



## IVP610 - November 2025

# Towards the General Strike in Portugal - Only the strength of those who work can halt the labour package

30 November 2025, by [Toupeira Vermelha](#)

While some proclaim the death of capitalism, in Portugal it remains very much alive. With the State on its side, capital uses technological pretexts and innovation to reorganise the capital-labour relationship in its favour.

No rhetoric of “modernity” or the “digital economy” can conceal the true plan. The attacks on labour rights are clear and undeniable. Proposals to extend working hours, normalise precariousness, facilitate dismissals, and attack time for social reproduction (rest, holidays, health, parenting, leisure) unequivocally aim to shift the balance of power in favour of employers. But to achieve this aim, it is also necessary to restrain workers’ forms and capacities for organisation, as well as the tools of struggle they mobilise. Thus, the package introduces various measures designed to weaken workers’ collective strength, undermining collective rights, the framework and security of collective agreements, and the very right to strike.

This attack is not new: it follows on from the neoliberal policy of devaluing labour implemented during the Troika period. That policy was partly contained by the Socialist Party governments (2015-2019 - the “geringonça” [1]; 2019-2023 - PS minority government) which, despite

restoring some rights, were unable to reverse the trajectory of labour devaluation set in motion during that period.

### **Maximum minimum services: emptying the strike, emptying the struggle**

The measure that seeks to broaden the interpretation of minimum service obligations during a strike is a clear attack on the most important instrument of workers’ struggle. The proposal to expand minimum services to more sectors is practically a way of abolishing the right to strike. [2] With this labour package, the strike - the tool that gives force to the fight for dignified and full employment - becomes mere performativity: the appearance of a right, but without material strength.

Workers are also left without material strength in the face of measures that reinforce the expiry of collective agreements, that is, mechanisms that favour employers by allowing them to terminate collective labour contracts more easily. This change gives employers greater tools to split and

divide workers and to use non-unionisation as a weapon of management.

### **Normalising precariousness: the return of lives on hold**

On the front of attacks against contracts offering stronger safeguards, and in addition to those targeting collective bargaining agreements, several proposals deepen and broaden precariousness, particularly affecting people working on digital platforms. [3] The package also seeks to extend the duration of fixed-term and uncertain-term contracts and to multiply “atypical” arrangements (intermittent work, temporary work, etc.), thus making it harder to obtain a stable employment relationship. These measures aim to ensure a more “efficient” management of labour from the employer’s perspective and to restore the employment contract as a permanent disciplining mechanism. It marks the return of the precariousness policy pursued by Pedro Passos Coelho, where lives are kept on hold.

The way in which this labour package brings back coercive instruments over

work is closely linked to measures aimed at hindering workers' self-organisation. By facilitating dismissals, the measures foreseen in the labour package encourage forced competition among workers, distorting existing forms of solidarity. With the PSD-CDS labour package, it becomes easier for employers to get rid of workers and replace them with outsourcing and impoverished subcontracting. By removing restrictions on hiring external companies after collective dismissals and limiting the possibilities of effective reinstatement after unlawful dismissal, capital is handed tools and legitimacy to exploit labour without restraint.

## **Eight hours' labour, eight hours' recreation, eight hours' rest**

Another attack targets the working time, which is central to workers' lives and has long been an arena of historic struggle. With the new labour package, we are faced with proposals that aim to extend working hours, directly attacking reproductive time and political participation. Stretching the working week to nearly fifty hours, concentrated in peaks of work when it suits the company, pushes workers into a regime where rest, family life, and health are subordinated to the volatility of business and markets. Furthermore, proposals to reduce overtime pay or to generalise flexible working-time banks empty the very concept of supplementary work. "Flexibilisation" conceals a single goal: to provide capital with tools to better manage its accumulation process, stripping workers of power and control over their own time. Taking advantage of the plasticity of human labour, the company decides, and the worker adapts.

It is therefore no surprise that the package also targets rest time. Holidays and pay are undermined, encouraging the commodification of time for social reproduction. Holiday time becomes treated as a privilege rather than a right - a right won by

the workers' movement after 1974.

The possibility of exchanging holidays for money is, in reality, a response to structurally low wages: those who cannot make ends meet are pushed into giving up rest to fill the gaps. If wages were sufficient, there would be no need to trade rest for income. Through contractual means, the Government is cutting wages outright. If wages are insufficient, it is not because workers have "too much holiday": it is because employers accumulate more.

## **Those who defend the family do not destroy the time needed to build it**

There is also a glaring contradiction in this labour package. A Government that presented itself as "family-friendly", heir to Pedro Passos Coelho's discourse on birth-related rights, now promotes attacks on parenting and on work-life balance. They claim to want higher birth rates, yet in practice they make parenting more expensive by increasing, through various reforms, the emotional, physical, and organisational costs of having children. They claim to support work-life balance, yet they reinforce flexible scheduling mechanisms used primarily to serve employers' interests. They claim to value motherhood and fatherhood, yet they have used these rights as bargaining chips in negotiations.

It is therefore important to expose this contradiction, which also serves as a strategy for the Government in managing negotiations. By putting extremely aggressive proposals on the table, the Government and capitalists know that these will become the focus of negotiations and are prepared to withdraw them to present the final result as a "balanced compromise", tying workers' struggle to the negotiating table. But even if many of these measures fall, the essential remains: more working time under capitalist control, widespread precariousness, hollowed-out strike rights, greater expiry of collective

bargaining agreement - all meaning less time and availability for personal, family and political life.

## **Negotiation without strength is not enough: long live organisation in the workplace!**

Faced with a labour package of this nature, it is not enough to pressure the Government at the negotiating table. Workers' autonomous action in their workplaces must be strengthened. A negotiating table will only be strong for workers if it reflects the real strength of organised workers. Only a movement of workers with capacity and autonomy, rooted in the everyday life of each company and service, can transform a general strike into a process of confrontation and reversal of this offensive.

The PSD/CDS labour package, besides being a profound attack on wages, time, stability, and workers' rights, is also a moment of defining the future of work: either we accept that the future is decided in offices and social-concertation forums, or we enforce a bottom-up "no", with collective capacity and organised strength to stop these attacks. It is this persistent and rooted workers' struggle that gives weight to the negotiating table and can prevent this offensive from passing into history as "inevitable".

A Toupeira Vermelha therefore joins the mobilisation efforts for the general strike on 11 December 2025.

26 November 2025

*In Portuguese [Toupeira Vermelha](#).*

## **Footnotes**

[1] "Geringonça" was the informal designation given to the left-wing governing arrangement in Portugal that supported António Costa's first government from 2015 to 2019. It was a parliamentary agreement between

the Socialist Party (PS), the Left Bloc, the Communist Party, and the Greens, which enabled the PS to govern as a minority with their support.

[2] The government's proposal expands the obligation to provide minimum services during strikes to several new areas, adding schools and nurseries, care homes and social-care institutions, food-supply services, and private

security activities to the sectors that must remain partially operational, alongside the already established essential services such as health, transport, and utilities.

[3] The proposed labour package is likely to affect many more people working through digital platforms by making it harder for them to be recognised as employees. Instead of strengthening the presumption

that platform workers should have employee rights, the reform raises the threshold for that recognition, meaning many couriers, drivers and other gig-economy workers may continue to be treated as self-employed. As a result, they risk remaining without guaranteed minimum wage, paid leave, social-security protection or regulated working conditions, leaving a large and growing group of workers in a more precarious position.

## Mamdani's Victory: what way forward to build the US socialist movement?

29 November 2025, by [Kay Mann](#)

Mamdani won on a program of radical reforms with an anticapitalist dynamic that spoke directly to issues of affordable housing, transportation, and childcare, and openly identified as a Democratic Socialist, Muslim, pro-Palestinian immigrant. He also defends immigrants at a time of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) terror raids and declining public support for Trump. There was tremendous enthusiasm in working class and immigrant neighborhoods for the campaign. Some 104,000 volunteers mobilized to campaign door-to-door. This includes 11,000 members of New York City Democratic Socialists of America (NYC-DSA) which endorsed his candidacy. The mass grassroots character of the campaign and its pro-immigrant character made it part of the broad anti-Trump movement that has seen three huge nationwide anti-Trump mobilizations over the last few months. The latest demonstration on October 18 brought out seven million people.

Mamdani ran as the Democratic party candidate after having defeated two discredited politicians in the DP primary. Former governor Andrew Cuomo, who was forced out of office following revelations of sexual harassment, ran as an independent in the general election. Current mayor Eric Adams who faced corruption charges, was finally politically bailed

out by Trump. In the general election he faced Cuomo and Republican Curtis Sliwa, the well-known vigilante who ran on a platform of hiring 7,000 more cops. Mamdani's victory was part of a wave of Democratic victories throughout the country, including several DSA members at a time when Trump is sagging in the polls.

While some have presented Mamdani's victory as an upset, he was favored by all pre-election polls. The upset occurred when he won the DP primary. While Mamdani faced opposition from many Democratic party power holders (Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer and former president Barack Obama did not support him), he also benefitted from endorsements from some Democrats including centrist New York governor Kathy Hochul.

Mamdani's campaign, victory, and prospects for implementing his program face a fundamental contradiction. He won the election on the basis of his progressive program. Having been elected on the DP ticket with DP resources and some endorsements, he will face huge pressure from within the DP to temper his program. Governor Kathy Hochul has already indicated that she would oppose the sharp increases in taxes for the super-rich that Mamdani correctly argues would be necessary to implement his program.

The considerable opposition that will come from the DP establishment, real estate interests, and the billionaires who Mamdani intends to tax to fund his program, points to the necessity of a mass movement to push for implementation of that program, and the grassroots dimension of the campaign points to the potential to build such a mass movement. Mamdani, however, has surrounded himself with advisors from nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and seems to be building a top-down organization, rather than a democratically controlled movement to realize his program.

### Independent political action for the working class and its allies

Mamdani's election will invigorate the debate in DSA and throughout the US left on the efficacy of using the DP ballot line to win office, the so-called "dirty break" as opposed to the "clean break" of running independent socialist campaigns outside of the Democratic party.

Proponents of the clean break argue that the Democratic party is a party of the 1% that is controlled by

billionaires and cannot be transformed into a vehicle for socialism. They oppose running or endorsing candidates as Democrats and call for independent socialist campaigns where possible. Most supporters of the dirty break agree that the DP is unreformable and consider use of the Democratic ballot line as a tactic. While DSA and other socialist candidates have won elections like Mamdani has, it is difficult to see how an independent socialist organization can be built with such an orientation.

The political situation in the US today including the growing anti-Trump resistance seen in at least three massive "No Kings!" demonstrations since April 5, polls showing Trump's loss of support among his own base, and successful campaigns like Mamdani's, point to the real possibility of building an independent mass socialist movement in the US. But the energy will be absorbed and

wasted if socialists run as Democrats.

There is evidence that independent socialist campaigns rooted in the mass movement can win elections today. Last April Alex Brower, co-chair of Milwaukee DSA, won a by-election for a city council seat with endorsements from DSA, the Green Party, and the revolutionary socialist organization Solidarity. He ran an energetic campaign as an open socialist on a radical program including municipalizing the local power company, and support from a small army of DSA and other volunteers to decisively beat a liberal, progressive Democrat. Although this was a non-partisan election, Brower's victory as an open socialist and the mass democratic character of his campaign indicate that successful mass socialist campaigns can be waged and won. Brower also founded and leads a mass organization called Power to the

People that is based in DSA that aims to municipalize the local power company. Although Milwaukee is not New York, and a city council seat is not the mayoralty the combination of mass and electoral anti-capitalist socialist politics seen in the Brower campaign represents the way forward for US socialism.

In their own ways, the Mamdani and Brower campaigns and the growing anti-Trump, anti-ICE movements point to the potential for socialists to attract enthusiastic working class and oppressed community support to contest and win elections and build a vigorous mass socialist movement that can chart a socialist alternative to Trump's neo-fascism and the Democrat's neo-liberalism.

27 November 2025

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## From progressive decline to reactionary advance in Chile

28 November 2025, by [Karina Nohales](#), [Pablo Abufom](#)

The election results of Sunday, November 16, clearly demonstrate the magnitude of the right-wing victory. In the presidential election, the right-wing bloc garnered 50.3% of the vote, distributed among José Antonio Kast (23.9%, Partido Republicano or Republican Party), Johannes Kaiser (13.9%, Partido Nacional Libertario or National Libertarian Party), and Evelyn Matthei (12.5%, Chile Vamos or Let's Go, Chile).

At the same time, the right wing is consolidating its majority in Congress. Of the 155 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the sector already aligned with Kast holds 76, compared to the 64 held by the left and centre-left. In the Senate, the right-wing bloc controls half of the seats.

If we take into account that the Partido de la Gente or Party of the People (PDG) won 14 seats in the Chamber, everything indicates that

the right wing in government will be able to form a parliamentary majority capable of reaching even the 4/7 needed to promote constitutional reforms.

In this context, the traditional right wing —the Unión Demócrata Independiente or Independent Democratic Union, Renovación Nacional or National Renewal and Evolución Política known as Evópoli or Political Evolution, grouped in the Chile Vamos coalition— ends up aligning itself behind Kast after an internal dispute for the leadership of the sector and after suffering a resounding defeat. Their presidential candidate came in fifth, behind all other right-wing candidates; the bloc went from 12 to 5 seats in the Senate and from 52 to 23 in the Chamber of Deputies, and one of the coalition parties was dissolved.

Far from any policy of "cordon

sanitaire" —such as those implemented by liberal-conservative sectors in other countries to isolate the far right—in Chile the traditional right maintains historical and organic ties with Pinochetism. This connection explains its rapid subordination to Kast's leadership in the current political cycle.

Meanwhile, the official candidate Jeannette Jara —nominated by the Unidad por Chile or Unity for Chile pact and from the Communist Party— won by a narrow margin in a campaign that, despite being the only progressive candidacy, was not a left-wing campaign. The 26.7% she obtained fell short of the expectations generated by her position as Minister of Labour and even below the 38% that supported the 2022 constitutional proposal.

It is true that Jara faced an adverse scenario: an unfavourable

international situation, the strain of being part of the ruling party at a time of widespread challenge, and the weight of an effective anti-communist narrative. But it is also true that neither the government nor the candidate developed a policy aimed at confronting the extreme right. On the contrary, in sensitive areas such as migration and security, they chose to appropriate part of the narrative and programme of their adversaries. She also made no attempt to distance herself from the persistent neoliberal consensus that all institutional forces have embraced since the defeat of the constitutional proposal in October 2022, beginning with Boric's own government. This is one of the clearest expressions of the far right's advance: it not only persuades the electorate but also manages to impose its political agenda across the board.

The surprise from the first round of the presidential election was the 19.7% obtained by Franco Parisi, candidate of the PDG, a party that appeals to the aspirations of middle sectors through a combination of monetary populism, securitised xenophobia and crypto-digital rhetoric against corruption and the "privileges" of public officials. Although all the polls placed him fifth, he finished third, ahead of Kaiser and Matthei. In his third presidential bid, Parisi tripled his 2021 vote and won the most votes in all four northern regions, a key mining area marked by a widespread anti-immigration agenda due to its border location through which migrants from the rest of the continent enter. Parisi has thus become the main source of votes that Jeannette Jara will try to capture, something she made explicit in her speech on the evening of Sunday, November 16.

Initial analyses show a marked territorial division of the vote. A report from the Faro UDD think tank shows that Parisi triumphed in the "mining north" (regions of Arica, Tarapacá, Antofagasta, and Atacama), Jara obtained a majority in "central metropolitan Chile" (Metropolitan and Valparaíso Regions, as well as the far south of Aysén and Magallanes), and Kast dominated in the "agricultural south" (O'Higgins, Maule, Ñuble, Biobío, Araucanía, Los Ríos, and Los

Lagos).

This fragmentation is also socioeconomic. A particularly critical piece of data for the government candidate is that her performance in low- and middle-income municipalities was worse than in high-income ones, a trend opposite to that of Kast, whose vote increased in lower-income municipalities and fell in wealthier ones. These differences are even more significant when you consider that voting was mandatory in the election and had a participation rate of 85% of registered voters, the highest since 1989.

Another relevant fact for the scenario that opens up for the second round and for the next government is that, of the 25 parties legally constituted at the time of the election, 14 are to be dissolved under the Political Parties Law, which requires a minimum of 5% of the votes in the last election of deputies or, alternatively, obtaining at least four elected parliamentarians in two different regions. Of the 14 parties that will disappear, 8 are left-wing, 4 centrist, and 2 right-wing. The result is conclusive: after this election, all left-wing parties outside the governing coalition are legally dissolved. One of the causes of this debacle is the inability to build a unified list in an electoral system—based on the D'Hondt method—that rewards pacts and severely punishes dispersion, since the most voted lists attract candidacies that, even with equal or greater individual support, are left out if they compete in isolation.

Political processes—including electoral ones—have a direct impact on collective emotions, and today that impact is expressed in a strong disillusionment within the left-wing forces. We also know that the social and electoral rise of the far right is not an exclusively Chilean phenomenon. It has occurred with Bolsonaro in Brazil, it is happening with Milei in Argentina, and in the United States with Trump. This present moment demands that we learn from the experiences of the people and left-wing movements that have already weathered the reactionary advance from within the government. Not all trajectories are the same, but

internationalist dialogue is a necessary condition for understanding the tasks that lie ahead in the next political cycle and in the face of the most likely governing scenario.

In the immediate future, with the second round of the presidential election on December 14th approaching, it is worth asking whether the margin by which Kast may win is irrelevant or not. Calling for a vote for Jara means explaining why we do so even while holding a deeply critical view of her and her milieu, and why we do so even knowing that it's an election that will likely be lost. It's not that difficult: after all, a policy of radical transformation almost never starts under favourable conditions, and yet we persist in it.

The first political task of this situation is to deploy an anti-fascist pedagogy that reaffirms the importance of putting all our vital forces into preventing the most extreme version of the programme of exploitation from being imposed without counterweight and without resistance. It is essential that those who feel discouraged today can consciously come together for shared reflection and a call to resume organising and mobilising. To build a broad base of opposition to the future far-right government, it matters how one loses: it is necessary to lose with one's head held high and with the greatest possible strategic clarity.

The recovery of our strength along with the construction of a response to the crisis from the point of view of the working class—in opposition to both emboldened fascism and bankrupt progressivism—will require serious programmatic work, which must be developed within the collective action of popular movements, and not only in progressive think tanks or from opposition parliamentary benches. Faced with the conservative, authoritarian, nationalist, patriarchal, and capitalist program of the Chilean right, popular movements will have the responsibility to become the first line of defense and the main trench from which to organise a counter-offensive.

*November 18, 2025*

# Political instability in France: act before it's too late

27 November 2025, by [Elsa Collonges](#)

The class struggle today resembles a blend of the late nineteenth century and the 1930s more than anything we've experienced in the last five decades. We must build a united front, both to rebuild the class for itself and to combat the rise of the far right—that is, to combine elements of clarification with a unifying political approach. The historical and theoretical achievements of our political current constitute tools that we must now collectively appropriate, update, and implement.

While global economic growth is halved compared to the 1960s, it is divided by six in Europe and France is expected to barely reach 0.8 per cent this year, according to the latest forecast from INSEE. [1]

## Economic crisis, debt and massive transfer of public money to the private sector

The mechanisms previously used by European capitalism to maintain its profit rates are ineffective today, whether one considers increasing labour productivity or expanding its imperialist sphere. Other mechanisms are therefore being implemented, with less efficiency and a high social cost for the working classes.

To maintain the profitability of capital, the French state has carried out a massive transfer of public money in recent years. According to a report by ATTAC France covering the period 2018-2023, reductions in levies (social security contributions, taxes, etc.)

represent more than 300 billion euros cumulatively, contributing nearly 35 per cent to the increase in France's debt.

Regarding public aid paid to businesses, a Senate inquiry commission estimates it at over 211 billion euros for the year 2023 alone. The public finances union of the *Solidaires* federation estimates illegal tax avoidance at over 80 billion euros

These estimates completely contradict government narratives that systematically attribute this debt to soaring spending and the supposedly overly generous "French social model." This disagreement over interpretation masks a major ideological issue and lies at the heart of the social conflicts surrounding social security in recent years.

Meanwhile, this increase in debt and the government's difficulties in balancing a budget have led to the downgrading of France's rating by various rating agencies, a downgrade which in turn fuels economic instability and the increase in the cost of debt.

## Crisis of French imperialism, industrial crisis and the race to war

In the context of the global crisis, access to energy and mineral resources is a major issue. Whether in the Middle East, Asia, or Africa, the desire for control and the reorganization of imperialist powers

are exacerbating tensions, with terrible consequences for the people, whether in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, or the DRC, to name just a few. China's growing industrial and technological influence is pushing both the United States and the countries of Western Europe to their limits.

In France, despite the financial support businesses are receiving, they are struggling to stay afloat. Today, probably more than half a million jobs are disappearing, while the country already has over five million unemployed. The few job "rescues" achieved through reallocation to the military sector, such as at the Brittany Foundries or Renault, will not be able to stem the tide, unless there is a much more significant shift towards a real war economy.

Faced with the crisis in mass industrial production and fierce international competition, the military and defence industry is one of the solutions currently being considered by imperialist powers. The trend towards rearmament was already underway in France, as the defence budget had increased from 32 billion to 50 billion (excluding pensions) between 2017 and 2025. Macron's target of 3.5 per cent of GDP allocated to military spending would represent a very significant increase of around 40 billion euros.

