of capital, the scarecrow agitated is immigration, Islam, LGBTI... and, in a more disguised way today, an alleged Jewish conspiracy.

Donald Trump, as we have already pointed out, is at the confluence of state radicalization and the rise of neo-fascists. Generally speaking, what can be said of a process in which the evolution of the state and the ruling classes gradually creates the conditions not only for participation in power (this is already the case in many states) but for a takeover of institutions by coalitions of far-right politicians and neo-fascists, probably respecting the dress codes of other politicians (even if less civil groups are crowding behind them)? These coalitions could also be heterogeneous in certain areas (more or less national-social discourse, for example), as were the

fascist parties of the first half of the twentieth century.

The various variations of the term "fascism" are at the centre of many analyses that are often interesting but seem on the whole questionable, in our opinion, to describe the modern counter-revolutionary process. Unless fascism is made a timeless concept, like Umberto Eco's Ur-fascism (eternal fascism). And to forget that this is a political strategy.

As Enzo Traverso (who speaks of "a kind of post-fascism" for the present period) explains, "we are not facing a repetition of history, a return to the past; we are facing new problems and threats, but we only have concepts inherited from the past to analyse and interpret them. This is obviously frustrating: these words do not describe well the uncertainty of our time, which seems to herald a terrible storm." [19].

Of course, it is not a question of minimizing the risks of the present situation, which can lead to situations as catastrophic as some of the fascisms of the 1930s. The invasion of Ukraine, the genocidal war in Gaza, the proxy wars for resources in eastern DR Congo are examples of this. The rejection or relativization of the impacts of the ongoing ecological catastrophe is another: despite proclamations and international conferences, false solutions and business as usual prevail.

There is a need to understand the ongoing transformations of capitalism and their political, social and

ecological impacts, as well as on the fractures within the bourgeoisies. This implies moving away from the debate on "fascism" alone.

There is, however, an argument that can justify, despite its inadequacy and beyond analysis, the use of the term "fascist": it brings us back to familiar ground and is therefore politically useful and could thus make it possible to mobilize mass resistance. The Brazilian academic Angela de Castro Gomes explains that the word "fascist" (while being intellectually very questionable to characterize various currents or current governments) "is an effective resource to fight against such experiences, insofar as, on the basis of a shared historical memory, it functions very well as a category of accusation". [20]

As for the international anti-fascist conference held in Porto Alegre from 26 to 29 March 2026, its final declaration states without nuance: "The capitalist-imperialist system is undergoing a profound crisis and a sharp economic, social and moral decline. The response of imperialist powers to this decline has been the promotion of fascism everywhere, the imposition of neoliberal policies, military aggression against weaker nations and their recolonization." [21]

7 July 2026

Translated by *International Viewpoint* from *A l'encontre*.

For a Global Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Front

FAROOQ TARIQ · 4 August 2026

First, I welcome everyone to the International Anti-Imperialist Conference in Lahore on behalf of the Haqooq-e-Khalq Party. I especially welcome the international guests who have travelled long hours to reach Lahore.

1. Friends, comrades, and allies, this Conference is taking place at a very critical time in history. This is a moment where we see that the Western capitalist centres have upped the ante of imperialism in the face of a receding global hegemony.

Donald Trump's second term, with its far-right agenda, has brought about a shift in the international situation.

With a foreign policy of recolonization and war, together with his partner in massacres, Netanyahu, Trump's war on Iran was to ensure complete domination of the oil and gas market. This comes after the genocide of the people of Gaza, the invasion of Venezuela, the attempt to strangle Cuba, and threats to annex Greenland.

The tyrant is striving to normalize genocidal language, blackmail, and interventionism, as well as racism, misogyny, and hatred of migrants — attempting to expel millions of workers from the United States.

We all know that imperialism is an essential built in part of capitalism, but we also know that it has been the most reliable partner of Euro-American powers in times of crisis.

With the American Empire lagging behind China and other countries in securing hegemony over renewable energy sources, it has fallen back to strengthening its control over traditional oil supplies. The kidnapping of Venezuelan leadership and the war on Iran are two glaring examples of an em-

pire refusing to innovate amidst the climate change crisis and instead taking violent control over the developing countries resources.

At the same time, the American gangsterism cannot be reduced to securing control over fossil fuel value chains only. Trump's all-out war against Venezuela, Iran, Palestine, Lebanon, and Cuba must be seen in the larger context of a war against the axis of resistance, even if the opponents don't happen to be anti-capitalist but anti-imperialist only.

Bloody authoritarianism is the central instrument of imperialism in our time, because it needs to impose policies of hunger, the proliferation of ecocidal technologies and practices, the excessive power of Big Tech, the dispossession of natural and energy resources from all peoples, and increased military spending. If it is not defeated, Yankee imperialism will embark on a blind march toward ecological disaster.

Anti-imperialism directed toward the US is a direct threat to the US hegemony over violence, even if it does not pose a threat to global capitalism.

It is in this context that we must support Iran and other developing countries resisting the imperialist aggression, even if their anti-imperialism seems to be devoid of anti-capitalism.

2. But comrades, this seems like a good strategy only in the short run. In the long run, we must work toward building movements and parties that are both anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist.

Anti-imperialism devoid of anti-capitalism, as we all know, is a slippery slope. It can either take the form of a theological anti-American state, as is the case with Iran. Or it can take the form of a secular state capitalism, as is the case with China.

While we resist American imperialism, we must resist these anti-imperialist caricatures too. This obviously does not mean that we don't support their fight over sovereignty, even if it comes with localised versions of capitalism. But we must be clear that this can be a strategy only in the short run.

Eventually, we cannot afford to reduce the socialist project to a point where capitalism with a human or anti-imperialist face becomes acceptable and desirable. We must not lower the bar to that point; we must fight against both imperialism and capitalism.

3. The third point I want to highlight is about Pakistan. While the world is admiring the Pakistani state's role as a peacemaker between Iran and the US-Israeli aggression, we also saw the state bulldozing the working-class settlements in Islamabad right in the middle of Iran talks and taking measure for full implementation of Neo liberal agenda. This is of course not an isolated incident but a microcosm of state's re-invigorated enthusiasm toward dispossessing the urban and rural working masses of their social and ecological cushions in the name of developmentalism. We want to remind the state that it cannot build peacemaking diplomatic credentials abroad while being repressive at home.

Pakistan has faced 32 years of military dictatorship and political activists have given maximum sacrifices for a genuine democracy and Socialism. I personally have spent 8 years in exile, dozens of time arrests and intimidation of my family, not only me but thousands such cases in Pakistan when military takes over. One of our main task is to regains the civic space that has taken over by the military.