## Transfer of the global crisis into the political sphere

Contrary to what we are being led to believe, it is not the political crisis that

is destabilizing the French economy. On the contrary, this political crisis is the direct consequence of the crisis of capitalism, of the fierce desire of the wealthy to seize ever more of the wealth produced, and of the contradictions at work within the bourgeoisie regarding the means of achieving this.

France is one of the European countries where the working classes remain significantly structured. The defeats accumulated over the last three decades weigh heavily, but the fact that they were conceded only after hard-fought battles has maintained a level of awareness and combativeness that has considerably weakened the political power of the state.

As Macron nears the end of his second term, he has exhausted the image of a centrist manager. This is primarily because the policies implemented over the past decade have clearly revealed his political leanings, and secondly because each political party hopes to gain an advantage by distancing itself from his record.

## **A real risk of the far right coming to power**

The rise of racist, particularly Islamophobic, and security-focused rhetoric since the 2001 attacks paved the way for the National Front, now known as the National Rally. While the right wing is obviously on the offensive regarding these issues, a segment of the left also contributes to the spread of these repugnant ideas through security-driven and/or protectionist/nationalist rhetoric. The decline of anti-racist and internationalist movements, linked to the disillusionment of a significant portion of the racialized population with the institutional left, is a serious problem.

Capitalizing on the despair generated by the social situation, the National Rally achieves significant scores among the working classes. But in recent elections, it is primarily a broadening of its social base among

the middle classes that has been observed. At the same time, a number of top executives no longer hide their sympathy for far-right ideas, and these executives are gradually extending their influence in the media through various acquisitions.

From the perspective of the growing influence of the far right, we are in a context that is reminiscent of the 1930s.

## **A fractured left**

On the other side of the political spectrum, the revolutionary far left is extremely fragmented and, to a large extent, inward-looking. Being part of the New Popular Front (NFP) during the June 2024 legislative elections allowed the NPA-L'Anticapitaliste to disseminate a radical message on a broad scale, while other far-left organizations were rendered completely invisible due to their incomprehensible stance regarding the threat of the far right coming to power.

As for the larger forces, the unity of the NFP did not last, and the institutional left finds itself once again fractured between a weakened social-liberal pole—embodied primarily by the Socialist Party (PS), which is willing to make significant compromises to maintain its institutional positions—and La France Insoumise (LFI), which appears as a very radical force in a context of declining social consciousness. It is LFI that today overwhelmingly channels the aspirations of the most politically aware segments of the working class. However, its actual grassroots activism remains weak in proportion to its electoral scores, and institutional illusions are very strong among its activists and supporters. Moreover, the lack of democratic structure is a significant obstacle to the expansion of this force. LFI is currently the only political force capable of initiating mass mobilizations, but its approach, by maintaining its absolute hegemony, prevents their development and hinders grassroots unity and the possibilities for self-organization.

## **Massive and regular social battles , but ultimately defeated**

After the compromise of the so-called Trente Glorieuses [2]- a period that was ultimately quite short in history - the oil shock and the structural crisis quickly led the bourgeoisie to develop a strategy to regain the offensive. The 1980s and 90s saw the dismantling of large concentrations of workers and the development of new management methods that individualized employees. Attacks multiplied to reduce the "cost of labour": wage cuts, attacks on socialized wages, lay-offs, increased workloads, etc.

From 1995 to 2023, successive governments have consistently sought to destroy our social protection system in order to regain control of vast amounts of socialized money that are slipping through their fingers, but also to throw millions of people into the arena of the working world who should have been receiving unemployment, sickness, or retirement insurance.

Millions of workers took to the streets to defend our pension system, but apart from the partial victory of 1995, all subsequent battles ended in defeat. The weakness of the strikes, particularly in the private sector, and the difficulty in initiating rolling strikes in significant sectors, weighed heavily on the outcome. The strategies of the trade unions did not help, but they also reflected the decline in class consciousness and organization, and a lack of confidence in our own strength due to a lack of experience in achieving victories.

Militancy and radicalism exist, as seen with the Yellow Vest (GJ) movement in 2019 and also in many sectors of the labour movement, as well as in youth, working-class, feminist, and environmental mobilizations, which are increasingly forging links with the traditional labour movement. But in all cases, the self-organization of these mobilizations has not been enough to

make up for decades of setbacks. On a positive note, distrust of trade unions is generally declining, thanks both to the experiences of mobilization and to the unity they have achieved in recent times.

This aspiration for unity remains extremely strong, both in the trade union and political spheres. It is based on the understanding of the necessity of unity within our social camp in order to win, and is all the stronger because the level of awareness and militancy does not encourage the less combative organizations to move beyond strategies of compromise.

## **A strategy to rebuild class consciousness**

Faced with the wait-and-see attitude of workers and the timid strategies of inter-union groupings, the temptation is strong to rely on the most radicalized sectors to stage demonstrations. However, history showed repeatedly throughout the twentieth century that there are no shortcuts and that only the building of mass struggles capable of paralyzing the economy allows for significant progress. Whether in 1995 (mobilization for Social Security and pensions), 2003 (alignment of public and private sector pensions), 2010 (again, the fight for pensions), or during the youth mobilization against the CPE in 2006, genuine frameworks for self-organization existed at various levels—frameworks that were unfortunately much weaker in the mobilizations that followed. The emergence of social media and digital communication methods contributes to this disaffection with traditional workplace discussion and decision-making frameworks. While they allow for much faster and wider dissemination of information, they also foster an individualized, debate-free relationship with that information and make attending meetings optional for accessing it.

The decline of self-organization structures makes it difficult to share experiences and therefore to identify concerns and demands that

strengthen mobilizations and unify sectors. Solidarity, determination, and collective anger are reinforced by the enthusiasm of shared moments in general assemblies, around picket lines, even more so than in marches. Extending a strike depends primarily on the energy of a general assembly, and without it, it is very difficult to prolong a 24-hour strike.

Self-organization frameworks also allow for progress, harmonization, and alignment with the level of awareness, even during periods of rapid change. These periods have crystallized in recent years around political or democratic issues such as the 2019 women's pension reform, the use of Article 49.3 to pass the pension reform by decree in 2023, and the violent state repression during the Yellow Vest movement. Self-organization frameworks enable a shared understanding of the capital/labour conflict on a broad scale, allowing it to be translated into concrete demands and also clarifying the confrontation with the state apparatus that defends the dominant classes.

Therefore, bringing sectoral demands to the fore and building self-organization are essential tasks for revolutionary activists .

For our class to regain confidence in its strength, it is essential that it once again experience victorious struggles, even partial or local ones, but significant on a mass scale. From this perspective, the retreat of the Lecornu government, forced to postpone the implementation of the pension reform, should be an encouragement to press our advantage against an illegitimate and greatly weakened government.

## **Building the social and political front**

The mobilization this autumn began immediately with very broad and political slogans: rejection of the budget presented by Prime Minister François Bayrou and the omnipresent chant of "Macron out!" The government's resignation and the institutional crisis that lasted several weeks partially disarmed the

movement, due to a lack of concrete demands in the absence of a concrete budget and an enemy to oppose. The challenge now is to engage with the movement where it stands, that is, not solely focused on a specific demand like "withdrawal of the reform," but on a broader understanding of the issues and a direct confrontation with the current government. Indeed, behind the demand to withdraw Bayrou's budget lay not only the refusal to work two extra days, but also the defence of public services and social security, as well as opposition to the increase in the defence budget.

This maturity of the movement should not, however, make us forget the difficulties, in a context of a severely deteriorated relationship of forces. First and foremost, we must absolutely not underestimate the threat of the far right coming to power. We must understand how this weighs on the dynamics of the various organizations: the ongoing realignments on the right, the fear among some on the left of a shift towards the far right should the National Assembly be dissolved, the reluctance of the inter-union alliance to exacerbate the crisis...

This compels us to be extremely clear about our political stance. The unity of our social camp against the far right is a crucial issue for the vast majority of the population, and particularly for people of colour, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, activists, and others. We must lead the fight for this unity as the most radical wing, which we did by participating in the June 2024 legislative elections. The current divisions within the left and the electoral calculations of various parties raise concerns that, should the National Assembly be dissolved, the far right will this time find no obstacle to its rise to power. The rejection of the government's motion of no confidence has postponed this deadline, but it is urgent that we focus our efforts on this battle.

## **Maintaining a revolutionary**

## perspective in a difficult context

Beyond these immediate challenges, as a revolutionary organization, we are reflecting on the forms that workers' contestation of the established power could take, and what political and organizational crystallizations could allow our class to make significant progress. Indeed, these efforts are rapidly being pushed and pulled between, on the one hand, a rejection of all organizations and a contestation of power within the framework of the system, and on the other, a strong subservience to union leadership or reformist political apparatuses. This is why we advocate a workers' government, a government of rupture that implements the demands of the social movement, formulating the foundations of its programme based on the reality of the current movement. The objective is to bridge the gap between mobilizations

and anger against the system and the need to formulate a political perspective, which the masses essentially concretise from an institutional point of view. This is also why it is crucial to link the slogan of a government of rupture with radical, even anti-capitalist, demands on wages, the requisitioning of banks, the sliding scale of working hours, the opening of borders, etc.

In the context of a mass mobilization that would genuinely challenge the governing parties, presidentialism and the functioning of parliamentary assemblies, we must at the same time popularize the slogan of a constituent assembly, rejecting the Fifth Republic and questioning all the foundations of society, while being concerned that this slogan does not serve to canalise the upsurge of the masses into the institutional field and that it finds an echo in the mobilized circles, that it strengthens the political dimension of self-organization.

In any case, the reconstruction of a comprehensive, eco-socialist political project is on the agenda, something worth fighting for, something that breaks with defeatism and allows our class to dream again of better days and to draw strength from that to fight!

*October 24, 2025*

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## Footnotes

[1] INSEE is the French national statistical institute.

[2] the term "Trente Glorieuses" is commonly used in France to describe the post-1945 expansive wave of the economy and the social gains that characterised it.

# The Unity List remains Copenhagen's largest party

26 November 2025, by [Jonathan Simmel](#)

On Tuesday, 18 November, elections were held for municipal and regional councils in Denmark. International media have already described the 'battle for Copenhagen,' where the Social Democrats lost the mayoralty for the first time in 123 years.

In the last election in 2021, the Unity List became the capital's largest party with 24.6% of the vote. This contrasted with the historically large Social Democratic Party, which had fallen to 17.2%. At that time, the Social Democrats got away with just a scare and were still able to take the mayor's office with support from the left.

In August 2024, the Prime Minister announced a government reshuffle and appointed the former Social Democratic mayor of Copenhagen as a new minister. Instead, Pernille Rosenkrantz-Theil (former Member of

Parliament for the Unity List) resigned as minister to become the Social Democrats' new top candidate in Copenhagen. The hope for the Social Democrats and the Prime Minister was that a more well-known Social Democrat would be able to revive the party in Copenhagen.

Meanwhile, opinion polls were moving in the opposite direction, and a clear picture was once again emerging with the Unity List as Copenhagen's largest party. And with the support of the Alternative (Green Party) and the Socialist People's Party (reformist socialist party), we were close to achieving an absolute majority together.

The Unity List clearly stated that if we became the largest party and the 'red bloc' could form a majority, we would field a candidate for mayor of Copenhagen. The Socialist People's

Party then made the same statement. Several opinion polls showed a very close race, and the longer the election campaign went on, the more panicked the Social Democrats' rhetoric became. For example, they sent a letter to all Copenhagen residents with a brief presentation of their own candidate and clear warnings against the policies of the Socialist People's Party and the Unity List.

The Unity List has also been treated harshly in the conservative media, a clear sign that certain groups felt threatened by our successes. Denmark's second largest tabloid newspaper, BT, published articles against the Unity List almost daily. Everything from our leading candidate Line Barfod's participation in the Moscow Festival in 1985 to previous cases of support for Palestine, Line Barfod's private housing situation and,

three days before election day, an article about the Unity List wanting to introduce 'Marxist training' in the party, which was interpreted as anti-democratic with references to the Soviet Union. A good example of the attitude of the media and the Social Democrats when the left threatens their power.

Unfortunately, it did not quite work out, as the left to the left of the Social Democrats only won 26 seats, two seats short of a majority. However, the Unity List remained the largest party with 13 seats, followed by the Socialist People's Party with 10 seats.

Since the Social Democrats have refused to nominate anyone other than themselves, the parties 'around' them

have formed a coalition across the right and left wings, with SF as the new mayor, thus pushing the Social Democrats out in the cold after 123 years as mayor of the country's capital.

But the really big news is actually in the rest of the country and at the national level. Here, Copenhagen is just one example of the Social Democrats' decline.

The Social Democrats are losing ground in 86 of 98 municipalities, with a total of 5.2%, but they are still the country's largest party with a total of 23.2%. However, the message is clear, and they are losing the mayoralty in a number of Denmark's larger cities, including 'classic Social Democratic cities'. Part of this is, of course, due to

local politics, but the results clearly reflect the national political scene, where the Social Democrats chose to form a majority government with two bourgeois parties in 2022. All three of these parties are experiencing a sharp decline. Unfortunately, it seems that voters are largely turning to right-wing parties. There has thus been an overall shift to the right on the political scene.

The Unity List largely maintained the status quo, with a few new municipalities and a few lost municipalities, a total decline of 0.2% to a total of 7.1% of the votes.

20 November 2025

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [Internationalen.se](https://www.internationalen.se).

## Six Lawmakers Tell U.S. Troop: Don't Obey Illegal Orders

25 November 2025, by [Dan La Botz](#)

While they did not say why they made this video at this time, it is clear that it was prompted by two recent developments. First, since June, President Donald Trump has been sending troops to American cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Portland Oregon to repress protests, over the objection of mayors and governors who have sued in the courts, arguing that US law prohibits the military from acting as domestic law enforcement. And second, since September the U.S. military has destroyed 22 boats and killed at least 83 people supposedly for drug smuggling. In clear violation of U.S. and international law, these people were never tried, and no evidence was presented; these are clearly murders on the high seas.

President Donald Trump called for the arrest of the six legislators saying that they were guilty of "sedition, punishable by death." He added "Each one of these traitors to our Country should be arrested and put on trial." Many were outraged by his remarks, leading him to say he had been

misunderstood and didn't want them killed..

Many people, including some veterans, were angry at Trump's remarks. In fact, the U.S. military tells troops during training that they have the right to refuse and must refuse illegal orders that violate the law or the Constitution.

The U.S. military has a long bloody history of egregious violation of human rights. During the Indian Wars of the late nineteenth century, the U.S. military carried out the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864 and the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890, where hundreds of non-combatant men, women, and children were murdered. U.S. troops in the Philippines killed hundreds of civilians at Bud Dajo in 1906. During the Korean War, in 1950 in No Gun Ri, South Korea U.S. troops murdered over 150 men, women, and children. In 1968 during the Vietnam War, Lt. William Calley ordered troops to kill unarmed civilians in the village of My Lai who then murdered 300 unarmed civilians, women, children, and the

elderly. In 2005, U.S. Marines killed 24 unarmed Iraqi civilians, including men, women, and children, in Haditha.

International law forbids the military killing of civilians in war, yet we see it go on daily by Israel in Gaza and by Russia in Ukraine. If the U.S. should attack Venezuela, as seems possible given the massing of U.S. massing of ships, planes, and troops near that country, it is practically inevitable that civilians will be bombed or shot. Unless soldiers refuse to do so.

Critics of the Democrats who made the video argue that it is too hard for ordinary troops, for corporals or privates to know whether they are committing a war crime. And if they refuse to drop the bomb or to pull the trigger, that they could be subject to military discipline. But soldiers don't have to understand international law or the uniform code of military justice to know that murdering unarmed men, women, and children is wrong. They have only to think about their own families and communities and look into their own hearts.

The six Democrats by making their video have challenged Trump and they have done a great service to our

country, to those in the military, and to those at home or abroad who might be victims. This too forms part of the growing, complex resistance

movement.

23 November 2025

## Britain - difficulties and opportunities...

24 November 2025, by [Veronica Fagan](#)

There is no doubt that there is a desperate need and a major opportunity to build a radical left organization with an activist presence in workplaces and trade unions as well as at the ballot box. The polycrisis devastating every corner of the globe with so many tentacles - environmental, economic, and social, further deepening existing inequalities - is playing out in its own ways in Britain - and indeed with different particularities in Wales, Scotland and England.

So if the sign ups show the opportunity, there is also a huge responsibility to develop ideas and ways of organising that improves the balance of forces for the working class in its most inclusive sense. The contribution that Your Party will make to these developments is not determined - and the responsibility of revolutionaries as always is to contribute collectively the lessons we derive from other attempts at home and abroad to tip the scales in the favour of the global majority

### Polarisation to the right

Following the general election in July 2024, after 13 years of a Conservative government at Westminster, overseeing deepening poverty and inequality, Labour under Keir Starmer took their place. The crisis-ridden Tories lost the election rather than Labour winning it; though both Starmer and much of the mainstream media proclaimed it as a Labour landslide.

Few people, particularly on the radical left had many expectations of positive results from Starmer's government. ACR's Dave Kellaway explained that

the manifesto on which Labour fought the election "is underpinned by an ideology that slavishly accepts the status quo as a model for organising the economy, the welfare state, and the government. Rather than generating hope for real change, it is imbued with pessimism about what we as working people can achieve, assuming the gods of the market and capital cannot be even minimally challenged. It even rejects a traditional social democratic vision of public ownership, taxation, and redistribution." But few predicted how far to the right the new administration would shift.

The July 2024 elections saw other notable developments. Nigel Farage had already made a major political impact with his reactionary nationalist Brexit Party winning a majority of seats at the European elections in June 2019 and campaigning for a no deal Brexit. They did not win seats at the 2019 general election but gained a great deal of airtime and pushed other parties to the right.

After Britain left the European Union in January 2020, in 2021 the Brexit Party rebranded as Reform UK. Anti-migrant policies and rhetoric are at the centre of their platform but alongside that is opposition to cutting carbon emissions, to vaccines and to lockdowns during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, slashing public spending - particularly but not only programmes that promote equality and inclusion. Farage is very much in Trump's ambit and has also increasingly aped the nativist rhetoric of the American far right.

This reactionary bile together with a number of own goals has had a significant effect on the deeply divided Conservative Party leading to electoral success with the election of five Reform MPs in July 2024. Combined

with high profile defections from the Tories to Farage's party, this trajectory has deepened so that now Reform now also has one member in the Scottish Parliament, one member in the Welsh Senedd (their national assembly with less powers than the Scottish Parliament) two members of the London Assembly (a body with little power) and control of twelve local councils. Reducing so-called waste - often by closing down any programmes which particularly support the most marginalised whether it be targeted at disabled people, at the LGBT+ community, at women and/or at racialised and migrant communities alongside general antimigrant propaganda has been at the centre of what they do and say.

Creeping or even galloping fascism has not only been driven by Farage himself and his friends in the United States but also by a related but partially separate movement under the leadership of a man who calls himself Tommy Robinson but is actually called Stephen Yaxley-Lennon. Yaxley-Lennon has been a member of a number of explicitly fascist organisations a long criminal record and a particular focus on whipping up Islamophobia,

The summers of both 2024 and 2025 saw the far right whipping up vicious attacks on migrants housed in hotels as well as making propaganda against those crossing the channel in small boats. In 2004, false rumour were spread that the perpetrator of the appalling Southport murders a few weeks earlier was a Muslim asylum seeker. It was extraordinary that no one died in the riot at the Tamworth hotel which was probably the worst incident.

In 2025, the summer was again the

focus for such far right and fascist mobilisations with the notion of 'protecting our women and girls' (meaning of course white women and girls) added to the themes of the previous years. Yaxley-Lennon has form on this subject - showing interest in questions of violence against women and girls only where alleged perpetrators are Muslims and the survivors are white. Protests against migrants also took place in parts of Scotland where such mobilisations had not previously occurred and politicians across the political spectrum and communities themselves have tended to be more welcoming of immigration.

Reform and Conservative councils in England and Wales - and in one case even a Labour administration - threatened action against the Westminster government using planning regulations to claim that no migrants should be housed in hotels. People sent to these hotels are often sharing rooms with others they don't know and don't always have a common first language have almost no disposable income and no choice about where they are sent. They are painted as scroungers living in luxury when they are denied the right to work. Divide and rule rhetoric disgracefully is coming from not only the far right right but from a significant number of Labour politicians too.

Another aspect was the development of Operation Raise the Colours, where the union jack and sometimes the flag of the relevant single country - Wales, Scotland or England - were tied to lampposts and in some cases painted on mini-roundabouts. These were particularly prolific in the same areas where the hotel protests were the largest and most long lasting. In at least some areas there were an increasing number of racist attacks in the same places - for example in my own area a football team of Chinese women were subject to racist aggression from a group of teenagers . The culmination of this so far at least was the largest far right demonstration in Britain's history called by Yaxley-Lennon under the banner of 'Unite the Kingdom' attended by over 150,000 at which Elon Musk spoke via video link and

called for a change of government. Chilling - and a real challenge to the radical left .

## Labour's further shift to the right

Meanwhile the response of Starmer's government was to speak and act as a hostile to migration as possible. There are more instances of this than space here to cover in detail but one of the most notorious was Starmer's speech in May 2025 in which, heralding the publication of a new immigration White Paper, he spoke about Britain 'becoming an island of strangers' - a phrase deeply reminiscent of that used by the racist Enoch Powell in 1968. It beggars belief that neither Starmer nor any of his team, all of whom has since claimed they didn't know its origin. Even if that were true, nothing justifies either that formula or anything else in the speech. And now, Labour has announced that it will introduced further extremely restrictive measures in the next few days to some extent inspired by the deeply reactionary Danish model - selling the same as coming from the centre left and therefore not toxic....

Labour is not only ceding ground to the far right on migration, it's also on economic questions. In opposition, Starmer and other prominent Labour figures had championed women who had lost out when the age at which they could draw their state pension had been raised without proper notice, trapping many in unanticipated poverty. In office, they turned their backs on them - though there are rumours that this could change shortly . One of the vicious attacks carried out by the Tories was the introduction of the two child benefit cap in 2017 meaning that families with more than two children didn't get means tested benefits for the third or subsequent child. This not only forces more families further into poverty but is deepening and manipulating divisive images of the undeserving poor. Starmer opposed scrapping the cap in opposition but in 2024 Labour said it would scrap the cap 'but only when the 'fiscal situation permits.' They not only signalled this was some way off but threw seven Labour MPs who

supported an opposition amendment to do so then out of the Parliamentary Labour Party. As we move towards next week's budget, amongst the many rumours swirling around is the idea that the cap will be raised to cover up to three children - rather than scrapped altogether as it should be.

Labour has been attacking disabled people. In Britain today because of low wage rates and weak trade unions many people in work - including full time work - are entitled to benefits in addition to their wages. At the same time the failure of employers to make adjustments to enable people with particular impairments to work and to implement draconian absence policies have forced increasing numbers of people out of waged labour and into dependency on benefits. But faced with a spiralling benefits bill, Labour did not seek to pressure employers or to strengthen antidiscrimination legislation but yet again to scapegoat the marginalised. Their initial plans to cut government expenditure were pushed back by a significant campaign by disabled people with some support from parts of the trade union movement and some rebellious Labour MPs (who again lost the whip for their principles.)

Meanwhile Labour came into office 9 months into the genocide in Gaza and essentially continued the Tories support for Israel. British arms sales have some military impact but even more significantly send a strong political message of which side the Westminster government is on. There has always been a relatively strong Palestine Solidarity movement in Britain but this has mushroomed significantly since October 7 2023. In the face of mass protests in September 2024 the new government did suspend some key export licences but this was more for show than to make any decisive step.

Further Starmer's government has been extremely repressive against protestors. The crackdown was initially cranked up against environmental protestors but has also targeted the Palestine solidarity movement. Two particular features merit mention. The first was the arrest of a number of prominent protestors -

-including a holocaust survivor - at a peaceful march in central London in January 2025 following the complaints reactionary Zionists that the march was going to near a synagogue - ignoring the large prominent Jewish Bloc on our march. Even worse was the decision to proscribe the direct action organisation Palestine Action in June and the subsequent arrest of more than 2000 protestors for silently holding signs decrying the ban.

All of this is taking place in the context of a rising cost of living initially brought about by the Tories but with little or no remedial action from Labour which allows the political space for divide and rule politics trumpeted by the far right but to often echoed by other mainstream parties to fester.

## Developments on the Left

While there is no doubt that the centre of political gravity has moved significantly to the right over the last eighteen months, other developments make clear that there is space and support to the left of social democracy.

The Green Party of England and Wales issued a press release on October 19 that it was now the third largest party in the UK overtaking the Conservatives for the first time - having previously surpassed the Liberal Democrats. Zack Polanski had been elected as the new party leader in September on an explicitly left populist platform. Polanski, who has been a member of the London Assembly since May 2021 won against a joint candidacy of two of the party's four MPs elected in July 2024, Adrian Ramsay and Ellie Chownes with policies way to his right. Not only did the Greens win more MPs than ever in 2024 but their percentage of the vote was higher - and greater than the four seats tend to suggest in Britain's deeply reactionary First Past the Post system for Westminster elections. It was clear that the party had a rigorous system of prioritisation of campaigning in areas where they thought they had a chance of success.

Their membership had been growing for some time but it is Polanski's election that developed a real spurt with a doubling of the figures. The internal election campaign allowed people to vote who joined the party up to the deadline - and there is no doubt that activists from the environmental and Palestine solidarity movements, including those who had joined Labour to back Corbyn, were a significant part of Polanski's support base. In recent weeks some opinion polls have shown the Greens ahead of Labour, second only to Reform.

Two parallel mistakes are being made by parts of the radical left in reaction. Sectarianism towards the Greens claim they are a petit bourgeois outfit - without clarifying whether this is a sociological description or a critique of their policies and praxis - and should be dismissed not only on the electoral front but as participants in key social movements and workplace organising that needs to be promoted as a crucial part of our response to the shift to the right, . On the other some other activists, frustrated with some of the own goals and lack of urgency from Your Party centrally are not only putting all their personal energies into the Greens - a fair enough choice - but dismissing as sectarian those of us who raise criticisms of their record in office including as the largest group on Brighton council where they implemented cuts.

Alongside the growth of the Green Party, the 2024 general election saw other left developments too. Jeremy Corbyn, MP for the north London seat of Islington North had resigned from the leadership of the Labour Party after the 2019 general election defeat and was replaced by Keir Starmer. In 2020 he was suspended from the Parliamentary Labour Party after the allegedly downplayed the extent of antisemitism inside the Labour Party. Following an unsuccessful campaign to overturn this, Corbyn finally announced he would stand as an independent in the general election which had been called by then-gaining the support not only of a large number of local activists including long standing Labour Party members but mobilising many campaigners across Britain and further afield to come and work for him. The result

saw Corbyn take 49.2 per cent of the vote and a 7000 majority.

The success of Corbyn's campaign was partly on the basis of his political ideas : opposition to austerity and support for migrants and for Palestine but also because he is a widely respected local representative with a personal support base broader than his politics. But he was not the only person to be elected as an independent MP in 2024.

Three other candidates were elected as independent MPs Adnan Hussain, Iqbal Mohamed and Ayoub Khan. Only Khan, who was previously a Liberal Democrat councilor, had any previous political experience, But in a situation where the campaign against the genocide against the Palestinian people was mobilizing huge numbers and this was a central part of each of their stances this allowed their elections. However though it was good to have people elected on the basis of support for Gaza, it's far from clear that on many other issues their political views are that progressive.

This also tied into other developments before the general election and before it where candidacies came forward in different parts of England against Labour candidates at parliamentary and at council level. Some of these candidates had previously been elected for Labour but were now blocked by the machine, some were successful at council level and a number had credible campaigns even where they were not elected.

## Own goals from whose party?

This is the context in which Your Party was launched by Zara Sultana the day before Labour had been in government at Westminster for a year. The following day Corbyn announced his involvement - but ever since there have been a series of media stories of arguments between the two. It's hard enough - as well as desperately depressing - for militants in England, Scotland and Wales to follow and analyse all the problems that have arisen since and imposing these on an international audience doesn't make sense.

Never the less two main headings need mentioning even if only to sketch the main features in outline:

- **The initial political programme is vague with major omissions and ambiguities.**

Four documents have been drafted in advance of the founding conference of which the political programme is by far the shortest at 263 words (1700 characters with spaces!).

There is no sense of urgency in the text - no mention of the the rise of the far right and hardly any of the environmental crisis. There are positive aspirations but no specific measures or demands that could concretise those hopes.

There is lack of clarity about how much Cymru/Wales and Scotland will have independent structures. Branch offices run from London will not cut it - not only amongst those central to the independence currents in those countries but more generally amongst young people.

No lessons seem to have been drawn from other examples of parties to the left of social democracy globally which have foundered through inadequate understanding of the need for political independence be it in Brazil, Greece or in the Spanish State. Yet in all those cases those defeats strengthened the radical right as well as demobilised thousands of activists

who felt they had been marched to the top of the hill - and then abandoned by their supposed leaders.

This lack of political clarity cannot in the end be separated from questions of democratic functioning - as the latter is the best guarantee that mistakes can be righted. This is why ACR has submitted both an alternative political statement and constitutional amendments to the founding conference .

- **There is no transparency**

The initial announcement of the organisation was July and the conference is in late November and no ongoing structures have been put in place in the interim. Attendees at the Liverpool event have been selected through a lottery system known as Sortition (with some unspecified weighting to include the most marginalised), With less than two weeks to go it's unclear what decisions will actually be taken then and which will go out to plebiscite afterwards.

It's true that setting up a democratic system of delegates for such a large numbers is challenging - no venue exists which could hold all of us for example. So i can live with the idea of Sortition at this stage but is more problematically it is being offered as a permanent part of the structure, That suggests it's a legitimate option not an

inevitable stop gap A system with no accountability, no basis of recall, can't be part of a democratic structure.

And although 'proto-branches' have been set up in many localities these haven't been resourced from the centre. Without access to lists of those who have signed up centrally, inevitably those involved are the already organised and known to each other. In some places rival groups, each dominated by a different left group have developed.

Further to the major issues outlined here, there have been a whole series of negative stories both in the mainstream media and on social media with prominent figures associated with the project either announcing they are withdrawing or criticising each other or the way things are being run in public. Inevitably all of this means some of those who signed up initially those months ago have drifted away. Some have joined the Greens which is not so bad but some have almost certainly dropped out of politics.

Despite all these difficulties, it would be completely irresponsible for revolutionaries not to be involved in this process and straining every muscle to ensure the best possible outcome.

*19 November 2025*

## Ukraine Faces an Unbearable Choice

23 November 2025, by [Oleksandr Kyselov](#)

As speculation mounts about another Trump-brokered peace plan for Ukraine, much of today's debate feels like déjà vu. There are the same denunciations of "vested interests" in the conflict, the condemnations of warmongers, and the cries for "urgent talks." In Ukraine, we didn't just hear these arguments. We made them ourselves.

In summer 2014, after Russia annexed Crimea and the war in Donbass was already flaring, activists from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus issued a "New Zimmerwald" declaration criticizing

the surge of chauvinism and xenophobia in their countries. They called for a broad antiwar movement, an immediate ceasefire, and mutual disarmament. Ukraine's newly formed Sotsialnyi Rukh (Social Movement) echoed that spirit in 2015, advocating direct negotiations involving trade unionists and rights defenders from both sides, and the disbandment of security agencies. It was a genuine attempt at internationalist peace — and it failed.

None of it stopped Russia's aggression in 2022. Yet Russian leftists, apart

from a brave minority, again retreated into pacifist formulas, blaming the war on both sides and pointing fingers at NATO, Boris Johnson, and the "neo-Nazi oligarchic regime in Kyiv." Ukrainians, under fire, had no such luxury. They resisted the occupying troops, and too many have already lost their lives.

The Left internationally, when not limiting itself to short boilerplate statements, largely oscillates between instinctive revulsion at injustice and the desperate plea for peace. But can either be a guide to action?

## The Price of Justice

There is no shortage of people denouncing any compromise with the Kremlin as downright betrayal that would set a precedent of rewarding aggression. In absolute terms, they are right. Yet justice always comes at a price: if not for the activist demanding it, then for someone else.

Ukraine's resources are stretched to breaking point. Defense spending in 2025 has [reached](#) \$70 billion, exceeding domestic tax revenues. The budget deficit [hovers](#) near \$40 billion, and continued foreign aid is not a given. The cost of reconstruction has already [climbed](#) over half a trillion dollars. Public debt [stands](#) at \$186 billion and keeps rising.

Almost two-thirds of Ukrainians [expect](#) the war to last for more than a year, and experts [agree](#). President Volodymyr Zelensky [underlines](#) that his country would need all available support to fight the Russian army for another two to three years. At the same time, Ukraine's Armed Forces are strained not only by shortages of arms and munitions but also by dwindling manpower.

Over 310,000 cases of desertion and absence without leave have been [registered](#) since 2022, with more than half occurring in 2025. Many soldiers who left [cite](#) exhaustion, psychological unpreparedness for extreme combat intensity, endless deployments, and corrupt commanders treating them as expendables. Some are ready to return once conditions improve, but only a fraction [did](#) so under the amnesty.

More than half of Ukrainian men [say](#) they are ready to fight, but a million and a half still haven't [updated](#) their military records. After recruitment was introduced in 2024, only 8,500 [volunteered](#) in a year. Even offering \$24,000 in sign-up bonuses for the one-year contracts to the youth [failed](#) to attract many. Once travel restrictions for eighteen-to-twenty-two-year-olds were eased, nearly one hundred thousand men [crossed](#) the border in the first two months, many to leave [for good](#).

The grim reality is that Ukrainian

resistance relies on "busification" — forcibly seizing men from streets or workplaces and pressing them into military service. The Ombudsman has [acknowledged](#) that these abuses are now systemic. Even so, Ukraine's Supreme Court has [ruled](#) that mobilization remains legally irreversible, even when carried out unlawfully. Meanwhile, social media feeds ever more often feature violent clashes with draft officers.

The public mood mirrors this fatigue, and recent graft scandals involving the President's closest associates hardly help. Polls show that sixty-nine percent now [favor](#) a negotiated end to the war and nearly three-quarters are [ready](#) to accept freezing the front line, even if not on Russia's terms. Ukrainians continue to insist on security guarantees, which for them include arms deliveries and EU integration.

The dream of "fighting to victory," no matter what, ignores these limits. Unless Western "unwavering support" includes a readiness to open a second front, what should we expect? The logic of desperation points towards lowering the draft age, extending the military duty to women, deporting draft-age Ukrainian refugees from abroad, to fill trenches, and then introducing barrier troops and field executions to prevent desertion.

## The Pacifist Illusion

This bleak situation is not merely a domestic failure. It reflects the exhaustion of carrying the heaviest burden alone — and of fighting tooth and nail for material support from those who think that strong condemnations and humanitarian aid are enough to stop Russia's invasion. The harder it gets, the more tempting it becomes for some abroad to imagine that the struggle itself must be the problem.

Hence the idea that Western arms only "prolong the suffering," and that cutting this lifeline to Ukraine would push it to accept "necessary concessions." It's a comforting illusion built on flawed rationale. If words

alone could end oppression, then strikes and revolutions would have been replaced with eloquence contests.

The arms deliveries do not block diplomacy but are what allow Ukraine to even participate in negotiations. President Zelensky has signaled his openness to [talks](#) and even to [hard decisions](#). But only a side that can stand its ground can negotiate on equal terms. To disarm Ukraine would be forcing it to yield. Moscow knows this and exploits contradictions to sow confusion and divide the ranks.

The Kremlin has repeatedly [rejected](#) a ceasefire, making it clear that it is only interested in Ukraine's effective capitulation. Even if Russia's maximalism is partly bluff, a "frozen" conflict or even Ukraine ceding Donbass would not indeed "address the root causes" of the war, as Vladimir Putin alleges. Moscow has secured its land bridge to Crimea but lacks the resources to seize the rest of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts that it also claims. Ukraine will never recognize losses, even if formally forced to. The resentment will cement Russia as an eternal enemy, creating potential for another outbreak of conflict.

Putin's own maxim — "If the fight is inevitable, strike first" — makes the next step predictable, looking at the map. A push toward the Russian outpost in Transnistria would trap Moldova, secure the Black Sea corridor and strangle what remains of Ukraine's maritime trade, while also delivering Odesa, once a Russian imperial jewel, central to the mythology of the "Russian Spring."

For European states to abandon Ukraine would bring no détente. New NATO members Finland and Sweden abandoned neutrality precisely because of Russia's new way of "resolving disputes." Five countries [withdrew](#) from the Ottawa Treaty landmine ban in 2025 for the same reason. Poland's military spending is on track to [triple](#) since 2022, and the Baltics are [racing](#) toward spending 5 percent of GDP on defense. Watching a neighbor dismembered by a former overlord wouldn't soothe but drive them to arm further.

## Blind Spot

Moscow's December 2021 ultimatum [made](#) its ambitions clear: NATO must withdraw to the 1997 borders and recognize a Russian sphere of influence in central-eastern Europe. The demand sounded absurd until the shots were fired in February 2022. But Putin's blitzkrieg against Ukraine failed, and he [holds](#) "European ruling elites" to blame.

No one expects Russian tanks reaching Berlin. But the Baltic states, squeezed between Russia and its militarized exclave in Kaliningrad, fit the pattern. Former imperial provinces, which separate Moscow from its territory on the coast, are a tempting target. The rhetoric about "nonhistoric nations" plagued by Russophobia is already in place.

Should the Kremlin decide to [bridge](#) the Suwalki Gap — the narrow strip of Polish and Lithuanian territory between Kaliningrad and Russian ally Belarus — amid another round of Western infighting over sanctions, energy policy or common defense strategy, who would risk World War III?

Somewhere along the way, parts of the Left lost the ability to distinguish resistance from militarism. By treating NATO's expansion as the cause of the war — and thereby finding a cure in its simple rollback — antimilitarists quietly concede that vast regions beyond Russia belong to its "natural" domain.

The core question is, If Russia gets to settle historical grievances and address "legitimate security concerns" by force, why can't others? The actual victory for the military-industrial complex would not be shipments to Ukraine or even the rearmament programs, but a Europe in permanent

crisis, where every border becomes contestable and defense spending spirals without end.

## Resentful Revisionism

The real threat is not Ukrainian nationalism. It is neither uniquely sinister nor more chauvinist than that of any small state under siege. Even those most affected by the war are more often concerned with surviving the missile strikes and drone attacks. This doesn't imply an approval of nationalist mythmaking. But fixating on the excesses of Ukraine's cultural policies is a convenient distraction, an excuse to relativize aggression and distance oneself from what's really at stake.

What we face now is a militarizing, expansionist petro-empire cloaking resentment in talk of "historic justice," draping its neotraditional revival against the "decadent West," and willing to use any means to claim its "rightful place in the world." This politics of resentful revisionism isn't unique to Moscow, but echoes from Washington to Beijing, and must be confronted before any talk of disarmament becomes meaningful.

Li Andersson, a former chair of Finland's Left Alliance, has already called for an anti-fascist foreign and security [policy](#). She rejects the illusion that fascism can be reasoned with, accepts building EU states' defense capabilities and strategic autonomy as a precondition for peace, and upholds international law as a mechanism of prevention against authoritarian subversion.

It is, as Andersson argued, high time to offer a credible alternative in debates on security that neither

surrenders to militarized neoliberalism nor fetishizes purity. The far right is surging in the polls, and defense budgets are swelling while social spending, climate adaptation, and development aid are slashed. Yet, the problem here is the elites who are exploiting this crisis to push this agenda, not Ukrainians for refusing to bow in subservience to Putin.

Resisting this course means insisting on two things. First, resilient social institutions and robust public infrastructure are as essential to withstanding shocks and those who can use them as weapons. Second, economic democracy, political inclusivity, and public control make any cause worth fighting for in the first place. As lessons from Ukraine show, without these, any talk of standing together is a [sham](#).

## No Ready-Made Solution

Everyone wants the war to end, yet no one has a ready-made solution — perhaps there are none. We owe each other the honesty this moment demands. Anything short of Russia's full withdrawal from Ukraine is profoundly unjust and outright dangerous, but an uncompromising pursuit of justice can also bring us to the point of no return.

Survival itself — enduring as an independent nation despite Putin's history lectures — is already a victory for Ukraine. But the story won't end there. Greedy states attack not because they are provoked, but because they can do so. Stopping them will take more than moral force.

21 November 2025

Source: [Jacobin](#).

## Notes on the historic rise of the far right in

# Britain

22 November 2025, by [Thierry Labica](#)

On 13 September 2025, a demonstration called by a notorious figure of the English fascist far right, Tommy Robinson (Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, his real name) brought together between 110,000 and 150,000 people in London. By its scale, unprecedented in Britain, this event marks a threshold of the audience of the far right — its mobilizing themes and affects — and of the fascist resurgence on an international scale.

Among the various factors and temporalities to be taken into account, one thinks of the historical trajectory of some twenty years in which the episode is part and comes to be a milestone: the racist focus on immigration owes little to the representatives of the far right itself and much to the violence of political and media discourse and to an ever more aggressively “hostile” legislative inflation for about fifteen years. It should be made clear from the outset that Labour’s responsibilities in this area from the end of the 2000s onwards were immense. Then we think of the political situation, both national and international, of which the demonstration of 13 September is a crystallisation: the deep crisis of the forces of the historic two-party system (Labour and the Conservatives), the audience for the far-right Reform UK led by Nigel Farage and Richard Tice, and the centrality of the Palestinian question and the genocide, against a backdrop of uninterrupted social degradation.

But to begin with, an overview of the personnel assembled and its main themes — as predictable as they may be — seems necessary. We will then draw attention to some, at least, of the material conditions of the event; the forces and resources which determine its possibility, the figures, and which define its content and expression.

Placed under the banner of “freedom of expression,” in other words, pluralist and democratic common sense, the event brought together a

number of factions of the British far right, but also European, Australian, and American. The participants were able to hear speeches by Elon Musk and Éric Zemmour (accompanied by Jean Messiha), but also Petr Bystron for the AfD, and the Dutch Christian far rightist Eva Vlaardingerbroek (one million followers on X, more than 390,000 on Instagram and present on Fox news, GB news, and the online outlets of the far-right Sweden Democrats party, among others).