4. Finally, we must develop a positive project for progressive, socialist futures against capitalism and the imperialist, fascist, liberal, theocratic, statist, and hybrid forms it takes under electoral and non-electoral conditions.

Despite internal differences within the Left, we must forge a united front against the Right. To this

end, the global pro-Palestine movement is a good example, in which progressives from diverse convictions joined hands to fight for the common cause. Similar instances of the Left forces coming together for converging causes and developing a ground-up socialism are rampant across the Third World. Some may question the success of these synergies, but my life-long experience working with movements and parties reveals that there are no quick fixes to the imperialist, genocidal machinery we're up against. It is only after we develop a powerful confluence of working masses, farmers, and other marginalised classes that we'd have a united front to reckon with.

Bourgeois governments refuse to recognize that popular mobilizations against them are the result of deep social contradictions. Typically, they attribute them to the action of internal or external "agents." We cannot accept this conspiracy conception of history.

Undoubtedly, imperialism and its agencies try to take advantage of struggles, such as that of the Iranian people, but that does not reduce those struggles to an operation of imperialism. We must oppose such intervention, while continuing to support those struggles.

Today more than ever, we must practice consistent internationalism, a solidarity without borders that encompasses the struggles of workers, the oppressed, and for self-determination in all countries of the world, without exception. It is a policy that opposes all forms of imperialism.

It does not subordinate the struggle in any country to that of another country. It is the policy that corresponds to the slogan Workers of the world, unite!

FOR SOLIDARITY WITHOUT BORDERS!

FOR INTERNATIONALISM WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS!

3 May 2026

After hyperglobalisation: the capitalist reconfiguration

DIOGO MACHADO AND ALEXANDRE ABREU · 1 August 2026

The liberal view of international economic relations rests on the idea that deeper economic interdependence between nations is both inevitable and desirable. Similarly, critical readings of this phenomenon share a set of fundamental concepts and theories. The central idea is that of an expansive dynamic of capital as a social relation, seeking to encompass ever more spaces and spheres of social life. This idea, which originated with Karl Marx, was developed by Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin and, more recently, by Giovanni Arrighi and David Harvey. Whether it involves access to new raw materials, new labour reserves, new opportunities for realizing surplus value, or new spaces—or all of these at once—this expansion plays a fundamental role: it stabilizes, at least temporarily, the capitalist system and helps explain imperialist and sub-imperialist dynamics, at least in the capitalist era.

Another pillar of these theories rests on the effects of this expansion on the trajectory of spaces and social formations, their links, and the hierarchical relationships that are established between them. It is within this framework that uneven and combined development is situated – a fundamental concept for Trotsky that has been taken up and developed in various ways by many authors, especially those working within the traditions of dependency theory [1] and world-systems analysis.

Viewed from this perspective, critical readings of globalization converge with liberal interpretations on one point: its historical necessity. However, they diverge decisively in their political assessment of its

effects. From this perspective, globalization is merely another name for imperialism; free trade is nothing more than the protectionism of the powerful—an idea also found among non-Marxist political economy theorists. The concrete forms of centrifugal capital expansion combine, to varying degrees, ordinary economic accumulation and exploitation on the one hand, and violent accumulation through extra-economic expropriation on the other, the latter being characteristic of peripheral contexts. Its results in terms of improving the human condition are highly contrasting and profoundly asymmetrical between the centre and the periphery.

From a Marxist perspective, globalization—understood broadly as the integration of new geographical areas into the circuit of capital accumulation—is a movement stemming from the attempt to resolve the internal contradictions of capitalism. It constitutes capital's response to the decline in its own profitability and the exhaustion of investment opportunities in a given space, which determines its expansion into other territories, generally those where the organic composition of capital is lower and the rate of surplus value higher. [2]

This phenomenon is as old as capitalism itself. The current wave—which can be described as hyperglobalisation or neoliberal globalisation—has unfolded over a long period, while possessing its own characteristics that give it its historicity. [3] Initiated in the context of the neoliberal counter-revolution of the early 1980s in response to the profit rate crisis of the previous decade, it adopted a specific institutional framework: free trade agreements, tariff reductions, exchange rate liberalization, the establishment of the dollar as the global currency, free movement of capital, financial deregulation, and a decline in state intervention. This

framework was shaped by an ideological consensus itself championed by the dominant factions of capitalist monopolies.

This framework formed the cornerstone of what is known as the post-war liberal international order, globalized after the end of the Cold War, articulating trade liberalization, selective application of international law, multilateralism, liberal ideological hegemony, and Pax Americana. It can be seen as a concrete articulation of the (economic) infrastructure and the (political, legal, and ideological) superstructure inherent in this global expansion of the frontiers of capital, underpinned by US imperial power and the sub-imperialisms associated with it.

Until recently, it was difficult to find authors—whether Marxist or liberal—who had anticipated or theorised the slowdown, or even the reversal, of globalization. However, several events over the past 15 years pose a significant analytical challenge, both empirical—precisely identifying the processes at work—and theoretical—uncovering their determining factors. The remainder of this article is structured around certain elements of this challenge: to what extent has there been a slowdown or reversal of hyperglobalisation? What explanations can a Marxist perspective offer? And what kind of new order is emerging from the ruins of neoliberal globalization?

The end of hyperglobalisation

The realization that international integration—productive, commercial, and financial—was, if not declining, at least stagnating in the period following the 2007–2008 crisis, began to be openly expressed in public debate during the following decade. The liberal magazine *The Economist*, for example, popularized the term "slowbalisation," borrowed from the Dutch author Adjiedj Bakas, in a January 2019 article. [4] References to deglobalisation had begun to appear at the start of the millennium but have multiplied considerably over the last decade. Similarly, from 2010 onward, expressions such as "reshoring," "near-shoring," and

"friend-shoring" became widespread, specifically referring to the reversal of globalization in the case of the fragmentation of international production chains. [5]

Looking back at the decades since World War II, there is no doubt that something fundamental changed as a result of the international financial crisis and the 2007–2008 recession. For example, as a percentage of global GDP, the importance of international trade increased almost linearly, from about 25 per cent in 1970 to 61 per cent in 2008 — attesting to an increasing and undeniable trade interdependence — before stabilizing (57 per cent in 2024 [6]). Annual foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, for their part, have not simply stagnated since 2007, but have undergone a genuine reversal of the trend: fluctuating between 0.5 and one per cent of global GDP in the 1970s and 1980s, FDI grew exponentially in the 1990s, reaching historic highs in 2000 (4.6 per cent) and 2007 (5.3 per cent), before declining more or less continuously, eventually settling at 0.9 per cent in 2023 and 1.3 per cent in 2024. [7] Taking as a reference the total of international financial flows in gross value — encompassing, in addition to FDI, portfolio investments [8], bank loans, and other flows — a considerable decrease is observed since 2007, including in absolute terms: these flows have fallen from approximately \$12.4 trillion in 2007 to some 4,200 billion per year in 2022–2023. [9] Finally, the share of value added to exports in total exports — an indicator commonly used to measure the degree of integration in global value chains — also stabilized from 2007 for the entire OECD area, after sustained growth throughout the 1990s and 2000s.

This type of data is subject to numerous circumstantial factors, not to mention measurement errors and biases of all kinds; it is neither exact nor precise, but rather the result of numerous assessments. This is why Marxist approaches tend not to place too much importance on this positivist data. [10] Nevertheless, these elements paint a relatively clear picture: the deepening of international economic interdependence underwent a notable

shift starting in the late 2000s. This shift manifested itself, depending on the dimensions considered, sometimes as stagnation, sometimes as a genuine reversal of the trend, sometimes in relative terms, sometimes in absolute terms. In all cases, this constitutes an undeniable break with the decades of hyperglobalisation that preceded it.

From the highest point to decline: the determining factors of the end of an era

Hyperglobalisation, as we have seen, constituted an attempt by capital to restore the rate of profit. It was made possible by the context of US hegemony and aimed at maintaining the hegemony of the United States and its allies. The network of institutions and norms built during this period, under the aegis of the liberal international order, served to institutionalise and deepen the asymmetries between centre and periphery, while facilitating the export of surplus Western capital.

While it initially allowed for a slight recovery in the profit rate and international trade stimulated global economic growth, hyperglobalisation has, in the long term, failed to reverse the downward trend in the profit rate [11] or to extricate capitalism from the secular stagnation characteristic of its fourth long wave of development—characterized by low levels of growth and investment, a high weight of fictitious capital, and a context of technological innovation and increased wealth concentration. Following the failure of the attempts at fiscal and monetary activism that followed the 2008 crisis, the accumulation crisis of late capitalism has become increasingly acute. The capacities of globalization and financialization appear to have run their course: we are facing a capitalism in marked slowdown.

From this arise new tensions and reactions from capital. Neoliberal globalization was based on indifference to the origin of capital, favouring the relocation of production and the international proliferation of long value chains in the name of efficiency in resource allocation—optimizing costs and maximizing profits. While it exacerbated inequalities be-

tween and within countries [12], it also resulted in a transfer of wealth from the Global North to the Global South—albeit a very limited one—particularly to China and other Asian countries.

Thus, India now has a GDP higher than that of France and Germany combined; China has already overtaken the United States in purchasing power parity (PPP, adjusted to take into account price levels in each context); and Western Europe and North America, which represented nearly 60 per cent of world GDP in PPP in 1980, will account for little more than 30 per cent in 2025, surpassed by a few percentage points by Southeast Asia. [13]

This posed little problem as long as the so-called advanced and emerging economies maintained a complementary relationship: the former exported their capital surpluses, benefiting from lower production costs abroad, as well as highly sophisticated, high-value-added goods and services, while the latter exported raw materials and cheap, low-technology manufactured goods. Some countries, however, were not content with this specialization and launched public policy programmes aimed at developing more advanced industrial sectors, with, in some cases, notable success: this is the case with the automotive and electronics sectors in Japan and the so-called "Asian Tigers," and with an increasingly broad and diversified range of productive sectors in China.

Many of these countries now have large, domestically owned companies that directly compete with Western firms in advanced technology segments—a direct threat to the dominant sectors of their bourgeoisie. A recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis documents the convergence of China's production structure with that of the United States and certain eurozone economies [14]: China now produces almost as many high-quality patents (IP5) as these two groups, and the similarity in export structures has increased considerably in recent years—evidence of direct competition in sectors such as machinery and equipment, transportation equipment, and even semiconductors. For example, between 2013 and 2021, the export similarity index

with Germany rose from 65 per cent to 80 per cent, reflecting a strong convergence in technological specialisation.

For its part, the United States is alarmed by Chinese competition in software and hardware, artificial intelligence, and semiconductors, which they consider critical to national security. China has made significant efforts to develop these sectors and has achieved considerable progress, with leading companies such as Huawei, Alibaba, Baidu, and Tencent. According to Bloomberg [15], it is already the world leader in industries such as solar panel production, electric vehicles, lithium batteries, high-speed trains, and drones, and has established itself as a highly competitive player in more traditional sectors such as pharmaceuticals, chemicals, robotics, and machine tools.

This phenomenon is a major factor explaining the gradual abandonment of international free trade by successive US administrations since Trump's election in 2016—consider the tariffs maintained by Biden, or the export bans on semiconductor-related technologies to Chinese companies. As Cédric Durand [16] argues:

These measures aim to prevent China from taking the long-term lead in productive capacity, particular attention must be paid to advanced technologies and the strength of the broader material base of the economy, including heavy industry and access to natural resources. For decades, the two countries were largely complementary, which generally benefited their respective capitalists, but the narrowing gap created by the Chinese economy has put them on a dangerous path toward confrontation.

From this perspective, the explanation for the end of hyperglobalisation offered by *The Economist* and other liberal analyses remains superficial: it merely invokes the exhaustion of gains linked to lower transport and communication costs, as well as the depletion of opportunities associated with the increasing fragmentation of international production chains. What is at stake, more fundamentally, is, on

the one hand, the progressive exhaustion of possibilities for arbitration in labour law at the international level, and on the other, a profound transformation of the relationship between the advanced and emerging sectors of global capitalism—which have gradually shifted from a logic of complementarity to one of competition.

The emerging new order

What will happen after hyperglobalisation? It is undoubtedly too early to draw definitive conclusions, but some significant developments and underlying trends are already perceptible. First, a series of major shocks and events—from the election of Trump and Brexit to the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine—have highlighted the vulnerability of long value chains: disruption of a strategic link can have global repercussions, interrupting the supply of certain essential goods. This has led to a political climate of growing distrust of international trade and of commercial dependence on other countries, prompting several states to seek strategic autonomy in sectors deemed critical.