Also invited were the New Zealand Pentecostal Christian fundamentalist Brian Tamaki, convinced that the pandemic of 2020-22 or Hurricane Gabrielle were so many divine punishments for our wanderings away from God, between pornography, gay rights and abortion; the Israeli-Australian Avi Yemini, a former member of the Israeli army, a notorious provocateur who during a demonstration against the imprisonment of Robinson in 2018, declared himself “the world’s proudest Jewish Nazi”, Ezra Levant, founder of the Rebel News website and known as the “Canadian Steve Bannon”, and the British Katie Hopkins, regularly spotted alongside Robinson, a once-familiar mainstream media personality for whom asylum seekers are “cockroaches” while “our towns are festering sores, plagued by swarms of migrants and asylum seekers, shelling out benefits like Monopoly money”. Other characters of a similar kind, from Spain, Belgium, Ireland, or Denmark, were invited to offer their contribution.

## The ideological matrix of the far right

Tommy Robinson, who initiated the 13 September demonstration, has become the focal point of this vast ultra-conservative and fascist movement nourished by a powerful victimhood imaginary whose

martyrology now reserves a central place for him. Far from having been disqualified and marginalised by his past as a hooligan, a member of a notorious neo-Nazi organisation (British National Party from 2004 to 2005) and then the founder of an ultra-nationalist and Islamophobic organisation (English Defence League, EDL, from 2009 to 2013), Robinson has achieved the status of an exemplary incarnation of a victim of the system. A cheeky character of modest origins, abandoned by his father at the age of two, he has seen his rich career as a repeat offender (between expulsion from social networks for incitement to hatred and five prison stays for passport fraud, obstruction of justice, assaults, possession of drugs, mortgage fraud) turn into a title of bravery and glory in the face of the evil that is both oppressive and occult of a “system” whose crimes he is now revealing.

According to this version of things, the government is repressing freedom of expression (“free speech”) in order to prevent its role in the “great replacement,” “uncontrolled immigration” and the extinction of “Western civilization,” “the Islamization of our societies” and the threat of generalized “jihad.” A nightmarish vision concentrates the horror of this secret exterminatory logic of which “we” are the despised and ignored victims: “the rape of our daughters” by migrants accused not only of sexual assault on minors, but even worse, of organizing networks (grooming gangs) for the sexual exploitation of minors.

It is worth dwelling, even if too briefly, on this motif of “rape” (“of our daughters”). To begin with, there is an old panic in the face of racial mixing propagated by the non-white, savage and insatiable foreigner — many women, many children — who are incompletely civilized and, in fact, have remained in a more or less anomic state of nature and destructive of our norms. This fantastical character of the most classic racist

imagination, proto-animal and presumed to be chronically overnumbered, would supposedly migrate to enjoy without limit or scruple the largesse of a national-social state to which he would never have contributed. While the brave and loyal taxpayer accepts various privations (and must be content with the distant promise of enjoyment dangled by a huge pornographic industry, from the front pages of the daily press with a large circulation), the migrant profiteer is then guilty of the general "civilizational collapse."

It should be noted that neither Robinson nor Musk, nor Zemmour, nor Bystron, manage to refer, even in a cosmetic and opportunistic way, to which concrete social dimension of the problem could be displaced on the "civilizational" terrain. Typically, this is a case of fantastical avoidance and recoding of a truly terrible reality; the systemic neglect and abuse of millions of children in the United Kingdom, most often suffering in the silence of words they do not have, the impoverishment of all protection, care and follow-up structures, and exposed to a whole repertoire of sexual abuse and violence, a dark continent of which the dedicated organizations claim to perceive only the small emergent area. [1]

This imaginary of "rape" (and all its dark charge of repressed appetites) is thus that of a primitive jouissance at the origin of the "civilizational" collapse to which "multiculturalism" is working. It goes without saying that it remains — and must remain — disconnected from any issue of male domination, criticism of patriarchy and gender violence in order to be recoded against critical feminist thought (domestic, sexual and sexist violence — including rape — feminicide, socio-sexual relegation or the violence of child poverty that befalls millions of "our daughters" never seem to have the same rank as a mobilizer of affects here — and in truth, here do not exist, or no longer exist, at the end of what bears the features of a sadistic voyeuristic erotic reconfiguration that also seems to presume a certain fatality of rape in the last instance).

In this perspective, the

"multiculturalist" left, feminists and anti-racists, as soon as they question the protective authority of fathers, brothers and husbands (over "our daughters"), and as soon as they defend the rights of migrants, are attributed a direct responsibility in the "social, moral and civilizational disaster". Or, to quote Robinson in his video "The Rape of Britain: Part One": "No country in the world is unaware that our government, our social services, and our police forces are sacrificing a generation of our daughters at the hands [sic] of the altar of multiculturalism [...]; There are still young girls, in every city and every big city, who are taken from us, taken from their mothers, as sex slaves at the hands of Islamic gangs." This same motif can be found almost word for word in the intervention of Petr Bystron, of the AfD, and his defence of "our struggle" in Europe "for 2000 years": "We don't want our daughters, our sisters, to be raped. We don't want our brothers, our friends, to be stabbed when they defend them."

Elon Musk, in giant screen version, "clarified" the fundamental problem in his own way: "what I see happening here is a destruction of Britain, initially a slow erosion but rapidly increasing erosion of Britain with massive uncontrolled migration. A failure by the government to protect innocent people, including children who are getting gang raped. It's unreal."

For Musk, "there's so many on the left that want to just crush debate and put people in prison just for talking, as you [Robinson] were, just for speaking their mind." And in addition to how "the government did nothing and tried to hide it — they tried to hide these horrific crimes" there's the violence of the left, designated as responsible for the assassination of Charlie Kirk three days earlier in the United States: "The left is the party of murder and celebrating murder. I mean, let that sink in for a minute. That's who we're dealing with here."

We understand then, if it were not clear enough, that it is against the "woke mind virus" and its logic of "cancelling" terror (to "prevent debate and put people in prison") that the

banner of "free speech" has been unfurled, as a perfect This is evident after several years of generalized anti-woke political and media moral panic, and three days after the assassination of Charlie Kirk, attributed to this same "murder party".

In the conclusion of this exchange, Musk confirms Robinson's idea that the left is the occult force capable of controlling governments, and of organizing mass migrations from which it would then draw electorates that it would otherwise be unable to gather among the "authentically" national populations. "There's a massive incentive on the left to import voters. So, if they can't convince their nation to vote for them, they're going to import people from other nations to vote for them... thus depriving the citizens of their democratic power. It's really a voter importation thing."

Here, more or less term for term, we find the classically anti-Semitic conspiracy imputations — but for someone who uses the Nazi salute, this cannot really be surprising — directed by the Hungarian far right against George Soros in 2017: Soros, the liberal "Jewish financier" supposedly working for the dissolution of national identities by putting his fortune at the service of a vast manipulation of migrants to Europe. This same motive, always accompanied by the quick but explicit reference to George Soros, is at the heart of a long interview offered on the far right and ardently pro-Israel GB News channel.

It should be remembered that this same victimhood of the "invasion" is the one that animated the neo-Nazi perpetrator of the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre in October 2018 (eleven dead). For the killer, Robert Bowers, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) was responsible for the arrival of Central American migrants and "evil Muslims," which "likes to bring in invaders who kill people from here. I'm not going to stand by and watch my people being slaughtered." The delusional justifications for the mass killings perpetrated by Anders Brevik in Norway in 2011 on young left-wing activists (71 dead) and by Brenton Tarrant in a mosque in New Zealand in 2019 (51 dead), were no

different.

## The origins of British racism

We can remain brief on the origin of these rhetorical figures and motifs. They have a long tradition in the history of ethno-nationalist paranoias. But above all, they have a history of recent and incessant activation by the political forces of the British two-party system over the last twenty years. In this respect, and as has already been indicated, Labour social democracy has left behind a uniformly toxic legacy since the 2000s, between the validation of the neo-Nazi British National Party's "just concerns" in terms of the allocation of social housing and the lexicon of the "invasion" and "submersion" of the schools by the children of migrants and asylum seekers. This language has been promoted by ministers (Labour Home Secretaries) in office. In 2010, Labour's election programme devoted a section to "crime and immigration: strengthening our territories, protecting our borders" to prepare "the next stage of national renewal". In 2015, the merchandizing of the party's conference offered mugs with the inscription: "Controls on immigration: I'm voting labour".

This endless catalogue of nationalist and racist one-upmanship reached a new critical threshold when the Labour prime minister since June 2024, Sir Keir Starmer, a staunch Zionist and avowed supporter of the Palestinian genocide, hastened to express the first tribute to the American racist ideologue, Charlie Kirk. It should be noted that the condolences of Starmer and Kemi Badenoch (leader of the conservative opposition) also focused on the question of "freedom of expression" in the name of which openly racist and sexist remarks and the obscurantism that inspires them must have their place in the public debate (which cannot be applied to denunciations of the genocide and Palestinian solidarity, as we have had ample opportunity to understand).

In the aftermath of Kirk's death, and on the eve of the "freedom of speech"

demonstration called by Tommy Robinson, Badenoch declared: "The murder of Charlie Kirk is a blow to everything that Western civilization stands for: open, vigorous debate and peaceful protest." For Boris Johnson, Kirk was nothing less than "a shining martyr for freedom of expression."

Three weeks later, Badenoch announced the "hardest border closure plan Britain has ever seen," which included withdrawal from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the repeal of the Human Rights Act of 1998.

In this way, in Britain, the various shades of the far right can continue to content themselves with continuing and prospering the work of political formations that have long been hegemonic and are now both in the grip of a crisis of legitimacy of unprecedented gravity. The debt is therefore great to the Labour-Tory tandem, its multi-recidivist anti-foreigner legislation, its attacks on civil liberties, its "anti-woke" moral panic, its genocidal complicity and normalization.

This is perfectly reflected, among other things, in the mediocrity of these far-right propagandists. The exchange between Robinson and Musk, the interventions of Zemmour or Bystron have no rhetorical charm, not even the slightest danger, even, of any rhetorical charm. In this respect, 13 September carries with it the possibility of a pleasure in a nullity of which the imaginary of the "rape of our daughters and our sisters" could be an attempt at correction as sordid as it is desperate. At this point, perhaps it should be admitted, rhetorical brutality devoid of the slightest sophistication, of skill, is sufficient as a manifestation of the sheer desire for the use of force, while the Trumpist ICE militias, the fascist exaltation of Israeli genocidal power, or the giant riots and rabbles in Britain and now Ireland, show the future.

## Tech, fossilism,

## armaments, Israelism and the heyday of neofascism

The rise of the British far right manifests itself in two obvious ways. The demonstration of 13 September is one of them; the considerable lead in opinion polls for Nigel Farage's anti-immigration Reform UK party is another. Between Robinson and Farage is the false contradiction and the real complementarity that can exist between a delinquent-martyr who has long had no party other than his own online brand, and a notable determined to fit into an institutional framework within which he can claim to embody a majority succession.

The first, Robinson, won the support of Musk, who himself broke with Trump, to the detriment of the second, the billionaire having judged Farage too "weak" on the issue of immigration.

The official far right is now divided between Reform UK (Farage) and Advance UK, a split from Reform UK led by Ben Habib, joined by Robinson since August 2025. But at this stage, their nuances can be considered minor in view of the scale and continuity of the forces now engaged in supporting this new political configuration.

Robinson, whose audience and wealth are linked to social networks and his sales of "manifest" books, owes Musk for having regained his "freedom of expression" on a new X account, owned by Musk, whom he also thanked for the payment of legal costs (not confirmed by Musk himself).

But it is to Israelism, among the most fanatical, that the former British neo-Nazi, converted into a "free speech martyr", frenzied Islamophobe and unconditional admirer of Israel (for which he has declared himself ready to fight in the event of war), owes a large part of his prosperity.

His sentence to thirteen months in prison for illegally filming and posting on Facebook the trial of Muslims accused of sexual assault (hence the

banner of “free speech” against a woke justice system won over to the “migratory invasion”), earned Robinson an international far-right campaign “Free Tommy” (relayed by many Russian accounts as well as by Trump himself), with the support of the pro-Russian right,

Israeli-American Daniel Pipes’ ultra-Zionist Middle East Forum (MEF) paid for the legal costs and the organization of three demonstrations in support of Robinson at a cost of \$60,000.

The Gatestone Institute, a pro-Israel think tank, and the David Horowitz Freedom Center, a far-right organization that describes itself as a “school of political warfare” against “the fifth column,” have published articles in defence of Robinson. In addition, the Gatestone Institute and the MEF both benefit from the largesse of Nina Rosenwald, co-president of a financial investment firm (American Securities Management), who claims to be an “ardent Zionist” and is known as the “sugar mama of anti-Muslim hate.”

Earlier, tech billionaire Robert Shillman, a regular donor to pro-Israel institutions, hired Robinson by the Canadian far-right organization Rebel Media in 2017-2018, awarding him a scholarship estimated at around \$85,000 per year. This position was also accompanied by three assistant posts, each paid \$2,500 per month. Robinson’s personal estate is estimated to be somewhere between £1 million and £3 million.

In October 2025, the verdict of a new trial was postponed following the official invitation extended to Robinson by the Israeli minister in charge of the diaspora and speaker of the Knesset, Amichai Chikli. There are many precedents of this kind, dating back to 2003 and the reception given by Ariel Sharon, then Prime Minister, to the neo-fascist Gianfranco Fini, an admirer of Mussolini and the apartheid wall then being built around the West Bank. However, the arrival of an influencer with no other title than that of an ex-Islamophobic hooligan is clearly a departure from the diplomatic decorum that was once de rigueur. The initiative, however, has

sparked anger and incomprehension in Israel itself, and even in British Jewish community organizations, which are usually so loyal to Israel.

## What place for Reform UK?

What about Reform UK and its leading figures? Farage, honorary chair, and Richard Tice, leader of Reform UK (which, unlike the other parties, has private company status), have distanced themselves from the “thug” Robinson. But like Robinson, Farage and Tice are the devoted and utterly servile relays of forces more determined than ever to do without standards and constraints that are far too cumbersome (fiscal, legal, environmental and so on), however weak or cosmetic they may be.

Farage (wealth estimated at between £3 million and £5 million) and Tice (£40 million and a tax-avoiding patriot), two authentic men of the people, both have their own programme on the conservative and Islamophobic channel, GB News, launched in 2021. In this context, both had plenty of time to challenge the reality of climate change, “absolute garbage,” according to Tice.

With this deep conviction, and for the good of all, the leaders of Reform UK defend the exploitation of Britain’s gas potential, knowing that “we’ve got potentially hundreds of billions of energy treasure in the form of shale gas,” according to Tice. It would then be “grossly financially negligent to a criminal degree to leave that value underground and not to extract it.”

Combining actions with words, Reform UK MPs, in council assemblies where they have won a number of majority positions since the last local elections, decided to repeal carbon neutrality targets and eliminate references to the “climate emergency” that have been integrated into the orientations of such assemblies in recent years. Budgets were then reallocated to other priorities, while continuing to receive subsidies earmarked for energy transition policies. Recently initiated guidelines and policies in the counties of Durham, Staffordshire,

Kent, Derbyshire, and West Northamptonshire have been annulled.

But this determination in the denial of climate change and the derailment of the few existing efforts in terms of energy transition corresponds strictly to what could be expected from a “party” almost entirely in the hands of the fossil fuel industry. An investigation published in the *New York Times* in March 2025 showed that of the £4.75 million obtained in 2024 by Reform UK, 40% came from individuals known to have “openly disputed the reality of climate change, or from holders of investments in fossil fuels and other polluting industries”.

Other researchers have shown, for the DeSmog website, that between December 2019 and June 2024, Reform UK collected more than £2.3 million from oil and gas interests and climate sceptic figures, including, for example, Terence Mordaunt, director of the Global Warming Policy Foundation, an organization at the forefront of challenging work on climate science. This amount corresponded to 92% of total donations to the Reform UK business party. Most of these contributions also come from accounts registered in tax havens.

But the conflict of interest can be even more caricatural; Tice and Farage are employees of a chain, GB News, whose owner, Paul Marshall, owns £1.8 billion in shares in the fossil fuel sector, including Shell, Chevron, Equinor (Norway) and more than a hundred others. The DeSmog investigation also showed that in 2022, a third of GB News anchors had openly questioned climate work and half had denounced climate initiatives.

Reform UK is also the recipient of donations from an arms company, QinetiQ, which is a major beneficiary of the increase in state spending in the defence sector. “80% of QinetiQ’s revenues related to armaments come from British taxpayers alone,” according to the *Byline Times*, a windfall of public money which the company’s main shareholder, Christopher Harborne, redirects in part to the benefit of Reform UK, of

which he is the main financier. Harborne donated nearly £14 million to Reform UK between 2019 and 2024, and paid for Farage's two recent visits to Trump, in 2024 and 2025 at a total cost of nearly £60,000.

Between Robinson and Farage-Tice, we understand the whole issue and the meaning of "freedom of expression": to maintain anti-migrant moral panics, by disrupting legal procedures if necessary, and to spread the myth of Islamization and the "rape" of the West; to be able to challenge climate research for the benefit of the fossil fuel lobby in the context of manifest conflicts of interest, and to defend all logics of oppression, up to the point of genocidal horror, by continuing to present oneself as a victim of feminist, anti-racist, or pro-Palestinian censorship, all in the service of the "freedom" of extraction, escape, exploitation, pollution and manipulation, conditions for the "expression" of an absolute capital.

Various components of the British far right could therefore be able to take over from the discredited parties, those who have made their bed but who still intend to ensure their survival with new anti-refugee, Islamophobic one-upmanship, and reformist sadism as proof of

managerial credibility: the hell of cruelty and indifference inflicted on the children of Gaza comes from afar.

These are undoubtedly the symptoms of the transition from a decrepit parliamentary neoliberalism to the oligarchic order which is now on the way to reaching its full political fulfilment. In which case, it must be admitted, defending this indefensible requires a very great "freedom of expression", purely fabricated, unencumbered by a justice system that is still capable of independence, a media and a press that are still free, scientific research that still assumes its critical vocation, and by any political demand for equality.

There is some good news, however, to emerge from the ongoing shipwreck of the parties that have dominated British political life until now: the deep, right-wing and sectarian Labourism, inspiring an almost universal disgust, may finally give a real chance to the emergence of a left-wing, socialist force, this time no longer condemned to the kind of peripheral and ephemeral agitation in which so much enthusiasm and momentum have inevitably ended up running out of steam and withering away until now. It remains to be seen, and to follow, the social democratic revival represented by the British Greens and, even more, what could

become of Your Party, launched by MPs Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana, whose announcement alone during the summer received nearly a million messages of support and membership requests. Enough to do. Well, maybe.

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

## Footnotes

[1] Read the National Audit Office report, "Pressures on Children Social Care," 2019. Also, the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse report, S. Kewley and K. Karsna, "Child Sexual Abuse in 2023/24: Trends in Official Data," June 2025. According to the two authors, "The number of children who are victims of sexual abuse is much higher than what is brought to the attention of public bodies. Based on available survey data, we estimate that at least one in 10 children in England and Wales are sexually abused before the age of 16 (Karsna and Kelly, 2021). According to a low estimate, the number of children who are victims of sexual abuse in a year is around 500,000." p.12.

# Between Trump's imperialist offensive and Maduro's repression

21 November 2025, by **Y.B.** and **F.G.**

This imperialist offensive, which does little to hide the United States' desire to bring about regime change in Venezuela, is also instrumentalized by the authoritarian government of president Nicolás Maduro in that country.

## Imperialist advance

With the arrival of Donald Trump in power, and in particular Marco Rubio,

representative of the Florida neoconservatives as Secretary of State, US imperialism is returning to its "natural zone of influence" with the aim of regaining control over Latin America. The installation of more than ten thousand troops in the region, in addition to six warships and an aircraft carrier, is an unwavering demonstration of US imperialism's willingness to impose its political and economic agenda by force. This is particularly the case in Venezuela, a country declared an "exceptional

threat" to the security of the United States since the Obama administration, a policy that was subsequently deepened by the first Trump administration, which in 2019 imposed economic sanctions on the state and on the Venezuelan state-owned oil company PDVSA, heavily aggravating the consequences of a catastrophic economic crisis already underway since the years 2014-2015.

A policy legitimized by the conservative opposition, including

María Corina Machado, recent Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who openly supports Trump's warmongering policies, as well as the expulsion of Venezuelan migrants sent to Bukele jails in El Salvador, under the pretext of belonging to "criminal gangs."

## Social and political repression

On the ground, the Maduro government, under pressure, excels in social and political repression. The disappearances or arrests of journalists, human rights activists, trade unionists, researchers, intellectuals and artists are part of everyday life. The president himself is calling on the population to use applications on phones to make denunciations without risk.

Finally, recently, it is environmental

researchers and activists who have been targeted by the executive, accused of promoting a false left-wing discourse while working in the service of foreign interests. The instruction is simple, as the hashtag now present on all government communications says: *dudar es traición* (to doubt is to betray). In return, the critical left rejects the government's façade of anti-imperialism and a furiously extractivist economic policy, in the service of a new ruling caste.

## Internationalist solidarity

As internationalists, we denounce the new manoeuvres of the United States against the sovereignty of Venezuela, which could — moreover — destabilize the entire region, against a backdrop of fierce competition with China for control of the subcontinent. In this

context, diplomatic initiatives and international mobilizations that could help make Trump back down in his warlike desires will be welcome.