National security considerations now permeate trade policy, fuelling what Colantone calls the "protectionist turn." [17] He shows that the use of such tools—anti-dumping measures, tariffs, countervailing duties—has increased significantly since the 2008 crisis, particularly in the post-Covid era. As a result, value chains are shortening, becoming less trade-intensive, and are being reoriented along geopolitical lines. The concepts of reshoring, near-shoring, and friend-shoring are increasingly present in the justification of economic policies. Since the war in Ukraine, in particular, several indicators suggest that countries are tending to reduce their trade with the states from which they are most politically distant, in favour of those with which they are more aligned. [18]

At the same time, IMF data [19] reveals a significant increase in the use of industrial policy measures since the financial crisis. According to the authors of this study, the end of 2019 marked a turning point from which this phenomenon intensified

sharply. The main reasons cited are the climate transition and the competitiveness of strategic sectors, but since the pandemic, justifications related to national security and the resilience of supply chains have become increasingly important. The use of these instruments is deeply uneven: advanced economies use them disproportionately. The preferred measures vary across regions, but include direct subsidies or state loans to businesses, tax exemptions, export or import aid, government procurement, and, of course, tariffs and anti-dumping measures. It is hardly surprising that more than 50 per cent of these measures are the work of China, the United States and the European Union – which illustrates how easily the supposed guarantors of the international order subvert its rules as soon as they cease to be profitable to them.

This movement, while posing challenges to the structure of international trade—sometimes described as neo-mercantilism, neo-statism, or new state capitalism [20]—does not constitute a complete break with the neoliberal paradigm. Rather, it is an adaptation, driven by elites, to the negative redistributive effects of hyper-globalisation : in practice, an alliance between the state and the national bourgeoisie to protect the dominant fractions of capital, guaranteeing them higher profit rates while pursuing the neoliberal project on a national scale. [21]

From this perspective, it is a response to the crisis of accumulation. When the spontaneous functioning of the market no longer guarantees the expected profit rates, the state intervenes forcefully to remedy the situation—even if it means abandoning its adherence to neoliberal economic orthodoxy overnight. The consequence is oligarchisation . In other words, "the lack of opportunities for productive investment makes the seizure of political power the most effective means of guaranteeing the profitability of capital." [22]

Finally, there is militarism. The accumulation crisis exacerbates conflicts between powers on a global scale. Trump's tariffs, quickly followed by retaliatory measures, are a prime example. Each power seeks to develop its strategic sectors and protect its national bourgeoisie, which fuels economic conflicts that can rapidly escalate into political and military confrontations.

The war industry is increasingly conceived as a solution for restoring the productive capacity of the capitalist core—a vision shared by NATO, the European Commission, the United States, and the major powers of the Old Continent, each of which is announcing vast public investment programmes in armaments. The IMF study mentioned earlier confirms this: the military industry is the sector that has benefited most from industrial policy measures since the crisis. Interstate conflicts are thus intensifying, along with episodes of occupation and interventionism—as in Ukraine and Palestine. The Venezuelan crisis threatens to deliver the final blow to a bankrupt liberal international order and reveals with stark clarity the nature of the emerging world order.

Hyperglobalisation has not succeeded in extricating late capitalism from its long period of stagnation. The world certainly remains interdependent, and international trade is far from having disappeared. The emerging new order inherits these characteristics, as well as tendencies toward stagnation, oligarchy, and inequality —both between and within nations. It will nevertheless be distinguished by states that are less dependent and more interventionist, determined to promote their national strategic sectors and to engage in more cautious international trade with closer partners, as well as by increased economic, political , and military conflict.

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Many Shades of Campism: An Internationalist Critique

AMIR KIANPOUR & MORTEZA SAMANPOUR · 1 August 2026

An internationalist project capable of contesting imperialist warfare in practice can only be constituted through particular social struggles rooted in their own local spatio-temporalities. Such a project, we argue, must therefore confront head-on the many forms of campism: positions and tendencies that back any force opposed to Western imperialism and its allies—whether China, Russia, or the Iran-led so-called "Axis of Resistance"—regardless of that force's internal domination or imperial and regional interventions.

The critique of campism now might appear to some as "counterproductive" in the midst of Zionist genocide in Gaza, the expansion of settler colonialism in the West Bank, and full-scale regional warfare – from the repeated bombardments of Lebanon and Yemen to the annexation of parts of Syria and the 12-Day War against Iran. Not despite but precisely because of this bloody imperialist warfare we think it is necessary to criticise campism now, when the need to constitute an anti-imperialist bloc as a united political force is greater than ever.

Campism is not only detrimental and divisive for heterogeneous liberation struggles rooted in specific local and national spatio-temporalities; it also undermines their articulation and synchronisation in the form of internationalism. It thwarts the real possibilities unleashed by the objective contradictions of the current war conjuncture for critically reconstructing an internationalist politics. Campism further remains blind to multiple imperialisms beyond the historical West, as well as to regional formations of empire at the margins, since actors such as the United Arab Emirates tearing apart Sudan are not mere Western proxies but

agents in their own right, seeking to control and reconfigure transnational circuits of accumulation that crisscross national borders.

Campism is, of course, not the only barrier to internationalism but it must be named and debated openly, as one of the key obstacles to any renewed internationalist politics.

Campism is a dead end for internationalism.

Campism of the Fools

Campism becomes appealing on various grounds, from ideological and nationalist to strategic and decolonial. The foolish logic of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" constitutes only one among many shades of campism: a variant that separates geopolitics from internal social relations, turning a blind eye to the repressive and reactionary character of the forces it supports while celebrating their opposition to the West.

The genealogy of what we call "campism of the fools" can be traced back to the Cold War and the emergence of "tankie" communists who defended the deployment of Soviet tanks to crush the uprisings in Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968. Today's tankies conceive Russia's invasion of Ukraine not as an openly Eurasian-colonial project – theorised by the likes of Alexander Dugin – but as a mere negative reaction to NATO's eastward expansion. The same logic, which reduces the active geopolitical ambitions of non-Western powers seeking to reshape the world market in their own image to a merely passive "victim" of Western imperialism, has dominated many readings of the Syrian revolution. There, Iran, Hezbollah, and Russia kept the dictator Assad in power and brutally repressed the popular uprising of the Syrian people, resulting in around half a million dead and

some 12 million displaced, while the critical voices of Syrians and activist-thinkers who emphasised the reactionary, imperialist, and interventionist character of these forces were largely ignored by campist currents.

We borrow the phrase "campism of the fools" from Fred Halliday's description of the 1979–81 US embassy hostage crisis in Tehran as an "anti-imperialism of fools": a form of anti-imperialism that celebrates any blow against the United States while ignoring how, in that case, the hostage crisis was used by the new Khomeinist forces to crush leftists, dismantle workers' and popular councils, and impose reactionary and patriarchal measures such as compulsory hijab on women, in order to consolidate their power. As the feminist activist Jaleh Ahmadi, who participated in the 8 March 1979 protests against compulsory hijab, later wrote: "Khomeini's fist that had been clenched to smash into the mouth of the Great Satan, America, came crashing down instead on the heads of the women of Iran".

By separating anti-imperialist struggle from other social struggles, this mode of campism renders anti-imperialism abstract. The logical consequence of such abstraction is that leftist opponents and social struggles within supposedly "anti-Western" states—such as the Woman, Life, Freedom uprising in Iran—are dismissed as mere creations and conspiracies of Zionism and imperialist powers, even as feminists of the uprising send solidarity messages from prison, declaring that "Palestine taught us that resistance is a way of living".

Undermining social struggles, in turn, feeds ideological practices of justifying domination through the mask of anti-imperialism. In this mode, the "free gifts" of history – colonial pasts, collective traumas, and anti-colonial struggles – are appropriated as legitimising instruments of repression in the present, in a way that echoes how Israel mobilises the long history of antisemitism and the Nazi genocide of Jews in Europe. If postcolonial states justify their own crimes via "anti-imp washing", Israel dresses its genocide in Gaza in the

colours of the queer rainbow flag – pinkwashing – and frames its attacks on Iran as "liberation" carried out by a supposedly heroic female fighter pilot in the name of "feminism". To speak of the dialectic between these two ideological operations is not to equate or homogenise the radically asymmetrical relation between Israel and Iran but to insist that they mirror and reinforce one another against the horizon of liberation.

Strategic Campism in the Face of Emergency

While the campism of fools abstracts geopolitics from internal social relations, "strategic campism" openly concedes the reactionary character of the forces it supports, yet still extends them conditional support in the name of wartime emergency.

Strategic campism has been brutally visible in Lebanon. In the 2019 *kellon ya'ni kellon* ("all of them means all of them") uprising, Hezbollah acted as frontline enforcers of the counter-revolution, playing a central role in the suppression of protesters. After 7 October 2023, as Israel's bombardments of Lebanon intensified, a familiar discourse returned with new force: that Hezbollah must be backed as the only effective deterrent against Israel, despite its deeply sectarian, authoritarian role inside Lebanon. Here the logic is not one of ideological affinity but of a supposedly higher strategic necessity: "we need Hezbollah now". All other struggles are told to wait in the name of emergency, forcing many to accept Hezbollah as the "lesser evil".

A paradigmatic case relates to the early years of the 1979 Revolution, when two opposed left strategies in Iran confronted the real threat of U.S. imperialism. On one side, the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party called for a "United People's Front" with "the steadfast fighters on the path of Ayatollah Khomeini," branding women, leftist, and minority struggles as divisive "imperialist plots" that endangered national unity. On the other, the National Democratic Front (NDF) insisted that only deepening the revolution's democratic content and defending the fundamental rights of the people could secure its anti-imperialist endurance. When the Islamic Republic, under the

banner of anti-imperialism, crushed the NDF and other leftist and minority movements, the Tudeh Party not only remained silent but at times endorsed this repression—until the same machinery eventually turned against its own leadership.

Today, when life is increasingly reduced to sheer survival and threatened with annihilation through AI-mediated forms of genocide, people will use any possible means just to stay alive. As the transnational network of the Peoples Want's Internationalist Manifesto emphasises, it would be foolish to expect them to "wait passively" while they are massacred. Armed resistance in Palestine – or, for that matter, in Kurdistan or Ukraine – may adopt different tactical methods of survival in order to sustain their national liberation, including temporary financial and logistical support from the Islamic Republic of Iran or from other states. Our critique of campism is not launched from a puritanical moral standpoint that evades the real contradictions of real struggles. However, when warfare leads social struggles to place their survival strategically – and not only tactically – in the hands of reactionary forces, that enforced reliance risks foreclosing the very possibility of liberation if dependency on those forces becomes the only political horizon. In the absence of real internationalist support, a struggle may begin with temporary tactical reliance, only to see that dependency harden over time into a strategic and integral part of its politics.

Embracing the real contradictions of real struggles also requires attending to how this very state of emergency – the Israeli threat – is instrumentalised by reactionary forces to justify, authorise, and normalise exceptional extra-judicial violence. Far from relativising the notion of emergency, the key question is who declares it, with what political consequences, and how the response can ground a durable front against it. Assad has long invoked Israel and "Western plots" to legitimate the crushing of the Syrian revolution. During the 12-Day War, some on the Left backed the Islamic Republic of Iran in the name of opposing a supposedly "greater evil" under the pressure of wartime emer-

gency. The state, however, weaponised that same urgency to carry out an unprecedented wave of mass deportations of Afghan migrants, accusing them of "espionage for Israel". According to the United Nations, more than half a million Afghans were deported from Iran in the sixteen days following the end of the Israeli aggression.

From Nationalist Campism to Decolonial Campism

Today's dominant forms of campism arise less from lingering Cold War imaginaries than from the internal contradictions of South–South solidarity itself, shaped by the entanglement of postcolonial nationalism with emerging configurations of geopolitical alignment.

Parallel to the proliferation of contemporary war regimes, nationalist campism intensifies: a political orientation that systematically privileges the form of the nation—territorial integrity, sovereign centralisation, national security, and positional leverage within the international order—over the substantive content of nationhood understood as democratic representation, social rights, and collective self-determination. This logic has been sharply visible since the Syrian war, when the Islamic Republic of Iran justified its intervention with the formula, "We fight in Syria so that we do not have to fight in Tehran", which has since crystallised as the central ideological core of Iran's pro–Axis of Resistance discourse.

Within this framework, the postcolonial national sovereign is recast as a pivotal figure mediating the relation between inward-facing logics of violent homogenisation and pacification and outward-facing logics of interstate strategic alignment in an expanded field of competitive warfare. What had once been deemed necessary to advance anti-colonial struggles—"national unity"—was reworked into a doctrine of "national security" that imposed a homogeneous, monolithic spatio-temporality, organised around a defensive contraction against an imperialism imagined as a single undifferentiated camp. This national spatio-temporality crushed the plurality of classed, gendered, racialised, and eco-

logical struggles into the singular temporality of a seemingly permanent national emergency. Everything was thereby subordinated to the so-called "primary struggle" between nation and imperialism, routinely justified through a continuous state of threatened "national security" presented as the precondition for all else.