Our solidarity goes to the Venezuelan people, who are the only ones capable of resolving the political and geopolitical conflict that afflicts them and that has caused the departure of more than eight million people, or a third of the country's population.

In the face of Maduro's imperialist attacks and authoritarianism, we call for support for the comrades and social movements that are mobilizing, in a difficult context, to promote struggles for emancipation from below, without giving in to the sirens of the far right.

13 November 2025

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

# The bromance between André Ventura and Luis Montenegro in Portugal

20 November 2025, by [Francisco Louçã](#)

I am therefore led to fight two misconceptions: the one according to which the problem of the left is delineated and the one that ensures that the country is condemned to the new normality of the close relationship (bromance) between André Ventura and Luis Montenegro. [Montenegro was prime minister of Portugal from April 2024, at the head of a centre-right government led by the PSD-Social Democratic Party.]

## The malaise

With 2% for the Bloco de Esquerda, 2.9% for the Communist Party (PCP) and 4.1% for the Livre (Green Party), and the Socialist Party (PS) overtaken in number of deputies by Chega (because the latter has monopolized the votes of the Portuguese abroad), the recent parliamentary elections have shown the state of distress of the left and the centre. Together, they

now account for less than a third of the vote, which means less than 20% of the electorate. None of these parties has the capacity to reconstitute a majority. They lost the parliamentary and municipal elections. And some do not want to understand this, because sectarianism, the most toxic characteristic of the Portuguese left, leads those who look in the mirror to ignore the world or, worse still, to pretend that the difficulties lie in their neighbour.

On the other hand, the right-wing and far-right majority has been consolidated, and has gained the power to revise the constitution. It can change the composition of the Constitutional Court and other bodies and will strengthen its positions because it has the wind in its sails. Their alliance was a historic gamble, which aimed to convince public opinion that there was a holy war

between the ethnic Portuguese and the horde of dangerous invaders who were already in the citadel, according to the Passos Coelho-Ventura-Montenegro version. [1] The advance of this crusade constitutes the greatest transformation of Portuguese politics since 25 April 1974: the terrain has changed and so have the protagonists.

This shift of the political regime through the new balance of forces is the result of the convergence of two crises. The first was the collapse of the absolute majority of the PS (which governed until a year and a half ago - until 2 April 2024, and since November 2015 - remember?), which caused a fracture in Portuguese society, and which tends to be overshadowed by the daily feverishness. Its effect has been to pave the way for the installation of the right as a political space, excluding from the field of possibility any

reference to protection measures at work or for housing (the rise in housing prices, under the effect of Airbnb tourism and the purchase of housing by Europe's "retirees", is unbearable for wage earners). The second crisis, from which we must not turn away, is caused by the naturalization of inequalities and the glorification of an insatiable and despotic neoliberalism: life thus becomes an ordeal for the majority of the population, precisely those who are led to believe that the fault lies with the colour of the immigrants' skin. This double crisis explains the surprising fact that the cultural affirmation of the new balance of forces no longer hesitates to erect a monument to Trump, Netanyahu and Milei. The "jesters" and the "criminals" are the heroes of revenge.

## The power of caste

To deal with this, the theory of the three bodies (interrelations between three actors) has been brandished, which leads to the recommendation of a compromise: the centre (and the left) should offer their support to the right to save it from the unstable proximity of the far right. It is obvious that this leads to a failure that arouses shame and disarray, reducing the PS to an ambiguous policy that renounces presenting alternatives, as in the case of its support for a "bad" and "uncredible" budget, and thus follows the drift. In view of the presidential election in January 2026, this strategy is being interpreted in a theatrical way by António José Seguro (who was secretary general of the PS from 2011 to 2014), which is not new. Indeed, a dozen years ago, the current candidate for the presidency of the PS - alongside various declared candidates, among them André Ventura, Luis Marques Mendes linked to the PSD and Catarina Martins of the Bloco - tried to conclude a "national salvation" agreement that would have led the PS to align itself with the government of Passos Coelho.

It was Mário Soares (president of Portugal from 1986 to 1996, who died in 2017) who prevented him from doing so, threatening to leave the PS if the affair succeeded.

Can we therefore be surprised by a presidential campaign whose main concern seems to be to deny the relevance of left-wing values? This headlong rush has become the candidate's refrain, which reveals an unprecedented electoral manoeuvre, because it is the first time that I have heard an emphatic call for a vote that declares itself useless. Moreover, the imbroglio is deepening, because, if we are to believe the latest poll, this theory of the three bodies would advise a vote for Admiral Henrique Gouveia e Melo in order to guarantee him a presence in the second round and thus avoid Ventura. The world is certainly round.

The "pacification" of the PS therefore has a history, which began with Seguro and continues today. However, this is a profound process because it corresponds to the "pacification" of politics. Former prime minister Antonio Costa himself set the tone by lamenting that "people feel like strangers in their own country," which led Leitão Amaro to raise the level to a conspiracy of "demographic reengineering" aimed at filling the country with immigrants. As Público pointed out, the fact that the deputy who kisses everyone (Filipe Melo de Chega, in September, mimed a "hug" from the socialist Isabel Moreira during a parliamentary debate) calls for the expulsion of a black deputy "to her country" is already a mainstream policy. The Montenegro-Ventura bromance is the consecration of this hard and xenophobic right-wing current.

What I mean here is that we can defeat this current by knowing its weak points. Its first fragility is the arrogance of the caste. Notice how tycoons mount presidential candidacies, how arms or public procurement contractors pour funds

into the Chega party, or how they finance the Observador-Iniciativa Liberal (a right-wing party that calls the regime set up after the Carnation Revolution a "left-wing dictatorship"). In fact, as in all the authoritarian reversals of the ruling class in the past, there is a boundless greed here. Formed by the state and fuelled by the state, the caste accumulated its wealth through the plundering of taxes, the threat of the sword, and colonial ideology. That's what it's back to today, with laws that protect the accumulation of real estate and tax cuts for the coffers of the biggest corporations, and it's also why racism against the colonized from within (including the Roma, long-time residents) is so natural to it. They repeat the language of their origin.

Hence its second and main weakness: this policy of "pacification" does not respond to anything. For the people, this only means that life in our cities is becoming an ordeal, that pensions and salaries are literally plundered by rents and that the supermarket charges exorbitant prices. We are driven from our land by the caste. It is in the revolt against this unbearable life that there lies the strength to constitute a new majority, a new response from the left and a new project for Portugal. The slogan is "to live." The caste forbids the hope of a normal life to people who work and want to breathe. It must be overcome in order to live.

3 November 2025

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Translated by **International  
Viewpoint** from **A l'Encontre**.

## Footnotes

[1] Pedro Passos Coelho, Prime Minister from June 2011 to November 2015, at the head of a centre-right government (PPD/PSD, CDS/PP) which applied severe austerity measures.

# Tanzania: When bullets replace ballots

19 November 2025, by [Paul Martial](#)

## Politics of terror

As in many other countries on the continent, the two main oppositionists were excluded from the electoral process. Tundu Lissu, leader of the Chadema party, was prevented from running for legal reasons, while Luhaga Mpina, leader of the ACT-Wazalendo party, is awaiting trial in prison on charges of treason — an offence that does not allow for bail.

In all the major cities of the country, massive demonstrations took place to denounce this sham election. The police have repeatedly fired live ammunition. The first videos released after the internet reopened show streets littered with corpses. The police are trying to erase this evidence by sending text messages threatening anyone who broadcasts testimonies about this bloodbath.

After the elections, the abuses continued. Security teams went at night to the homes of citizens

suspected of having taken sides against the president in order to execute them. Even some important figures of the ruling party, the CCM, such as Humphrey Polepole, disappeared after issuing criticisms of the current political line.

## An isolated regime

Samia Suluhu Hassan, initially vice president, came to power after the sudden death of president John Magufuli. The early days of her mandate were marked by a relative openness of the public space. But very quickly, authoritarian and then openly dictatorial practices took over, at a time when opposition parties, notably Chadema, were gaining popularity.

The ferocity of the repression illustrates the fragility of the Hassan regime, whose only real support remains, so far, the army and the police forces. Her predecessor, although also undemocratic, had

never reached such a level of coercion. Magufuli also retained a certain social base, because of his anti-imperialist rhetoric and sovereignist economic policy in the face of British and Canadian multinationals in the mining sector. His measures against corruption and budget waste also won him some popular sympathy.

Samia Suluhu Hassan, on the other hand, is pursuing a neoliberal economic policy aimed at improving the “business climate” and attracting foreign investors by favouring the private sector. Her brutal authoritarianism earned her the nickname “Idi Amin Mama” on the street, in reference to Idi Amin Dada, the bloodthirsty Ugandan dictator of the 1970s. This shows the popularity of this president, officially elected with... 98% of the votes.

13 November 2025

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from *[l'Anticapitaliste](#)*.

# Social movements and COP 30: transnational alliances against the global extractivist offensive

18 November 2025, by [Maureen Zelaya Paredes](#), [Pedro Ramiro](#)

There's activity in Belém. On one hand, at the official summit, which opened yesterday [10 November] and where, for two weeks, delegations from various countries will debate whether progress can be made in terms of mitigation, financing, and mechanisms for a just transition. On the other hand, in the various forums and meeting spaces where organisations and social groups from around the world, especially from Latin America, are trying these days to revitalise internationalist alliances to confront the global extractivist

offensive.

In reality, not much can be expected from the official summit. For too long, the COPs have become a ritual in which the world's leading figures parade—this time, not even those from the countries with the highest emissions: China, the United States, India, and Russia—to issue solemn declarations of intent and promote new mechanisms that, when the summit curtain falls, have no effective translation into timelines and budgets. “We don't want it to be a marketplace

of ideological products, we want something very serious and for the decisions to actually be implemented,” said the president of Brazil, acknowledging the ineffectiveness of summits that straddle greenwashing and business as usual.

From the other meeting spaces, however, it is possible to find renewed hope. In parallel to COP 30—we could also say in opposition to the official summit—a multitude of indigenous, environmental, trade union, feminist and anti-capitalist organisations and

movements have come together in Belém to rethink strategies and reactivate international bodies to strengthen the processes of struggle and resistance. Having learned from the World Social Forum and seeking to overcome the contradictions of progressive governments, the goal is to promote community self-organisation processes that rebuild the social fabric and look beyond the constant demands on the State.

### The People's Summits

The People's Summits have been taking place for thirty years within the framework of the climate summits promoted by the United Nations. This year, after the three COP editions held in countries characterised by the criminalisation of the right to protest and the persecution of activists and organisations critical of governments, there has been a resurgence of interest from social groups in this forum. At the People's Summit in Belém, representatives from more than 1,200 organisations from around the globe will gather around one objective: "To strengthen popular mobilisation and converge on unified agendas: socio-environmental, anti-patriarchal, anti-capitalist, anti-colonialist, anti-racist and based on human rights," as the manifesto states.

The People's Summit will begin tomorrow, November 12, with a river "march" of more than 200 boats carrying some 5,000 people. With this nautical caravan, the movements participating in this alternative summit "unite to make their voices heard, across the waters, in protest against the COP decisions that perpetuate this model of territorial exploitation." As one of the initiative's spokespeople said, "The waters of the Amazon bring the voices the world needs to hear: those of people who defend life, land and the climate."

The dozens of talks, workshops, and assemblies taking place over four days as part of the People's Summit will culminate on Saturday, November 15, with a large demonstration, accompanied by decentralised actions in many other countries. On Sunday, November 16, the demands of the People's Summit will be presented at

the COP plenary session.

At this event, the largest of all those that will bring together activists and social organisations around COP 30, one of the topics that will undoubtedly be a subject of debate is the relationship of the various social movements with progressive governments. Just three weeks ago, the state-owned company Petrobras received approval from the Lula government to exploit oil in deep waters about 500 km from the mouth of the Amazon River. In a city decorated for the occasion with thousands of colourful advertising posters highlighting the importance of caring for the Amazon, the gap between the usual rhetoric of green capitalism and the ever-postponed urgency of transforming the primary-export matrix will once again become evident.

But this forum is by no means the only one held in Belém outside of the initiatives sponsored by the Brazilian government. From November 8 to 11, the II Latin American and Caribbean Ecosocialist Meetings took place, in which two hundred grassroots activists from very diverse countries met to reflect, based on the experience of the struggles against land plundering, on strategies to strengthen a common internationalist front that can face the socio-ecological crisis. At the same time, from November 7 to 12, the IV International Meeting of People Affected by Dams took place, the result of an international coordination process of community struggles against large power plants and electricity companies that has been in existence for three decades.

### Peoples against extractivism

On a planet mired in climate emergency and extreme inequality generated by the capitalocene (and by policies that greenwash capitalism), voices from different resistances against the extractivist model have joined the Peoples Against Extractivism coalition. This space was established in Belém on November 9 to unite and coordinate movements, communities and organisations that face dispossession and are committed to a profound transformation of the

system that threatens life and land.

This international network has integrated experiences primarily from Latin America and Europe, although with a commitment to expanding its presence on the African continent. The coalition is made up of grassroots movements, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and peasants, as well as various mass social organisations. They all fight, from different fronts, against the same enemy: the extractivist model that perpetuates the continuous overexploitation of common resources and the expansion of production frontiers into territories considered "unproductive." It is not limited to mining or oil; it also includes monocultures, agribusiness, biofuels, and energy megaprojects that consolidate a dependent model and generate a return to primary commodity exports in peripheral economies.

For this network, extractivism is not just an economic practice, but a form of the organisation of power within liberal democracies and a mechanism of domination that conditions the lives of communities. In this new phase of capitalist accumulation, the dispossession of peoples and their territories—cynically turned into zones of sacrifice—is imposed, now justified in the name of the energy transition. In "green military capitalism," the European Union, the United States, and China compete for control of the minerals fundamental to sustaining the economic metabolism of the capitalist centre. In this accelerated race to secure access to critical raw materials, which does not represent any real progress in the ecosocial transition, mining currently stands as the most violent expression of extractivism: militarisation, forced displacement, racism, criminalisation and even murders of those who defend the commons.

The Peoples Against Extractivism alliance argues that protecting habitats and ecosystems is inseparable from the struggle against the neocolonial extractivist offensive. This internationalism begins with supporting the peoples of Ecuador, Panama, and Peru, where state repression has intensified in recent months with arbitrary arrests,

militarisation of communities, and judicial persecution of environmental and social leaders and denouncing these actions. At the same time, in the face of the expanding extractive frontier, it is based on building alternatives from the ground up.

Territorial resistances are organised in defense of water, land, land and those who inhabit them, articulating different struggles and demands. In Ecuador, Amazonian communities have halted oil projects; in Panama, after weeks of mobilisation the popular movement succeeded in stopping a mining concession; in Peru, peasant patrols keep alive the collective defense of common resources. These processes reposition the right to resist as a shared practice

against extractive neocolonialism.

The planet and its communities cannot continue to wait for the goodwill of governments that promote the extractive frenzy. Faced with the dispossession of land, militarisation, and corporate impunity, this internationalist network aims to strengthen the defense of the land as a living body, because land is not a resource: it is the material basis of the life of the communities and the nature that inhabits it and, in the cases of indigenous peoples, the spiritual basis of life. Additionally, we have the right to resistance, self-defense, and self-determination of peoples, as pillars of environmental and social justice. And the construction of community-based

alternatives, such as economies of solidarity, self-governance, feminist and agroecological networks, and many other practices promoted by grassroots organisations are essential.

Strengthening transnational counter-hegemonic networks is key to confronting corporate power and moving towards a future of dignified life and climate justice. As *Pueblos contra el Extractivismo* (Peoples Against Extractivism) reiterates in its arguments: our territories are not for sale, they must be defended.

11 November 2025

Translated by David Fagan for *International Viewpoint* from *El Salto*.

## Trump Seems Vulnerable for First Time in Second Term

17 November 2025, by [Dan La Botz](#)

This is the reason that he and his party suffered defeat in the November 4 elections across the country. In New York City, Trump supported Andrew Cuomo who was defeated by socialist Zohran Mamdani as Democrats also won the governorships in New Jersey and Virginia, while in California Democrats beat Republicans 60 to 40% on a referendum on congressional redistricting.

Trump blamed the government shutdown for the election defeats. The unprecedented 43-day closure of the government, caused by the inability of Republicans and Democrats to reach an agreement on the budget caused tremendous misery. Most of the 42 million Americans, children, the elderly, and the disabled, who depend on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program lost their food benefits for over a month. And now, the Republican budget will increase medical insurance costs for 92% of the 45 million people covered by the Affordable Care Act, for some it will double. The higher rates will make health care unaffordable for millions. No surprise then that 48% of

Americans placed the blame on President Trump and Republicans while only 34% blame the Democrats.

With the budget no longer on the agenda, the demand by both Democrats and Republicans that the government release the files of deceased financier and sex offender Jeffrey Epstein is back on the congressional agenda. The Make America Great Again (MAGA) base wants the file opened. Trump calls the whole thing “a hoax” but he has demanded that Attorney General Pam Bondi investigate Democrats whose names appear in the Epstein files, including former President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of the Treasury and Harvard president Larry Summers. It seems likely that a motion to open the files will pass the House and possibly the Senate, at which time it would go to Trump to pass or veto. But dare he veto it? Does he fear what the files contain about him?

The issue has led to the first open break in MAGA, with congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene publicly criticizing Trump for failing to open

the Epstein files and for rising health care and food costs. Trump calls Greene “wacky” and a “disgrace to our great Republican Party.” But other Republicans are also demanding the files be opened and some express concerns about health care costs. So, Greene’s defiance could signal a coming rift.

Trump has never been popular. Today, as usual, only 42 percent of the American people approve of him but 58% now disapprove, according to polls. How will Trump keep his grip on his base and on the country?

Trump has announced that he plans to give every American making under \$100,000 per year a \$2,000 dividend to be paid for by tariffs. The problem is that the dividend would cost \$300 billion while tariffs have generated only \$175 billion. Trump also promised a dividend earlier in the year, when Elon Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency were slashing programs and jobs. That bonus never came.

Trump seems less focused on transparency and affordability than on

warfare on two fronts: sending Immigration and Customs Enforcement and National Guard to U.S. cities governed by Democrats and preparing for an invasion of Venezuela. The MAGA base supports

the first but it will rankle at a foreign war aimed at regime change, which Trump campaigned against.

Tangled in contradictions, Trump is in trouble. So eyes are now focused on

the November 2026 midterm elections as everyone wonders whether the Democrats can take back both the House and the Senate.

16 November 2025

## Brazil, COP30 and the extractivist paradox

16 November 2025, by [Miguel Urbán Crespo](#)

Once again, the COP —Conference of the Parties—, the meeting of the countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is meeting again to supposedly make political decisions at the international level to combat climate change or reduce its effects. This time in Brazil, in a context characterised both by the worsening effects of the ecological crisis and by the growing climate denial championed from the White House by Donald Trump it has the symbolic weight of being held in the Amazon.

Brazil is using the global climate crisis to try to position itself as the champion of green capitalism. This move is largely driven by internal political maneuvering, serving as an antagonist to the climate change denialism of the far-right Bolsonaro movement a year before the presidential elections, while simultaneously positioning Brazil as a regional and international player. All this is happening within a context marked by a European Union that is abandoning the facade of the Green Deal to show a more khaki, militaristic face of "Rearm Europe", as well as by the growth of denialism championed by the Trumpian international.

COP30, held in Belém, will show the limits of Brazilian soft power in leading the global environmental agenda while increasing oil production, expanding the fossil fuel frontier, and boosting agribusiness that exacerbates the climate crisis and its extreme weather events. In fact, a month before the climate summit, Petrobras, the Brazilian state-owned oil company, obtained a license to drill in the Amazon River basin. This operation will make Brazil the world's

fourth-largest oil producer, behind only the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Russia.

In fact, the last two COP meetings were held in Baku, Azerbaijan (2024), and Dubai, United Arab Emirates (2023), countries with an economy centered on fossil fuels, showing the existential contradictions of this type of summit. In the case of Dubai, the CEO of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) used his position as host president of the international meeting to close oil deals. While in Baku, fossil fuel lobbyists had over 1,700 representatives, a far greater number than the delegations from the countries most vulnerable to climate change. These are examples that illustrate the corporate capture of COP and some of its structural shortcomings in serving as a useful forum for addressing the ongoing ecological crisis.

But it's not just fossil fuels that seem to be outside COP's control, but also other extractive activities such as mining or agribusiness. Brazil has avoided acknowledging the role of intensive agriculture in deforestation, the country's main contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. This reality, once again, clashes with the veneer of green capitalism that the country is trying to sell at this summit, with its flagship measure, the Tropical Forest Forever Fund (TFFF). A public-private initiative aims to create US \$125 billion fund (\$25 billion from governments and \$100 billion from multinational corporations), administered by the World Bank, to invest in financial markets, distributing its annual returns—estimated at around \$4 billion—among the countries that preserve their forests. Finance

Minister Fernando Haddad himself stated that the fund is "Brazil's main initiative" at COP25.

Promoting a Tropical Forest Fund while, a few weeks later, the European Union-Mercosur trade agreement is scheduled to be signed —popularly known as a "cows for cars" agreement. While the EU aims to improve access to the Mercosur market for its multinational automotive, automotive parts, energy, beverage and financial services companies, in return the Mercosur countries want greater access to the European market for their raw materials, beef and chicken, soybeans, sugar and ethanol for biofuels, among other products. We cannot ignore that livestock farming is the biggest driver of deforestation in the Amazon, with 63% of deforested areas occupied by pastures.