Along the external axis of postcolonial state formation, the strategic South–South alignments forged in the postcolonial era further consolidated the rationality of nationalist campism. The 1955 Bandung Conference stands as the symbolic juncture where this logic of South–South alignment was normalised: the radical, militant language of anti-imperialist struggles by oppressed peoples was recoded into the vocabulary of economic and cultural cooperation between postcolonial states. This shift from anti-imperialist militancy to postcolonial statecraft laid the groundwork for today's transformation of multipolarity from an objective-critical into a normative category. By absorbing revolutionary forces into the competitive logic of the interstate system, and ultimately into inter-polar rivalries, it transformed a horizon of liberation into a framework of geopolitical management.

The so-called "Bandung spirit," despite its undeniable inspirational force in advancing anti-colonial struggles and its dissuasive effect during the Cold War, has increasingly been redeployed as ideological fuel for contemporary campist celebrations of multipolarity—treated as an inherently positive and self-evidently emancipatory alternative to U.S.-led unipolarity. In this view, multipolarity is celebrated as "balance of power" and "enhanced autonomy" for Global South states. A critical conception of multipolarity, by contrast, names not a solution but the deepening crisis of hegemony—marked by permanent crisis, escalating militarisation, fragmented sovereignties, and proliferating war zones. It is precisely the non-critical approach to Bandung's legacy by authors such as Vijay Prashad, and the reduction of internationalism to a cooperation platform of non-Western state sovereignties, that enables today's campist discourses to present projects such as

China's imperialist project of the Belt and Road Initiative as the following: "The start of a new confidence, or 'new mood', in the Global South since the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America no longer had to rely so fully on the institutions of the Global North for finance and technology."

This kind of nationalist or multipolar-normivist campism is closely linked to another contemporary formation that we might call decolonial campism which redefines imperialism in culturalist terms, detaching the concept from its historical-material foundations and thus from the concrete living conditions of ordinary people. Unable to break from structural dependencies of the world market, some postcolonial sovereignties sought to compensate for their material derivativeness from Western modernisation—their copy-modelled military apparatuses, bureaucratic institutions, and developmental planning models—by asserting a distinctive cultural–spiritual identity through appeals to cultural authenticity, civilisational exceptionalism, or religious uniqueness.

"Imperialism" is semantically inflated by decolonial campism into a spectral shape-shifting menace, discernible at once in manifestations of so-called backwardness and of development: in illiteracy and drug addiction as much as in university education; in women's unveiled hair as much as in the wearing of a tie—as was clearly visible in post-revolutionary Iran during the 1980s. Today, within such a framework of decolonial campism, the uprising of Iranian women in the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement is directly identified as the product of Western liberalism—and therefore, by definition, as an expression of imperialism.

In this cultural turn, figures such as Ali Shariati, with his call for a "return to the self," Jalal Al-e Ahmad, with the notion of *gharbzadegi* (Westoxification), and Sayyid Qutb, with his diagnosis of "modern jahiliyya," (moral and spiritual ignorance and bankruptcy of modern society) among others, helped articulate a discourse of "cultural invasion", "identity crisis", and "spiritual decline" which—regardless of its analytical adequacy in accounting for

global structures of domination—was readily appropriated by postcolonial states as an all-purpose signifier. It was deployed arbitrarily to stigmatize difference and suppress dissent, even as these same states imposed neoliberal reforms and embraced some of the most predatory variants of capitalism—a plainly evident contradiction, already apparent more than forty years ago, when Maxine Molyneux and Fred Halliday observed that "the anti-imperialism of Khomeini or Hafiz al-Asad" offered no emancipation from capitalism but merely "the replacement of rule by one capitalism with another."

Towards An Internationalism of Concrete Universalities

As the warfare moves to the centre of the reproduction of a deeply fractured capitalism, the historical necessity of an explicitly anti-imperialist internationalism becomes more and more evident. By internationalism we do not mean an abstract form of global organization standing above local politics, suspending feminist, ecological, labour, and queer struggles. On the contrary, as Palestine after 7 October has shown, internationalism is necessarily mediated by particular struggles embedded in their own local politics; it can only exist as a concrete universality that is woven out of these situated struggles, rather than imposed over them.

University encampments; struggles for disarmament and boycott; and counter-logistical disruptions of the transnational circuits of accumulation that enable Israel's genocide in Gaza – from general strikes and port blockades in Italy to the maritime interventions of the Freedom Flotilla – were not carried out from an abstract moral stance of a vague humanist empathy. They emerged from the felt necessity of objectively shared destinies between each of these struggles and Palestine. "We are not liberating Palestine, Palestine is liberating us" – a slogan chanted from the streets from Algeria to Italy – aptly captures the spirit of internationalism as the political form that synchronises and coordinates heterogeneous struggles of liberation on the basis of their common grounds, resonances, and mutual solidarities, without campist

subsumption of their singularities under a supposedly "higher" anti-imperialist cause.

Solidarities with Palestine are "meaningful" for people because they can immediately grasp that Israel's genocide in Gaza bears directly on their own lives. When dock workers in the port of Ravenna in northern Italy took action to block the loading of weapons destined for the port of Haifa – a concrete node in the logistical chain of genocide, now partly owned by an Indian company – they did so not simply out of an abstract opposition to Israel, but out of a refusal to let their own labour be mobilised for genocide and to accept the transformation of their workplaces into infrastructures of war.

Today, the abolition of Zionism is one of the conditions of possibility for the liberation of all oppressed classes. However, this universality remains abstract, ineffective, and ultimately reactionary insofar as it is detached from the concrete particular struggles through which any such universality could actually be realised. By positing opposition to Israel as the primary struggle and relegating all others to a secondary rank, campism in fact undermines the very basis of anti-imperialist struggles.

By siding with one pole of a war, campism is not only detrimental to each liberation struggle taken separately, but also to their mutually intertwined relations, which are the very precondition of internationalism. Through support for, for example, the Islamic Republic of Iran, campism marginalizes not only the feminist, anti-colonial, and egalitarian actualities of the Woman, Life, Freedom uprising, but also its potential internationalist articulations with other struggles in the region. By elevating opposition to Western imperialism into the "primary contradiction", all other struggles are deferred to an indefinite "not now". Campism thus imposes a false synchronization: heterogeneous struggles with distinct horizons, urgencies, and rhythms are subsumed under a single wartime rhythm. By contrast, internationalism affirms a different politics of time, not governed by the nationalist injunction "first national security, then everything else". During the

12-Day War, Iranian students, teachers, workers, feminists, and political prisoners (including the Kurdish militants on death row, Pakhsan Azizi and Varishe Mordai), together with explicitly internationalist diasporic organisations, affirmed a counter-synchronisation that linked Woman, Life, Freedom to Palestine. Their insistence that justice is indivisible counters both the Islamic Republic's cynical instrumentalization of Palestine and the campist logics that separate anti-imperialism from struggles against authoritarianism at home.

Internationalism, both as a concept and as a political form, has never been an "add-on" to local and national struggles, but constitutive of class politics

as such, rooted in the sociality of capital itself as an intrinsically global relation that reproduces itself through the world market. Today, as the world market is reorganized along multipolar and logistical lines, campism appears increasingly out of sync with its own historical time. The task ahead is to renew internationalism capable of disrupting the circuits of war and accumulation and defending the corridors of life—a task that can only be advanced through the concrete articulation of struggles, not through the abstract universality of campist alignments.

Source: Portolan

NEWS

News from around the world



NICARAGUA

Open Letter from Sergio Ramirez to President Lula da Silva

SERGIO RAMIREZ · 31 August 2026

In that speech, you said that the left's mistake was to insist on distinguishing between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy, when there was only one kind of democracy: one in which power was determined by the votes of the citizens.

Daniel Ortega and the doctrinaire hardliners who supported him, and who proclaimed that it had been a mistake to surrender revolutionary power in elections held "under the blackmail of Yankee imperialism," did not like what you had to say. I remember that Edmundo Jarquín, who was with me among the reformists, called me that night to tell me that the hardliners had left you alone at the hotel. So we went to get you and took you to Edmundo's house, where we spent long hours talking about the future of the left in Latin America, which had to be democratic, or it would have no future at all.

Now, all of us who were with you that night in Managua are in exile, stripped of our Nicaraguan citizenship for opposing the two-headed dictatorship of Ortega and his wife, a satrapy without parallel in the history of our country.

Eleven years after that congress, in 2002, you won the presidential election after three previous attempts, and since then you have been elected three times and are now seeking a fourth term, always faithful to Brazil's democratic system and respectful of election results when they do not favor you.

I am certain that if anyone were to say that there would be no more elections in Brazil, you would be the first to take to the streets to defend the right to choose. Because, indeed, there is only one kind of

democracy: democracy based on votes. Democracy is neither right-wing nor left-wing; those who respect it are part of it.

When electoral fraud took place in Venezuela in 2024 in favor of dictator Nicolas Maduro, and Brazil demanded that the voting records be produced, Ortega lashed out at you. I quote his words: "The way Lula has behaved in response to the victory of Venezuela's legitimate president is shameful, shameful, repeating the slogans of the Yankees, the Europeans, the lackeys of Latin America..."

"You're groveling too, Lula, you're groveling..." "Who are you serving? The Yankees? The Europeans? Or are you seeking leadership so you can become the Yankees' representative in Latin America?" And he capped off his diatribe by breaking diplomatic relations with Brazil. All because you defended the legitimacy of the vote in Venezuela, a cause that transcends borders.

This year, Ortega shamelessly proclaimed that there would be no more elections in Nicaragua, thereby abolishing democracy in my country and putting us back on the political map. On August 19, the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) considered the case and approved convening an extraordinary meeting of the hemisphere's foreign ministers on the grounds that "representative democracy, an indispensable condition for the stability, peace, and development of the region, no longer exists in Nicaragua." The resolution was supported by all member countries except two: Mexico abstained, and Brazil voted against it.

Your ambassador to the OAS argued: "We are all in favor of human rights. But we do not want any medicine to kill the patient." This statement, Mr. President, represents a radical departure from

your unwavering positions in defense of democracy, which must be defended by governments of both the left and the right. The patient, who buries elections and establishes himself as dictator for life, can live for many years on life support.

It no longer matters whether Ortega is a man of the left, as he proclaims in his archaic harangues, or whether he has become a traditional right-wing dictator. Dictatorships have only one dark color, and they must be fought from every position on the democratic ideological spectrum.

Ortega has abolished elections. Do not deny Nicaragua, Mr. President, the right to choose freely

—the very same right that could make you president of Brazil once again.

Please do not risk creating a terrible confusion that could lead the people of Nicaragua to believe that the only way Brazil will take a clear stand against Ortega and his family dictatorship is through the victory of Flávio Bolsonaro and everything he represents.

25 August 2028

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Anticapitalistas on the Forest Fires of Summer 2026

ANTICAPITALISTAS · 9 August 2026

In Madrid, the criminal government of Ayuso [1] and her cronies have tried to shift the crisis onto the central government by forcing the declaration of a Level 3 alert, which compels the Ministry of the Interior to take command. The objective of this manoeuvre is clear: to place the blame on the Sánchez government and immediately begin accusing them of a lack of resources.

As so often happens, Ayuso plays at taking the initiative, launching insults and forcing her political rivals to go on the defensive against the avalanche of media outlets that the right wing showers with public money and that are eager to point the finger at the supposedly progressive central government. However, we cannot be swayed by the escalating rhetoric of Madrid's ruling class or by the contrived responses of Sánchez's government, which continues to engage in climate posturing without taking real action. The best proof of the irrelevance of its transition policies is the disappearance of the minister and vice president of the government who should be in charge of these actions.

The powers to deal with this issue belong to the regional government, and this is not a matter of legal discussion, but of facts and means: it is the regional government that has the resources, the budget and the knowledge of the territory; Ayuso and her team are responsible for the fact that the Madrid region is burning.

This does not absolve the central government of guilt: its green progressivism is completely incapable of taking control of key sectors, including land use, and has turned the fight against climate change into a puppet show where the usual suspects win. Real estate and commercial interests are

undeniably paramount, and the supposed policy of ecological transition is merely a veneer that blesses electric cars and rejects a rational and democratic use of land.

Let's not fool ourselves: climate change has progressed too far, and wildfires are now a part of our reality. Some of them, like those ravaging the southwest of the region or the recent fire that consumed thousands of hectares, have reached levels that are beyond human control. The real resources, beyond the rhetoric of many, cannot contain the firepower that the flames have reached in a context of climate chaos and a constant rise in temperatures.

But things can still be done: actions can be taken on the land, a construction moratorium can be imposed and companies that profit from tourist housing can be expelled while demanding new constructions, soil and forest conservation can be intensified and private vehicle travel can be legally reduced. The working conditions of forest firefighters, who are under-resourced and subject to a seasonal system that makes them precarious instead of providing a stable and well-equipped workforce to combat the fires that are now a part of our lives, can be improved. Tragsa [2] and other similar companies can be removed; these are organisations with public capital that are dedicated to creating precarious work instead of hiring with guarantees and rights.