This COP will be the first since Donald Trump returned to the White House. In an unequivocal statement of intent, the United States will not only abstain from participating in this weekend's leaders' summit, but will also refrain from sending high-level representatives to the technical negotiations at the Belém summit, which begin this coming Monday. Thus, he demonstrates his utter contempt for multilateral forums, reaffirming climate change denial as a defining characteristic of the global reactionary wave. In fact, Argentine President Javier Milei, the most prominent figure of the reactionary international movement in Latin America, will follow Trump's example and also boycott the COP in Belém.

An ultra-right-wing denialism that serves the lesser-evil logic of green capitalism. A concave mirror in which to magnify the image of speculative

funds for tropical forests, avoid criticism of oil exploration in the Amazon, or even defend the European Union's military khaki green. A way of shrinking the scope of what is possible for climate mitigation policies while amplifying the influence and importance of denialism, bestowing upon them the label of anti-establishment at a time of growing discontent.

But these days in Brazil, it's not just the lobbyists of green, khaki, and fossil capitalism who will be there, or the government representatives who come in a liturgical way to sign up, like someone who visits the church year after year on All Saints' Day to light a candle for the deceased and cleanse their conscience until next year. Various grassroots initiatives and meetings will also be developed, aiming to establish broad alliances between social, political, and trade union organisations that reject this violent and predatory model, as well

as its greenwashing of lesser evil.

Faced with the impotence of denialism and the green veneer of extractive capital, it is essential to build a new eco-territorial internationalism, from the ground up and closely linked to community processes. In this context, this weekend in Belém, coinciding with the summit of heads of state from around the world, was the launching of *Pueblos contra el Extractivismo* (Peoples Against Extractivism) — a platform for grassroots organisations that confront mining and extractivism in all its forms. They denounce every project that destroys life in these territories, not as isolated threats, but as concrete manifestations of the dynamics of militarised green capitalism.

Because, faced with a scenario of climate emergency, eco-social crisis and the advance of a reactionary internationalism at the service of the

interests of the super-oligarchs, we cannot continue to rely on summits that have become zombie structures parasitised by lobbyists of capital. We need to confront the dictatorship of profit to win victories that place life and territory at the center. Peoples Against Extractivism was born as a humble initiative in service of popular struggles against the logic of extractivism. At the same time, many other initiatives are taking place in Brazil these days, from the post-extractivist forum in São Paulo to the ecosocialist gatherings and the People's Summit in Belém. These proposals go beyond the functional blackmail between climate change denial and green capitalism, broadening the scope of what is possible.

7 November 2025

*Translated by David Fagan for **International Viewpoint** from **Publico**.*

## COP30: The shift to green capitalism fails to materialise

15 November 2025, by [Christian Zeller](#)

The US government under Trump has withdrawn from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. Recently, the US president described 'climate change' as a 'hoax'. New 'climate targets' are not on the agenda. By February of this year, most countries had not fulfilled their obligation to set climate targets to be achieved by 2035. Moreover the national climate targets submitted in the previous five-year period were all insufficient. If they had been met, they would have pushed global warming well above two degrees above the pre-industrial global average. The European Union only recently agreed on its new targets after lengthy haggling and is scaling back its previously formulated targets. It wants to reduce emissions by 66.25 to 72.5 per cent by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. In addition, the EU also wants to count investments in emission reductions outside the EU towards its own 2040 emission target.

It is postponing the start of the new emissions trading scheme for transport and buildings until 2028. The host country, Brazil, is no better. With its national oil company, Petrobras, it is vigorously pushing ahead with the expansion of oil production.

### Adapting to barbarism

The conference in Belém will focus on strategies for adapting to global warming and on indicators for measuring the success of these adaptations. Another key topic is 'climate finance'. At COP29 in Baku last year, the early industrialised countries agreed to support developing countries with at least 300 billion US dollars annually for climate protection and adaptation. However,

there is still disagreement about where the money will come from, where it will go and under what conditions. A key project is the expansion of carbon markets. This pleases the players on the financial markets.

The conference spectacle seems rather cynical in view of the massive changes to the Earth's climate system caused by the burning of coal, oil and gas. The recently published *Lancet Countdown Report* reports that millions of people lose their lives every year due to heat, air pollution, the spread of disease and worsening food insecurity. The number of heat-related deaths has risen by 63 per cent since the 1990s, reaching an average of 546,000 deaths per year between 2012 and 2021. The year 2024 was the hottest since records began, with the most vulnerable people (under one year old and over 65) exposed to an

average of more than 300 per cent additional heatwave days compared to the annual average between 1986 and 2005. Extreme precipitation events, including flash floods and landslides, as well as droughts, increased over 60 per cent of the Earth's land area. These climate extremes affect crop yields, disrupt supply chains and threaten food security. Added to this is the increased risk of transmission of deadly infectious diseases and air pollution caused by fossil fuels. In short, the rule of capital is forcing humanity into barbarism.

## **Emissions continue to rise**

Despite these alarming findings, there is no sign of a reversal in the trend of global greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Emission Gap Report published in early November, total greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. CO<sub>2</sub>, methane, nitrous oxide, fluorinated gases and land use change) rose by 2.3 per cent worldwide in 2024 to 53.7 gigatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents (up 1.6 per cent in the previous year). This increase is roughly equivalent to the annual increase in emissions in the 2010s, but is four times higher than in the 2000s. According to the Global Carbon Project, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions alone, including land use changes, will rise by 1.1 per cent this year to a record high of 42.2 gigatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. In the EU and the US, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are actually increasing again, contrary to the long-term trend. The massive growth seen in China and India to date is slowing down.

The fossil fuel counter-offensive that I analysed over two years ago has prevailed. The illusions of green capitalism have now vanished. COP28 in Dubai two years ago annointed the fossil fuel backlash (see ak 699). The development shows that there is no climate-relevant energy transition; rather, renewable energies are being added to the fossil fuel base of the capitalist economy.

According to Energy Outlook 2025, global energy demand rose by an average of 1.3 per cent per year from 2010 to 2023, but by more than two per cent in 2024. Energy intensity, the

measure of energy consumption in relation to economic output, fell by an average of around two per cent per year between 2010 and 2019. In 2024, it fell by only 1.1 per cent. Measures to increase energy efficiency are running out of steam. However, global electricity demand increased by 4.3 per cent in 2024, far more than in previous years. The global economy thus became more electricity-intensive. Yet fossil fuels continued to account for 80 per cent of primary energy consumption. Even in 2024, investment in fossil fuels was higher than investment in renewable energies.

The rapid increase in the use of artificial intelligence and the construction of huge data centres are partly responsible for the huge increase in electricity consumption. They already account for 1.5 per cent of global electricity consumption. In Europe, the figure is three per cent, and in Ireland as high as 20 per cent. It should be noted that data centres require a constant supply of electricity. This argues against the unpredictable supply patterns of renewables as long as there is no comprehensive grid and storage infrastructure in place.

## **Oil consumption will rise**

For the first time since 2019, the International Energy Agency's (IEA) World Energy Outlook 2025 once again includes a scenario that extrapolates current developments and policies and models energy consumption up to 2050 on this basis. In doing so, it departs from the sometimes optimistic portrayals of an energy transition in recent years. This 'Current Policies Scenario' (CPS) depicts development trends much more realistically than the 'Stated Policies Scenario' (with an oil peak around 2030) or the normative climate neutrality scenario by 2050, which is completely illusory under capitalist conditions. Similar scenarios to the CPS one from oil companies and OPEC have unfortunately proven to be quite realistic in the past.

Global energy consumption in the CPS

will increase by about 1.3 per cent per year over the next ten years, similar to the average over the last ten years. Demand for oil will rise to 113 million barrels per day by 2050, mainly due to increased use in emerging and developing countries for road transport, petrochemical feedstocks and aviation. Global demand for natural gas will rise to 5,600 billion cubic metres by 2050. The United States will remain the world's largest oil and gas producer until 2050. However, OPEC+ oil production in 2050 will be 15 per cent higher than ever before in history.

Electricity demand is rising in all countries and regions. Solar photovoltaics (PV) and wind energy are cost-effective in many regions, but their introduction faces integration challenges that are slowing further growth: annual capacity growth for solar PV will average 540 gigawatts until 2035, roughly matching the growth seen in 2024.

Coal will remain the largest single source of global electricity generation over the next decade. The People's Republic of China alone, now admired by uncritical contemporaries as the last hope of an energy transition after the faded illusions of green modernisation in Europe, is currently building more coal-fired power plants than it has in ten years. Even in the emerging imperialist power of China, energy security is more important than ecological restructuring. The construction of new nuclear power plants will accelerate worldwide in the 2030s. This scenario will result in a warming of around three degrees by the end of the century.

## **Strategic errors of the left**

However, the persistence of fossil capital is not only the result of the rise of national conservative and fascist forces. Rather, the capitalist mode of production is completely interwoven with fossil fuels. Without the advantages of fossil fuels – easy storage, transportability, high energy density and high energy yield – the capitalist accumulation machinery would lose its central fuel.

Investments in fossil fuels are many times more profitable than investments in renewables. Large financial companies have long since abandoned their 'green' investment strategies. The so-called Net-Zero Banking Alliance of large financial institutions has dissolved. Green finance is languishing in obscurity. Furthermore, it is often forgotten that the infrastructure for renewable energies is largely built using fossil fuels. The CO2 emissions associated with this energy demand (around 195 GtCO2) already exceed the remaining budget (130 GtCO2) for meeting the so-called 1.5°C target. These structural economic and energy realities, as well as the requirements of a genuine energy transition, make it clear that there can be no non-fossil capitalism. The compulsion to accumulate capital cannot be satisfied on the basis of renewable energies. A capitalist energy transition is impossible.

Developments in recent years show that the discourse on the competition between a fossil-reactionary and a green-modernist hegemony project, which is particularly prevalent among critical and often Gramsci-oriented

social scientists and on the left of the political spectrum, is a gigantic fallacy. The protagonists of this interpretation have examined the political discourses. This is interesting, but it does not help to understand the material and economic dynamics and constraints of the current phase of capitalism.

This discourse on the green-modernist hegemony project has contributed to two fatal strategic errors on the part of significant sections of the climate movement and the left. First, they underestimated the fossil fuel dependency of capitalism and thus lost sight of the power of fossil fuel capital - the main opponent. Second, they considered green modernisation to be probable and positioned themselves primarily as a left-wing socio-ecological corrective force to this modernisation project, which ultimately lacks material foundations. As long as there is not even the slightest success in undermining the power of fossil capital and the financial capital closely linked to it, any discourse on a 'socio-ecological transformation' remains hollow.

Climate conferences do not negotiate an energy transition. In fact they are

about which powers and capital groups can portray and enforce their interests in the expansion of renewable energies on a fossil fuel basis - but under rapidly changing geopolitical and geo-economic conditions - as 'climate-friendly'. Rather than critically monitoring one diplomatic initiative or another, it is more important to consider how the power of fossil fuel companies and their political representatives can truly be challenged.

To summarize our key points:

- Capitalist rule is forcing humanity into barbarism.
- Coal will remain the largest single source of global electricity generation for the next ten years.
- Without the advantages of fossil fuels, the capitalist accumulation machine would lose a key fuel.
- There can therefore be no non-fossil capitalism. The compulsion to accumulate cannot be satisfied on the basis of renewable energies.

**15 November 2025**

*Translated by **Anti\*Capitalist Resistance** from **analyse & kritik**.*

## **We must save the children of Ukraine**

14 November 2025, by [European network for solidarity with Ukraine](#)

At the same time, the latest report from Yale University's Humanitarian Research Laboratory [1], published on 16 September 2025, once again demonstrates the widespread, quasi-industrial, orchestrated and planned nature of the forced Russification carried out by the Russian occupation authorities in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories and details in detail the fate of Ukrainian minors who have been isolated, deported and imprisoned in a network of 'ideological re-education' and militarisation camps. It reveals the full extent of the crime committed by Putin's mafia-like imperialist regime against Ukrainian children.

According to a recent survey carried out by the daily *Kyiv Independent* [2],

the 1.6 million or so children living in the territories occupied by Russia are subjected to daily indoctrination from school, where they are obliged to [study according to Russian standards](#), and forced to join youth organisations designed to glorify the army. These future janissaries are expected to swell the ranks of Ukrainians forcibly conscripted into the Russian army since 2014.

According to Kateryna Rashevskaya, a Ukrainian lawyer working internationally to defend the rights of Ukrainian children affected by the war, Article 50 of the 4th Geneva Convention requires an occupying power to maintain the education of children in conjunction with the local authorities, to entrust schooling, as far

as possible, to persons of its own nationality, language and religion, and to prohibit enrolling children in organisations subordinate to the occupier.

But that doesn't matter to Putin's henchmen: as Igor Vorobyov, director of the Volgograd branch of the Warrior Centre programme, an organisation responsible for training 'the next generation of soldiers', bluntly explains: "If you want to defeat your enemy, raise his children.

These monstrous practices have led to Vladimir Putin and his accomplice Maria Lvova-Belova being indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court.

International mobilisation and pressure must be stepped up to ensure that they and their accomplices are brought to justice. We cannot work towards peace unless justice is done and the children of Ukraine can return home.

### **Maria Lvova-Belova had a hard time with Philipp**

Philipp is a 15-year-old Ukrainian whom she abducted from Marioupol, a martyred Ukrainian town, and adopted.

'He complicated our family life', she complained recently in an interview on the Russian talk show *Smotri i Dumai* ('Look and Think'). And with good reason: 'He suffered from severe post-traumatic stress disorder after the bombings'. Above all, 'he said that Moscow and Russia irritated him [...] He was hysterical'.

To the presenter's question: "Didn't he want to live in Russia? the grieving

'mother' replied: "No, he didn't want to. [ He said he didn't want to because he loved Ukraine". But Mum was tenacious: 'He gradually changed his mind and turned to reality...'.

When asked how many children Russia had 'taken', Maria Lvova-Belova replied that it was around 20,000. Yet she remains incredulous that she has been indicted by the International Criminal Court.

The official bulletin on her activities, published after the ICC arrest warrant, states:

To date, the Commissioner for Children's Rights to the President of the Russian Federation does not know exactly what the charges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) are and what they are based on. [...] The expression 'unlawful deportation of population

(children)' used in the official communication on the ICC website is perplexing. The Russian Federation does not recognise the jurisdiction of the ICC and its representatives are wanted in our country. The Commissioner continues to work as usual.

Maria Lvova-Belova or the banality of evil...

*Published on 10 November 2025 by RESU/ENSU*

## **Footnotes**

[1] ["Ukraine's Stolen Children: Inside Russia's Network of Re-education and Militarization.](#)

[2] 23 October 2025, ["Investigation: After occupying their land, Russia trains Ukrainian children for a lifetime of war"](#).

# **Trump's Reality for African Americans**

13 November 2025, by [Malik Miah](#)

AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE under fire from the Trump regime on all fronts. President Trump says the Black population is receiving unfair advantages over most whites, particularly young white men.

The attack targets concepts of "wokism" (which originally meant awakening to realities of oppression and DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion).

Pure and simple, this is a broadside racist assault with the goal of reversing every socio-economic and political gain won by this oppressed segment of the population.

When Trump and his underlings say he plans to go after the "radical left," at the top of his list are civil rights groups.

## **Capitalism,**

## **National Oppression, Sexism**

The source of these assaults is the structure of the capitalist system, where billionaires come first and working people last.

American capitalism is deeply rooted in its historic race-based class structure. Before independence from colonial England, the founders saw native peoples who welcomed them as inferior.

The white European settlers and colonists saw African slaves as less than civilized. They viewed Mexicans and other brown future Latino immigrants as invaders.

The largest oppressed people, Blacks have been targeted as "less than" since the formation of an independent

country. It took a Civil War (the Second American Revolution) to end slavery and former slaves to become citizens.

Despite their debates over slavery, the founders never supported equality for nonwhite people. Native tribes faced genocide.

It is not surprising that white future rulers of both major capitalist parties imposed a system of white supremacy based on enforced segregation, exclusion and "last hired, first fired" for African Americans.

Women of course suffered double or triple exploitation — racism, sexual oppression and today's threats by the extreme right wing of further rollbacks of abortion rights and even contraceptives.

The "Secretary of War" Pete Hegseth, a patriarchal Christian-supremacist ideologue, has even questioned whether women should continue to

have the right to vote. Transgender people are facing threats to their physical existence.

## Rising Unemployment and Cuts

A study of the August, 2025 employment data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) shows the true nature of capitalism and Black oppression.

The Black unemployment rate of 7.5% (up from 6.1% in July 2024) remains significantly higher than the national average of 4.3%.

Black workers face persistent disparities due to many factors, including geographic concentration in high-unemployment urban areas, and systemic barriers in hiring and promotion.

The latest unemployment rates by race and ethnicity as of August 2025, based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

White 3.7%  
Black/African American 7.5%  
Asian 3.6%  
Latino 5.3%  
National Average 4.3%

The data show in short that African Americans continue to face the highest unemployment rate, nearly double that of Whites and Asians. They don't show, however, the rise in homelessness from working people being laid off and unable to pay rent and keep their homes.

Hardest hit are Black men and women, including those with children going to school without permanent addresses. Cuts in SNAP (food stamps) and fewer free meals at public schools are leading to undernourished families, especially among Black and Latino communities.

Asian Americans consistently show the lowest unemployment, often attributed to higher educational attainment and concentration in high-demand sectors.

Latino workers fall in the middle, with

rates above white and Asians but below African Americans.

These disparities persist across age groups but are most pronounced among younger workers (ages 16-24), where Black youth unemployment can exceed 19%.

## Black Women Hard Hit

In Trump's federal work force cuts, Black women are among the hardest hit. He cut hundreds of thousands of jobs from the federal work force, disproportionately affecting Black employees, especially women who got jobs and benefits unavailable to them in the private sector.

For example, when Trump started dismantling federal agencies and dismissing rank-and-file civil servants, Peggy Carr, the chief statistician at the Education Department, immediately started to make a calculation.

She was the first Black person and the first woman to hold the prestigious post of commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics. As a political appointee, she knew there was a risk of becoming a target.

But her 35-year career at the department spanned a half dozen administrations, including Trump's first term, and she had earned the respect of officials from both parties.

Surely, she thought, the office tasked with tracking the achievement of the nation's students could not fall under the president's definition of "divisive and harmful" or "woke."

On a February afternoon, a security guard showed up to her office just as she was preparing to hold a staff meeting. Fifteen minutes later, the staff watched in tears and disbelief as she was escorted out of the building. Dr. Carr said in an interview:

*It was like being prosecuted in front of my family — my work family. It was like I was being taken out like the trash, the only difference is I was being taken out the front door rather than the back door.*

While tens of thousands of employees like Carr have lost their jobs in President Trump's slash-and-burn approach to shrinking the federal work force, labor experts say the cuts disproportionately affect Black women.

Black women make up 12% of the federal work force, nearly double their share of the labor force overall. However, they make up 25% of the work force in agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service and the Department of Education where the cuts have been the deepest.

The Education Department was a special case, more than a quarter of whose work force was Black women, suspending dozens of people whose job titles and official duties had no connection to DEI.

Their only apparent exposure to DEI initiatives came in the form of trainings encouraged by their managers. To Trump being Black in a job is proof you were hired because of "wokism" and DEI.

## Why Defend DEI

Federal employment has served generations as a ladder to the middle working class who were shut out of jobs because of discrimination. The government has historically offered more job stability, pay equity and career advancement than the private sector.

Since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the federal government aggressively enforced affirmative action in hiring and anti-discrimination rules. Trump calls those programs "reverse racism."

The right wing, controlling a majority in Congress and the White House, defend Trump's overhaul of the federal government. In July, the Supreme Court majority ruled the president could continue his racist firing across the federal government

In a statement, Harrison Fields, a White House spokesman, said that Trump was "ushering in an economy that will empower all Americans, just as it did during his first term."

He added that “the obsession with divisive D.E.I. initiatives reverse years of strides toward genuine equality.”

This agenda is exactly why DEI must be front and central to the resistance to rising moves to entrench Trump’s move to a presidential system with no checks on its powers. (The government shutdown gives Trump and the Office of Management and Budget a pretext for even more abuses.)

During the first 200 days of the Trump presidency, of the 98 of his nominees for the administration’s highest staff, only two were African American. These were Scott Turner, secretary of Housing and Urban Development and Earl G. Mathews, general counsel in the newly named Department of War. In the first Trump administration, of the 70 nominations, Ben Carson, who became Secretary of the housing department, was the only Black official confirmed.

#### Purges

Statistics compiled by Kathryn Dunn Tenpas for the Brookings Institution reveal the extent of a white administration. In comparison with this two percent rate 200 days into other administrations, Black officials represented 21% of Senate-confirmed nominees under Joseph Biden, 13% under Barack Obama and 8% under George W. Bush.