The climate emergency is permanent, but the response to the fires currently ravaging the region must be immediate and massive, utilising all available operational and management resources. The focus must shift in the opposite direction from current policies: socially and politically sanctioning those who trivialise climate change and prosecuting those responsible for ecocidal policies.

It is possible, of course, to expropriate unused land in private hands and give it a social use to avoid the abandonment that awaits only for speculative use and that, meanwhile, leaves the land as cannon fodder for fires. Control of economic activity, expropriation, and collective management are the recipes for a common policy that truly tackles the problem of the land and provides collective solutions to the imminent challenges of climate change. An active

policy is needed that unites the popular and working classes to give substance and strength to an antagonistic political project that challenges the dominant common sense in favour of a common political project.

2 August 2026

Translated and annotated by David Fagan for
International Viewpoint.

World Social Forum Banned and Suppressed - Reinstated!

INPRECOR · 5 August 2026

This morning alarming reports are circulating: the university where most of the debates are scheduled to take place is reportedly closed, and people are said to have been expelled this morning. These reports are difficult to verify, but the government has explicitly told the organizing committee that no meetings may be held at the university and that publicly stating that one is attending the WSF is grounds for expulsion.

There has been complete confusion for several days, with contradictory information being relayed by the authorities to the organizing committee—as exemplified by the caravan, which was initially able to cross the border and travel several dozen kilometers before ultimately being turned back.

Rumors on the ground suggest that the Benin government is under pressure from the United States, Israel, and Morocco to ban the forum. Once again, it is difficult to obtain reliable information, even though it is highly likely that the major powers are playing a very negative role in preventing the World Social Forum from taking place—a forum that serves as a space for self-organization for African human rights activists, social movements, and cultural associations. These actions run counter to the anti-democratic abuses, militarization, and anti-social policies being carried out in Africa under pressure from imperialist powers.

The World Social Forum must take place! Africa must be able to organize so that its peoples can defend their rights!

MOROCCO

"Almounadila socialiste": Our ecosocialist and feminist alternative to the crisis of capitalist civilization

AL MOUNADIL-A · 1 August 2026

Organized according to a participatory methodology based on the exchange of experiences, collective discussions and the joint elaboration of analyses, this meeting brought together activists engaged in social struggles in order to strengthen the theoretical and political tools essential for intervention in the current period.

The work focused on the main challenges facing the working class, in its broadest sense, as well as the oppressed peoples, in a context marked by the deepening multidimensional crisis of capitalist civilization, the rise of the new extreme right and reactionary forces, the acceleration of the ecological catastrophe and the generalized offensive against social rights and freedoms.

Faced with this situation, the construction of an ecosocialist, feminist, internationalist and democratic alternative appears more than ever to be a historical necessity.

The training program drew on several fundamental texts of the Fourth International, enriched by discussions on the transformations of contemporary capitalism as well as the political, social and ecological issues facing popular movements. The objective was to better understand the dynamics of the international situation and to draw the consequences for the tasks of revolutionaries, constantly articulating the theoretical elaboration with the concrete experience of the struggles in Morocco and in the region.

The meeting opened with the discussion of the programmatic manifesto of the Fourth International, "Manifesto for an Ecosocialist Revolution –

Breaking with Capitalist Growth". This text shows that extractivist capitalism is leading humanity towards a dead end by destroying ecological balances, depleting natural resources and increasingly subordinating human needs to the logic of profit.

The discussions highlighted the main foundations of the ecosocialist alternative: breaking with capitalist productivism, establishing democratic planning of the economy, respecting the ecological limits of the planet, and redirecting production towards the satisfaction of social needs rather than the private accumulation of capital.

The second session was devoted to the resolution "The new rise of the women's movement". The debates focused on the renewal of feminist mobilizations on an international scale, on the perspectives they open up as well as on the challenges they pose to the socialist movement. They reaffirmed that the struggle against patriarchy is inseparable from the struggle against capitalism and all forms of exploitation and oppression. The exchanges also deepened several central notions of socialist feminism, including social reproduction and intersectionality, as tools for analysing relations of domination and developing a strategy of emancipation. Particular attention was paid to the realities of the feminist movement in Morocco and the region.

Another session focused on the resolution "Our orientation and tasks in social movements". The discussions reaffirmed the need for socialists to contribute to the strengthening of social movements while fully respecting their autonomy, to foster self-organization, grassroots democracy, unity of resistance, and convergence of struggles. The debates

also drew on the experience of social movements in Morocco and the region in order to identify their achievements, limitations and strategic lessons.

The Days concluded with the discussion of the resolution "As the crises of capitalism converge, the challenge of how to move forward for those below". This text analyses the strategic tasks of the socialist movement in a period characterized by the interweaving of economic, social, ecological, geopolitical and democratic crises. It also highlights the contrast between the proliferation of popular resistance around the world and the weakness of a global political alternative, a lasting consequence of the collapse of the bureaucratic regimes of Eastern Europe. The discussions focused on the conditions for the reconstruction of a social and political force capable of carrying out a revolutionary ecosocialist project.

Throughout the Conference, the working method favoured introductory presentations, group workshops, plenary debates and the collective elaboration of summaries. This approach has encouraged the active participation of all activists and a collective enrichment of the texts based on their concrete experiences of struggle.

The Days also reserved an important place for discussions on the political situation in Morocco, the evolutions of the left, the stakes of the next elections and the immediate tasks of militant intervention, with the constant concern to articulate theoretical analysis with concrete political challenges.

Self-management was an essential dimension of this experience. The participants took turns collectively preparing meals, organizing common areas

and carrying out the various tasks necessary for daily life in the room. This practice was a political and pedagogical choice: to make training itself a space for experimenting with socialist values, based on equality, shared responsibility, solidarity and the questioning of hierarchical and gendered divisions of work. For revolutionary training does not consist only in the study of texts; it also implies building collective practices that are consistent with the social project that we defend.

This first edition of the Socialist Days confirmed, once again, the urgency of strengthening theoretical and political training in order to understand the transformations of contemporary capitalism and to equip activists with the analytical tools essential to interpreting the world as well as to transforming it. Contributing to the development of the struggles of the working class, women, youth and the entire popular classes, while linking daily struggles to the strategic perspective of overcoming capitalism, remains a central task for all those who campaign for an ecosocialist, democratic and emancipatory society.

The editorial staff of the newspaper *Almounadila socialist* warmly thanks all the educators, participants and all those who contributed to the success of this initiative. It reaffirms that the Socialist Days are part of a long-term process aimed at deepening theoretical and political training, strengthening militant capacities and bringing the project of revolutionary socialism to life at the heart of social and popular resistance.

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **Unprecór**.*