In the same time period, the Trump administration fired high-ranking Black officials who had been previously confirmed by the Senate. These include Alvin Brown, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board; General Charles Q. Brown, chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Carla Hayden, Congress librarian; Robert E. Primus, board chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Gwynne Wilcox, member of the National Labor Relations Board. (See “Trump Fires Black Officials From an Overwhelmingly White

Administration,” Elisabeth Bumiller and Erica L. Green, *New York Times*, updated 10/10/25)

Most were fired via email or text message without a reason. Several found their work phones and computers switched off and were escorted off federal property shortly afterward. But General Brown was clear about the reason he was shown the door. Pete Hegseth had called for his firing, claiming he harmed the military because he was implementing D.E.I. programs.

General Brown, along with Primus and Wilcox, are suing to be reinstated. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the administration could temporarily remove Gwynne Wilcox, the first Black woman to serve on the NLRB, as her suit goes forward.

Wilcox is concerned about the agency since it no longer has a quorum and its work has ground to a halt.

Others have been pressured to step down rather than face the humiliation of a brutal firing and smear campaign. Willie L. Phillips, the first African American chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, resigned last spring at the request of the White House.

Trump’s attempt to fire Lisa D. Cook, the first Black woman governor at the Federal Reserve Board, has so far been unsuccessful. Unlike in the Wilcox case, the Supreme Court ruled Cook can continue to serve as the Administration’s challenge goes forward.

Although Trump initially targeted the board chair, Jerome Powell, for removal, rules state that a member can only be removed for cause. Then the administration charged that Cook had lied on a mortgage application. Even if true, the incident had nothing to do with her qualifications or performance on the board, and occurred before her confirmation.

(Media reports indicate that the charge is specious.)

Cook is a former economics professor whose research focused on racial disparities, the history of financial institutions, and crises in financial markets and innovation.

Activist LaTosha Brown explained to the *Guardian* why Trump picked Lisa Cook:

He picked her because he is betting that, in an industry that is probably 90% or more white male, his odds of removing her are greater than the odds for removing others from the board. That in itself is rooted in the history and how insidious racism is built into the fabric of how we see people of color in this country.

So far Cook has fought this attempt to fire her all the way up to the Supreme Court, which found that she could continue as Governor as her case progressed. It has been added to their docket in early 2026.

Many of these individuals were the first African Americans to be nominated, confirmed and work in their category. This is true for Alvin Brown, Lisa Cook, Carla Hayden, Willie Phillips, Robert Primus and Gwynne Wilcox. General Brown was the second Black chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Clearly these purges demonstrate why defending DEI must be front and central in fighting Trump’s authoritarianism and his white supremacist policies. The unity of the working class that’s essential to defeating the far right is not possible unless that occurs.

*Source: November-December 2025, ATC 239*

# No return of the centre but consolidation of the far-right and weakening of the left in Dutch elections

12 November 2025, by SAP / Grenzeloos

## Far right stable and strong

Firstly, the parliamentary far-right has shown itself to be remarkably stable. Around a third of the seats in parliament remain in its hands. The loss of the PVV is offset by the gains of other far-right parties: JA21 and FvD. JA21 supports similar politics as the PVV but in a more technocratic, respectable guise while FvD is arguably to the right of the PVV and openly refers to neo-fascist and racist ideas. Yet another party, the Farmer-Citizen Movement (BBB in Dutch initials) entered parliament in 2021 as a populist, rightwing party and has since then shifted towards the far-right. All in all, the far-right enlarged its parliamentary presence. The most likely scenario is the formation of a new centre-right cabinet, one that will not solve the social problems that stimulate the growth of the far-right. There is therefore a real risk of even further growth of the far-right.

## The centre is shifting to the right

As stable as the far right is, so unstable is the famous political centre. One of the real surprises of the elections was that the losses for the conservative-liberal, pro-business government-party VVD remained limited. But that does not mean that this party is not changing. Under its present leader Dilan Yeşilgöz, the party has clearly shifted further to the right. The VVD lost votes on its “left” from liberals who switched to D66, but this loss was offset on the right by an influx of former PVV voters who

apparently agree with the party’s new orientation. As a result, the VVD is becoming less and less ‘the right wing of the centre’ and increasingly the natural ally of the far-right.

And D66 has also shifted to the right. Its leader Rob Jetten is no longer the politician who once embraced the label of climate fanatic and who showed up at a climate justice demonstration.

Instead, D66 has joined in the attacks on the politically powerless group that in the Netherlands is so often blamed for everything that goes wrong: refugees. Jetten’s D66 managed to combine right-wing positions on increasing defence spending, detaining asylum seekers outside Europe and cutting benefits with a vaguely progressive sentiment, thereby winning the elections. Only the appearance is progressive. Incidentally, the result of this shift is only two more seats than in 2021. Here too, the so-called change in pattern is not that substantial at all.

## Further erosion of the centre-left

The rise of D66 came largely at the expense of GreenLeft [1] and the Labour Party. Those two parties are engaged in process of merging and participated in the elections as a joint list; GroenLinks-PvdA.

D66 also attracted votes from conservative parties but only to considerably smaller extent. The GroenLinks-PvdA merger project was an attempt to climb out of the slump that GroenLinks and the PvdA found themselves in in 2021. The PvdA had already ended up there in 2017. That year, the PvdA suffered a historic defeat of 29 seats. This was the

punishment for the party’s decision, after running a campaign against the VVD, to join a VVD-led cabinet and help implement a harsh austerity agenda. The merger party would rather not be reminded of this.

In order to be an attractive alternative, GroenLinks-PvdA is now trying to present a different message. But at the same time, its political horizon is limited to striving for participation in a coalition government with the right at the soonest possible moment. Choosing to be an opposition-party that builds up counter-power seems to be literally unimaginable for its leadership. But a choice to participate in a centre-right cabinet with D66 and VVD, a real possibility, will probably end badly for the party.

GroenLinks-PvdA leader Frans Timmermans was the embodiment of the dilemma in which the new party found itself. During the elections, he declared that he had “learned” from the experience of participating in the VVD-led government when “unnecessarily harsh” austerity measures were implemented. Timmermans had been himself a minister in this cabinet, the formation of which he had strongly supported. Another of Timmermans’ achievements was his earlier role in blocking cooperation with the left-wing SP. “Never trust anyone who has ever been a communist,” he said of this. In his own way, Timmermans is a sincere politician who is convinced that cooperation with the moderate right in a centre cabinet should be the goal. But that did not help him to be convincing as the leader of a left-wing opposition party. The upshot was that GroenLinks-PvdA was unable to retain voters who were leaning towards D66 and also failed to win new voters.

## Further weakening of the entire left

A second surprise was that the elections brought yet another defeat for the SP which fell from five to three seats. For almost two decades now, the party has failed to win additional seats in parliamentary elections. Little remains of the historic record set in 2006, when the party won 25 seats. The party's lack of self-criticism is discouraging. More often than not, disappointing election results are attributed to factors outside the party. With a new party leader and combative rhetoric, the party seemed to be on the verge of a minor revival but instead, yet another disappointment followed.

Part of the explanation for this failure is the ageing of its shrinking membership and of the party's social base. It is striking where many former SP voters are going. When people switch parties, they usually move to one that is directly adjacent to their old home. But in the case of the SP, the number of defectors who are turning radically, in this case to the far-right, is remarkably high. The SP's "economically left-wing but socially conservative" orientation does not deter people from choosing the far-right.

All in all, there is little reason to rejoice about the so-called return of the political centre as an alternative to the far-right. Not only is this centre unstable, its content is also becoming increasingly right-wing. The left, of course, has even less reason to rejoice. The fact that the ecologist Party for the Animals managed to maintain its three seats and that the

far right is somewhat more divided than before is cold comfort. These elections also showed once again that outside the major cities, the radical-left party BIJ1 ('together' in Dutch) is virtually non-existent. In the capital Amsterdam, BIJ1 managed to score 2.4 per cent but Amsterdam is not the Netherlands. The fact that BIJ1 has a consistent left-wing narrative, opposing militarisation, NATO and racism, is not enough. Its future is unclear. After these elections, the Dutch left is at an all-time low.

## A truly left-wing policy

The decline of the Dutch left is, of course, not unique; the right is on the rise globally. It would be a mistake to attribute the election results solely to the role played by specific individuals. It is true that election campaigns are becoming more and more like show business. Many people do not vote on the basis of well-considered political convictions but are guided by "vibes", as Jetten correctly put it. But that leaves open the question of why certain political movements succeed in appealing to such feelings. Why does anger so often take the form of racism and support for the far-right, and why is a centre-right party like D66 able to present itself as a source of hope and optimism?

A Labour Party strategist attributed their loss to "poor communication"; the party has a good story to tell but fails to convey it convincingly because it still has "too much respect for intelligence". More crude demagoguery and empty promises should therefore compensate for the lack of strategy. Perhaps that can help to win seats, but not to pursue left-wing policies.

At present, there simply is no audience in the Netherlands large enough to make truly left-wing policies possible, policies that break with neoliberalism, that prioritise the interests of the vast majority on issues such as the housing shortage and healthcare, and that take serious measures to combat the climate crisis. For this to happen, not only must enough people desire such policies, they must also be convinced that they are possible. Until they are, people will opt for the moderate right as an alternative to the far-right. Or they will join the large group of non-voters.

Focus groups and communication strategies cannot solve this fundamental problem. Building a base for such policies will be a long-term endeavour, going against the tide. It requires organising people and addressing their daily concerns and linking that to a vision that does not stop at the next elections. It requires struggle, debate and conviction. It requires strong social movements and a political organisation that gives expression to them. The sooner we face this with sober senses and act, the better.

6 November 2025

First published on [Grenzeloos](#).

## Footnotes

[1] GroenLinks (GreenLeft) was formed in 1990 from a merger of the Communist Party (CPN), the Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP), the Political Party Radicals (PPR), and the Evangelical People's Party (EVP).

# Democratic Socialist Mamdani, Other Democrats Win November Elections

11 November 2025, by [Dan La Botz](#)

Mamdani ran on a platform calling for freezing rents, making public

transportation free, and providing free childcare. And while it was not a

central issue in his campaign, he made clear that he supported Palestine and

promised to arrest Benjamin Netanyahu for war crimes if he came to New York. His opponents labeled him an antisemite and even suggested he was linked to Hamas, but still, he won one-third of the Jewish vote. He won wide support from younger voters, renters, labor union members, and Black and Latino voters.

Mamdani's victory was a defeat for President Donald Trump and his Republican Party, especially coming as it did among several other Democratic victories. At the same time, it was a victory for the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. And it was a victory for the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the country's largest socialist organization with about 80,000 members.

When he becomes mayor on January 1, 2026, he will face enormous challenges. Trump has suggested he will make Mamdani and New Yorkers pay for electing a socialist. And he has the power to do so. He can withhold funds from the city. He can send Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the National Guard to the city. And he can support the financial interests and realtors who oppose Mamdani.

In his victory speech Mamdani told his supporters that as mayor, "We will put an end to the culture of corruption that has allowed billionaires like Trump to evade taxation and exploit tax breaks." Directly addressing the president, he said, "New York will remain a city of immigrants: a city built by immigrants, powered by immigrants and, as of tonight, led by an immigrant. So, hear me, President Trump, when I say this: To get to any of us, you will have to get through all of us."

Across the country Republicans suffered defeats on November 4. In Virginia, Former Democratic Rep. Abigail Spanberger has defeated Republican Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears 51.2% to 42.6 percent to become governor. While in New Jersey Democratic Rep. Mikie Sherrill defeated Donald Trump's candidate Jack Ciattarelli, a former state legislator, to win the governorship. The Democratic victors are known as "national security democrats," that is, not "hawks" but supporters of a strong military and the use of soft power, such as foreign aid. Abigail Spanberger is a former CIA intelligence officers and Mikie Sherrill

is a former Navy officer. They could both be characterized as mainstream or moderate Democrats and are definitely not progressives. Nevertheless, as Democrats they stand solidly opposed to Donald Trump and his Republican Party. In that sense, their election was a victory for the opposition.

In California, Governor Gavin Newsom and the Democrats succeeded in passing a referendum on Proposition 50 which allows them to redraw the congressional districts to get more seats in Congress. They won by 64 to 36 percent, a stunning victory for the Democrats. Prop 50 was a response to a measure in Texas that will redistrict to benefit Republicans.

The far left, those who define themselves as "revolutionary socialists," such as Solidarity and Tempest, declined to endorse Mamdani because he's a Democrat. They call instead for building mass movements to challenge Trump and both major parties. Most American progressives look to a combination of protests like "No Kings" days and to the election of Democrats to stop Trump.

*9 November 2025*

## After Typhoon Tino (Kalmaegi): Mourn and Rage for Accountability and demand for ecological transformation

10 November 2025, by [Remo Camote](#)

The public cannot just simply mourn. While the survivors are slowly picking up the pieces of their lives, movements across the country demand full transparency and justice for the victims.

For the Filipinos, the failure to protect lives and national resources must entail legal and political consequences without delay.

The devastation caused by Typhoon Tino across the Visayas, Mindanao, and (Mindoro, Marinduque,

Romblon, and Palawan) MIMAROPA regions is more than a natural disaster—it shows the high price of ecological destruction and systemic corruption. Over 2.2 million Filipinos are affected, and the families are grieving the 188 confirmed deaths (National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Nov 7, 2025), with 135 individuals still missing.

A total of 123 areas reported flooding, not less than 9,585 homes and 81 pieces of infrastructure—including government facilities, schools, farms,

roads, and bridges—were damaged. Agricultural losses are estimated at ₱10.615 million, and at least 64 cities and municipalities have declared a state of calamity.

The nation entered a State of National Calamity on Thursday, Nov 6, following the catastrophic onslaught. Government reports said that the Office of the President (OP) has provided a total of ₱760 million in financial assistance to the affected local government units:

- PhP50 million each for the provinces of Cebu, Capiz, Surigao del Norte, Iloilo, Bohol, and Negros Occidental; PhP40 million each for Eastern Samar, Surigao del Sur, Southern Leyte, Antique, and Aklan;

- PhP30 million each for Leyte and Masbate; PhP20 million each for Guimaras, Agusan del Norte, and Dinagat Islands; PhP10 million each for Biliran, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Misamis Oriental, Negros Oriental, and Palawan; and

- PhP5 million to Albay, Romblon, Batangas, Northern Samar, Siquijor, Quezon, Samar, Agusan del Sur, Laguna, Zamboanga City, City of Manila (due to stranded passengers), Camiguin, Occidental Mindoro, Camarines Norte, Zamboanga del Norte, and Iligan City.

Raising more doubts and the loss of confidence in the bureaucracy related to the recent flood-control projects corruption scandal, the disbursement of these amounts has been called for a transparent system with strict compliance with accountability standards. It must!

## **Beyond Immediate Relief**

But what is also important to highlight nowadays, aside from preparing for another typhoon, is that the government's and people's responses must extend beyond immediate relief to confront the root causes that turned a powerful storm into an avoidable, human-made tragedy.

The massive, deadly flooding in urban centers such as Cebu—where 111 lives were lost and water levels rose faster than in any recent storm—provides undeniable proof of a failed “ridge to reefs” management strategy. Surface run-off and landslides were amplified by the degradation of natural defenses. Recent reports confirm that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is probing large-scale developments and altered mountain slopes in Cebu, underscoring the direct link: when forests disappear, communities drown.

Government spending on flood control projects in Cebu reached more than P50 billion over the past decade, the Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary said and submitted the records with recommendations to the investigating Commission for Infrastructures formed by the Philippine president following the explosion of massive protests demanding accountability. While, approximately P25.52 billion to P26.6 billion was spent on flood control projects in Cebu province from 2022 to 2025 as mentioned in the media reports. Whenever the dates covered, the disaster revealed that these investments failed to protect the populace.

This inability of billions of pesos in flood control projects to safeguard communities is a direct consequence of misappropriated funds and substandard engineering. Investigations into more than 500 flood control projects in Cebu must bring uncompromising justice.

But it would be naïve to attribute the tragedy solely to climate change or natural occurrence. While rising sea temperatures and intensifying storms are real, the scale of loss in Tino's wake is amplified by systemic corruption. Funds intended for mitigating infrastructure have been ghosted, contracts awarded to politically connected firms, and oversight mechanisms weakened.

The Office of the Ombudsman have announced the creation of a special task force, and must prioritize investigations into anomalous flood control projects in the Tino hit areas. While the DENR also reportedly announced to aggressively pursue and sanction entities whose activities—such as mining, quarrying, logging, or illegal land conversion and other forest alterations—contributed to landslides and accelerated flood flows. This includes suspending or revoking Environmental Compliance Certificates (ECCs) for violators. These processes must uncover truths for justice and not bury the findings to escape from accountability. Officials, contractors, and engineers responsible for substandard or non-existing projects must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. These

must not serve as an addition to bureaucratic circus and mockery to the dead.

In addition, the demand for an independent, legislated citizen's-led truth commission to investigate and bring behind bars the culprits who mastered all environmental and government fund plunders has become louder. We cannot rely genuine compliance with personalities and agencies investigating their own dark shadows. They are responsible for issuing permits and clearances to these environmentally destructive and anomalous investments and have colluded with irregularities. To ensure escape, they will only clear their patrons if not their selves. Reforms in the government procurement processes must be introduced restricting politicians from accessing government projects or any corporations having close ties with public officials and government personnel. Records should be made available for public access. Constitutional provision against political dynasties has to be enacted once and for all.

The widespread presence of political dynasties and recurring infrastructure scandals in the Philippines is a well-documented national problem, often identified as a significant barrier to genuine progress and effective governance. These political families, who maintain intergenerational power across regions, are widely considered a root cause or major enabler of systemic corruption, especially within public works.

## **Dynasties: Power Concentration and Broken Checks**

Philippines is run by despotic dynasties for long decades already. Estrada, Aquino, Duterte, Marcos, etc have ruled the nation one after the other. These dynasties have monopolized power from the national level down to provincial, city, and municipal governments. And this overwhelming concentration of authority erodes the system of checks and balances.

Such, established and sustained extensive patronage networks, where loyalty is rewarded with access to public resources; Massive-budgeted infrastructure projects become the primary vehicle for the patronage system and for misappropriation of public funds; unrestricted access to opportunities for corruption with control over substantial public funds—particularly those allocated for flood control and roads; and the deeply entrenched influence over vital institutions, including the bureaucracy, regulatory bodies, and even the justice system, corrupt dynastic politicians often operate with a high degree of impunity, making accountability low-risk.

The wealth and resources acquired through corruption (frequently stemming from infrastructure projects) are then used to finance expensive election campaigns, thereby ensuring the dynasty's survival and perpetual hold on power.

This cycle ensures that the concentration of public wealth, control over natural resources, and political power remains in the hands of a few families.

A study by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) found that at least 71 of the country's 82 provincial governments (87%) are led by members of political dynasties.

Examples across Luzon include the Marcoses (Ilocos Norte), Singsons (Ilocos Sur), Ortegas (La Union), and Pinedas (Pampanga); dynasties like the Romualdezes (Eastern Leyte) and Tans (Samar Island) in Visayas; and Mindanao is similarly dominated by families such as the Dimaporos (Lanao del Norte), Adiongs (Lanao del Sur), and Mangudadatus (Maguindanao).

The PCIJ also counted that 113 out of 149 Philippine cities are dynasty-ruled, including the Dutertes (Davao) and Binays (Makati City).

These dynastic families holding executive posts in provinces and cities also place relatives in local legislative bodies, even encroaching upon Party-list elections. Their influence is further compounded by having close family or friendly ties with corporations

involved in government bids, with some even owning construction firms. This strong clout is consistently leveraged to bargain votes, influences, and favors with national authorities.

In the ongoing investigation of the DPWH and the Philippine President himself, findings led to DPWH and dynasties-favored contractors were rewarded government infrastructure projects and are also election campaign donors.

Despite a presidential vow following the fourth State of the Nation Address in July to investigate and punish those responsible for widespread infrastructure failures exposed by massive rains that same month and his institution of an infrastructure investigating commission, not a single conviction had been made three months later.

## Where to after Tino?

Going forward, the national recovery plan must be anchored in democratic ecological restoration and climate justice.

Three critical actions are proposed here:

- The government must prioritize massive reforestation of upland watersheds and rehabilitation of damaged coastal mangrove forests in affected regions (and the whole country), allocating a substantial portion of calamity and recovery funds to these efforts. This requires moving beyond a defensive, status quo mindset that enables environmental plunder and corruption, toward a holistic, ecological, and democratic approach defined by transparency and corruption-free mechanisms.

- The Marcos, Jr. administration needs to immediately push to repeal the Philippine Mining Act and table the proposed climate accountability and alternative mineral management policies as urgent priorities. These policies are vital for establishing a resource management system that prioritizes the Filipino people and the environment. Furthermore, these are

necessary to hold major fossil fuel polluters financially accountable for climate damages, losses, and the essential adaptation measures required by Filipinos, who are among the most vulnerable to worsening disasters. If President Marcos, Jr. seeks to truly differentiate himself from the pro-capitalist legacy of his father (Marcos Sr.) and the International Criminal Court detainee former President Duterte's, he must champion these proposals now. And to be really different, he should front line in the passage of an anti-dynasty law in the country, a test of his statesman's imagery in the global scene.

- The Philippine government must fundamentally shift towards a climate-just, democratic, and sovereignty-based economic and governance model. This mandate requires all government agencies and Local Government Units (LGUs) to integrate this perspective into every facet of development planning, recognizing that our forests, rivers, and reefs are the lifeblood of human sustenance. Protecting the environment is synonymous with protecting the people and all other inhabitants.

The current practice of continually funding ineffective, often corrupted, climate mitigation efforts—such as the National Greening Program, or waste management programs that fail to address pollutant plastic production or the failure in implementing those beautifully bound plans, must be transformed.

Instead of wasteful spending, the government must take serious structural actions like, implementation of a comprehensive rehabilitation and restoration of all watersheds and forests, spanning from the uplands to the plains and coasts; immediate suspension of operations and projects that are actively destroying our forests, hills, rivers, and coastal areas and rehabilitate; and provision of substantial support for ecological agriculture, local industrialization, and democratic, sustainable economies.

Without these decisive, structural reforms, the daily devastation will only escalate. As a nine-year-old girl in front of me this morning said,

“corruption and destruction of the environment enriched the few and tear apart the country.”

## Dignified Recovery to Democratic Transformation

Government, civil society, and the private sector must guarantee the meaningful participation of survivors in all recovery and rehabilitation processes. This means providing guaranteed spaces for representation, dialogue, and decision-making. Survivors should never be subjected to recovery programs that burden them with debt or require gratitude for essential aid. Excluding victims and survivors will only aggravate their grief and frustration, potentially leading to social chaos.

Beyond immediate humanitarian aid, social and progressive movements need to mobilize the nation’s broad base of climate survivors. This collective force must be consolidated into a significant political and electoral base at both local and national levels to genuinely push for reforms and radical transformation, rather than being used as mere political propaganda. Any form of opportunism capitalizing on these tragedies must be exposed and denounced.

The outrage surrounding Typhoon Tino presents a crucial opportunity—not just for short-term relief, but for a fundamental transformation of the Philippines’ development model. Progressive movements, civil society organizations, and innovative private sector actors should unite around a platform that inextricably links climate action with social justice. This coalition must actively challenge the entrenched extractive interests that have long benefited from environmental destruction.

The disaster of Typhoon Tino, and others before it, should serve as a stark indictment of the moral and political decay fueled by the prevailing capitalist culture. The tragedy must not be simply recorded as a statistic. Instead, it must catalyze a new era of governance where ecological stewardship, transparent and accountable fiscal management, and real democracy are inseparable.

True rebuilding is not just about repairing physical infrastructure like roads; it must also include restoring the moral and social fabric eroded by corruption and negligence. This profound transformation cannot be expected from the current ruling elite; it is the shared responsibility and accountability of progressive forces and the popular masses.

Democratic forces must continue direct demonstrations and mass actions for accountability on the pocketed government funds for infrastructures, and this must include now the environmental plunder and the aggravating circumstances.

Ondoy, Sendong, Pablo, Odette, Yolanda including the earthquakes and the rest must have taught us lessons and grounded experiences- the civil society, the communities and the government in shaping our vision, our strategic direction and actions. Resiliency corresponds empowerment and justice.

The climate martyrs and the survivors deserve decisive action and justice—and we must fight for it. Weeks ago, September 30, 2025, to be exact, the same province (northern Cebu) trembled with a 6.9 magnitude earthquake —collapsing buildings, causing dozens of deaths, displacing thousands, and prompting a large-scale emergency response.

*Mindanao, Philippines  
8 November 2025*

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# The uprising after the collapse at Novi Sad

9 November 2025, by [Fourth International Serbia delegation](#)

Violence, corruption, nepotism, nationalism: these words would probably not be enough to characterize the police state regime of Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, who has been at the country's helm since 2012. Its hold on the country's institutions and land heritage is sprawling. To obtain a basic job in many sectors, or even a simple place to live, it is strongly recommended to take your card from the ruling party, the SNS (Serbian Progressive Party), and to participate in its propaganda meetings. Many Serbs consider themselves "under occupation." And they speak of imperialist interference coming from the East as well as from the West, which closes its eyes to the reality of the regime.

## Students as driving force of resistance

The Novi Sad disaster, a symptom of corruption that has devastated the country's economic infrastructure, acted as a detonator. Teaching staff, going beyond its traditional

corporatism, initiated a strike movement. It was quickly joined, and massively, by students from all over the country. Organized in assemblies that apply strict democratic practices, they have set up long marches throughout the country. From village to village, they are welcomed by the inhabitants as heroes. The majority of people enthusiastically supported the movement of those they call "our children."

One of the most striking and moving symbols was the meeting of students from Novi Pazar, a city with a Muslim and Bosnian majority, with students from the rest of the country: a scene of incredible symbolic force in this region of Europe haunted by a genocidal civil war. "It was the first time I felt like a Serbian citizen," said a student from Novi Pazar when he arrived in Belgrade.

## Movement plans electoral challenge

Since September, the movement has struggled to find a second breath; blockades of universities have stopped almost everywhere. Lack of political

coordination? Is the movement running out of steam over the long term? Failed convergence with the trade union movement? Conflictual relationship with a discredited political opposition? Intensification of repression by the regime? Structural blockage linked to Serbia's position in the world economy? There are many explanations for the current impasses, and they testify to the richness of the strategic debates that run through the Serbian left.

To find a political outlet, the student movement, demanding Vučić's departure and the holding of free and democratic elections, has chosen to present an independent electoral list. A student list that has engaged in extensive programmatic and organizational work, in conjunction with the rest of the population and civil society. Some polls credit them with more than 45% of voting intentions. The regime has understood this well, rejecting any early election and playing the card of rot and repression to the full. We will stand by them in this perilous fight and send them our full solidarity.

5 November 2025

# Nobel Peace Prize: Beyond the Dismay...

8 November 2025, by [Luís Bonilla-Molina](#)

Clearly, understanding the implications of awarding this prize requires an analysis to fully grasp the stakes of its political motivations. This is the only way to highlight the driving forces acting in concert with the military, media, and mass data-gathering offensive conducted in the Caribbean in recent months. We call for moving beyond simplistic, binary interpretations of political propaganda and geopolitical frameworks that reflect the power dynamics that led to the awarding of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize.

Of course, our position unequivocally rejects any attempt at military intervention or intelligence work by the United States (CIA) in Venezuela. What we wish to emphasize in this article is the need to build an anti-imperialism from the working class, an anti-imperialism that transcends the deceptive rhetoric of the left, which, under the guise of a geopolitical vision, ignores the material living conditions of the working class and the restrictions imposed on political freedoms by the current regime.

## The Nobel Peace Prize: an eternal strategy of capitalist soft power?

Historically, the United States, while developing its strategy of economic and military domination, also implements mechanisms of control and cultural hegemony. Soft power (the title of a book by Joseph Nye,

1990) refers to the North American capacity to subtly influence geopolitical power dynamics through social behaviour by fostering ideological adherence through discourse or an approach that prioritizes persuasion over force and direct coercion; in other words, enabling the dominated to appropriate the position of the dominant themselves.

In this sense, the Nobel Prize has historically served several functions: first, to co-opt leaders and align them with consensus-building strategies—liberal, neoliberal, or illiberal—while distancing all discourse and actions from any positioning related to class struggle. The rhetoric of national reconciliation often plays a central role in this. Second, to neutralize anti-imperialist projects, portraying them as radical, uncivilized, and out of step with the present, to the point of equating the concepts of sovereignty and freedom with an unprecedented threat to US national security. The goal is to socially isolate movements that challenge private property and the power of capital. Third, to reinforce Western cultural hegemony, that of the Northern powers. Fourth, to use humanitarian morality as an ideological weapon—from a Gramscian perspective—to justify actions involving the disproportionate use of force. Fifth, to establish the dominance of global financial capital in the landscape, presenting market stabilization as a hallmark of lasting peace. This can be easily verified by examining the circumstances surrounding the awarding of several of these prizes in Norway.

In 1983 (Lech Walesa) and 1989 (Mikhail Gorbachev), the Nobel Prize served as a mechanism to accelerate and legitimize the Soviet bloc's transition to capitalism, protecting the leadership that effectively guaranteed it. After the dismantling of the USSR, Poland was integrated into NATO, thus consolidating the eastern border of the Atlantic bloc. Gorbachev's rhetoric of openness and transparency provided the framework for the transition to capitalism in the Soviet republics.

This rhetoric, legitimized by the Nobel Prize, facilitated the imposition of

market peace, guaranteeing Russia's entry into the processes of global capital reproduction, to the point of becoming a driving force for the potential creation of a Group of Three (G3) within the context of the reconfiguration of international power relations following the world wars. The war in Ukraine and drone provocations against once-inviolable European nations are part of this new world order that is struggling to emerge and consolidate. The Nobel Prizes awarded to Walesa and Gorbachev contributed to building global capitalist hegemony and consolidating North American imperial power, following a gradual downward trajectory. Once their objectives were achieved, the laureates faded into the background.

In 1991, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Aung San Suu Kyi (Myanmar) amidst the highly publicized context of Burma's democratic transition, presented by the West as an example of peaceful resistance—that is, the ability to prevent the loss of capital control in the face of a popular uprising. Aung San Suu Kyi's rise to power marked the triumph of political and economic neoliberalism over progressive Asian national models. Indeed, from the moment she took office, she aligned herself with Western capital, liberalizing strategic sectors while repressing ethnic minorities such as the Rohingya. Consequently, the prize became the mechanism by which the internal bourgeois bloc was able to consolidate itself, thus opening the country to international energy companies and Western multinationals after decades of "isolation" from the circuits of the global market and transnational capital.

Years later, after the PLO's evident dismantling had begun, the Oslo Accords between Israel and Palestine were signed, their legitimacy confirmed by the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize, awarded jointly to Shimon Peres, Yitzhak Rabin, and Yasser Arafat. These accords, which created a "Palestinian Authority," obscured the anti-imperialist nature of the Palestinian cause, subordinating the national liberation struggle to an administration dependent on international aid. The rise of Hamas,

contrary to this logic, was a predictable consequence, furthering Israel's strategic plan to crush the Palestinian people, drive them into the occupied territories, and ultimately lead to the current genocide in Gaza. The path to this genocide was paved by the Nobel Peace Prize's legitimization of the Oslo Accords. The 1994 Nobel Prize marked the staging of the post-Cold War neoliberal consensus in Palestine.

Barack Obama received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, just months after becoming President of the United States, in recognition of his efforts to re-legitimize his country's leadership following the disasters in Iraq and the evidence of torture at Guantanamo. The Obama administration consolidated the new model of hybrid warfare with the use of drones for military purposes (Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan), the invasion and destruction of Libya (2011), and the bombings in Syria and Iraq under the pretext of attacking the Islamic State. The promotion of soft coups like the 2009 coup in Honduras (Zelaya), the expansion of military bases in Africa (AFRICOM) and the Middle East, the coup in Egypt (against Mohamed Morsi), the coup in Ukraine (Euromaidan, 2014), and attempts to reorganize the imperial system after the 2008 financial crisis. Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Obama became a symbolic act, aimed at presenting North American hegemonic neocolonial leadership as ethical, not based on imperial coercion. This is what the Trump administration tried to do in 2025, unsuccessfully, because the geopolitical manipulation surrounding Venezuela was far more astute. The Norwegian jury did not make its decision because of disagreements between Europe and the Trump administration, as has been portrayed, because Europe is already submissive enough to allow itself such a gesture of rebellion, but because Venezuela is a priority in the current context of imperialist reorganization.

In 2016, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Juan Manuel Santos, former Minister of Defence under Álvaro Uribe Vélez, responsible for the "democratic security" policy and the expansion of US military bases on Colombian soil. As Minister of

Defence, he led the rescue operation of Ingrid Betancourt and 15 others, as well as the massacre of 17 FARC guerrillas in Ecuador, during which Raúl Reyes was killed (Operation Phoenix, 2008). As president (2010-2018), he led Operation Sodom (2010), which resulted in the death of Commander Jojoy (Víctor Julio Suárez), and Operation Odiseo (2011), during which Alfonso Cano, then a high-ranking FARC leader, was killed. His military actions of extermination paved the way, through military means, for the possibility of political negotiations. Therefore, the 2016 Nobel laureate's objective was to confer international legitimacy on the peace agreement with the FARC-EP, which, as we have emphasized, had been preceded by assassination operations against the group's leaders. In doing so, the United States ensured the implementation of a peace narrative that masked the clauses of an agreement that diminished the possibility of radical change, particularly regarding the dominance of the Colombian bourgeoisie and its colonial relationship with the North Americans. While the peace process formally mitigated the manifestations of internal warfare, it did not alter the economic structure of wealth accumulation by a small sector, nor did it break the oligarchic control of the territory that had fuelled the armed uprisings of previous decades. The "peace", legitimized by the Nobel Prize, was the necessary condition to attract foreign direct investment, particularly in the mining, hydrocarbon and agri-food sectors, thus consolidating the neoliberal model in this country.

This "geopolitical" trajectory was confirmed in 2019 when the prize was awarded to Ethiopian President Abiy Ahmed for the peace agreement with Eritrea and the democratic opening he spearheaded. This prize brought an end to the cycle of American interventions that led to the overthrow of the leftist DERG regime (Ethiopian Provisional Military Government, 1974-1991) and the period of instability caused by the military offensive of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which overthrew Mengistu Haile Mariam. In reality, this prize

served to re-legitimize the Ethiopian government, which aligned itself with the US and IMF strategy for the Horn of Africa. The Abiy administration (2018-) has pursued the privatization of state-owned enterprises (telecommunications, airlines, energy, transport, logistics, and ports), pushing for market-friendly reforms to integrate Ethiopia into the logic of global finance (megaprojects such as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam), while simultaneously intervening to avert the risk of radical change. The Abiy government has shifted towards neoliberalism (opening foreign banks, establishing a stock exchange), launching macroeconomic reforms with the help of international loans (IMF and others), opening up the exchange rate to the public and introducing flexibility into the economy, and dispossessing communities through land accumulation by displacing the urban poor due to land-use change. Following the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize, the Tigray War (2020) revealed that the peace achieved was in reality a mechanism for reorganizing state power that favoured elites associated with transnational capital and Washington's interests. Control of the Red Sea (the ports of Djibouti and Eritrea) and the containment of Chinese commercial expansion, when you read between the lines, unveil the real reasons for awarding this prize.

In 2025, it was awarded to María Corina Machado, which is not really a surprise given the intended purpose. To explain who the recipient of this prize is, I will summarize the article I wrote with Leonardo Bracamonte in 2024, entitled "Venezuela: Who is María Corina Machado?"

## **María Corina Machado: beyond illiberalism**

María Corina Machado is a militant of political illiberalism and the fascist far right, harbouring hatred for anything resembling the political left. A descendant of European colonizers, she clearly embodies the global rise of the far right. This is not to deny or

obscure the extent of her leadership, based on the rallying of a significant portion of the Venezuelan right to the status quo, the catastrophic errors of the Maduro regime, and her ability to embrace the three major popular aspirations of the moment: decent wages (the current monthly minimum wage is less than one dollar) in line with the regional average, the return of migrants for family reunification, and freedom of opinion and association for the vast majority who live by their labour. However, an examination of her 2023 government programme reveals that these slogans, when they touch upon the interests of capital, are diluted or emptied of their substance. Her leadership, therefore, rests on a clear ideological foundation. This is a real leadership. Denying it helps neither political analysis nor building alternatives, even though, as Fernando Mires says, "MCM was the leader of a multi-social and multi-ideological national movement, which today has transformed into a pro-Trump movement... which, far from accumulating forces, has rather reduced them" (X network, 13/10/2025).

Over the past two years, Machado has established herself as the undisputed leader of a significant portion of the Venezuelan opposition. During the opposition primaries for the July 28, 2024 presidential election, she garnered overwhelming support (93 per cent) from voters. This was before her disqualification by the Maduro government, which prevented her from running for president. She then led the campaign of Edmundo González Urrutia, the opposition's "lead candidate" for the June 28, 2024 elections.

For the first time in 25 years, a right-wing candidate has garnered significant support, not only from traditional opposition groups but also from popular and left-wing sectors, weary of Maduro's authoritarianism and the elimination of democratic processes for choosing political representatives. Machado embodies not only opposition—to both Chavism and Maduroism—but also a bourgeois political project aligned with transnational capital, of geopolitical significance, seeking to exert institutional and state leadership as

soon as conditions allow.

María Corina Machado is clearly rooted in the traditional Venezuelan bourgeoisie. Her family history stretches back a long way: to Electricidad de Caracas and other economic and financial empires. She has cultivated a public image based on merit, individual effort, entrepreneurial values, and a model family, which contrasts sharply with what is known as clientelism, networks of favouritism, and state corruption, all of which are considered essential to the Venezuelan rentier system.

Her leadership is not based on strongly institutionalized party structures, but rather on fragile social organizations, civil society groups, and a high degree of personalization—a kind of "caudillismo." During the Chavist and Maduro years, Machado was a recurring figure in the opposition, often adopting insurrectionary positions (attempts to overthrow the government, denunciation of the dictatorship, etc.). One of the defining episodes was her participation in the 2004 recall referendum with the organization Súmate; it appears that Súmate received funding from US entities, and Machado was accused of conspiracy, though no legal action was taken.

As early as 2002, during the coup against Chávez, Machado signed the "National Salvation Decree" on behalf of civil society. This episode illustrates her early involvement in attempts to overthrow the institutions of the Chavist regime.

Her opposition is based on class principles: indeed, her governing programme (2023-2024), entitled "Venezuela: Land of Grace. Freedom, Democracy, and Prosperity," proposes a transition to a smaller state, a market economy, private property, a reduction of the bureaucratic apparatus, meritocracy, a liberal justice system, and guarantees for national and international private investment. She proposes a "national agreement" to turn the page on Maduro-Bolivarism in order to revise the Venezuelan social pact enshrined in the 1999 Constitution. One of the axes that she proposes is federalism,

understood as the decentralization of power, the distribution of resources to the regions, the creation of spaces for regional capitalist accumulation and the overcoming of the "imbalance of state control" in order to build new power relations based on capital.

In the article we co-authored with Bracamonte (2024), we highlight the six pillars of her government programme, presented in 2023, each accompanied by short-, medium-, and long-term measures. Among the political foundations of coexistence, she advocates the independence of powers, checks and balances, bureaucratic simplification, the professionalization of the civil service, the restoration of institutional balance, the legitimization of the legislative and judicial branches, and the restoration of legal guarantees.

Regarding the restructuring of the state, she emphasizes the need to reduce the size of the state in accordance with the neoliberal model, to reorganize the federal system, to digitize administrative processes ("E-gov"), to establish a meritocratic civil service career, and to retrain public workers on a voluntary basis to the new management model.

To stabilize the economy, she proposes a stable economic and financial framework, respect for private property, the elimination of public oversight of exchange and financing regulations, fiscal adjustments, agreements with international organizations such as the IMF/World Bank, debt-for-asset swaps, the privatization of public enterprises (including the state oil company PDVSA) and essential public services.

Her economic, social and cultural development strategy includes comprehensive health plans, STEM-focused education, education vouchers, curriculum overhauls aimed at eliminating Bolivarian ideology, a social security system with private components, labour flexibility and an integration policy based on private property and the market.

She advocates "sustainable development" based on a green economy through the promotion of non-polluting energies, green

businesses linked to private investment, the establishment of regulation of extractive sectors and the replacement of public debt with green initiatives.

In foreign policy, efforts are focused on the return of immigration, based on regaining the country's role in the international division of labour inherent in neoliberal globalization. Her pragmatic approach to international relations relies on the professionalization of the diplomatic corps (a new bureaucracy trained in the logic of capital) and integration into international organizations such as the OECD, which will attract foreign investment.

The opposition primary campaign gave her visibility and legitimacy. Despite her disqualification, her messages, her nationwide tour, and her optimistic rhetoric resonated more and more strongly. She cultivated an image of victimhood due to the government's underhand tactics (refusal to register, disqualifications, restrictions on her freedom of movement). This narrative strengthened her leadership. She succeeded in capturing the support not only of traditional right-wing sectors but also of broader sectors that had previously supported Maduro, including those targeted by sanctions, migrants, and working-class communities affected by the deterioration of services and the economy.

Although Machado presents an explicit neoliberal agenda, many of these ideas were not widely debated during the campaign, which facilitated the fact that her real programme remained in the shadows, or at least received little publicity. Publicly, she does not clearly address the popular demands of the working class, unions, social movements, or social rights: she focuses primarily on the legal guarantees of the market, private property, and a smaller state. Social policies appear more as promises or publicity stunts.

Machado fails to acknowledge the existence or role of the "new bourgeoisie," speaking only of corrupt individuals, as if the old bourgeoisie hadn't been built on the appropriation of oil revenues. This inability to engage in dialogue with the new

bourgeoisie limits her capacity to build broad consensus within the bourgeoisie, thus hindering her stated desire to promote an orderly transition of power. Her verbal radicalism—insurrectionism, outright opposition, and an uncompromising stance toward the Maduro regime—earns her support but also creates spaces for political conflict that pose risks to institutional stability and political dialogue. This is her main Achilles' heel: she takes sides with one or the other of the conflicting bourgeois sectors, thereby obstructing any possibility of political and economic stabilization.

Machado maintains close ties with the old Venezuelan bourgeoisie (businessmen, owners of the means of production). She is also connected to foreign capital and international and diplomatic organizations. Invitations, awards, and external recognition are an integral part of her career.

In 2005, María Corina Machado and George W. Bush met publicly to unveil their shared agenda on democracy and human rights, the domestic political situation, the future of bilateral relations between the United States and Venezuela, and oil geopolitics. Twenty years later, it appears that the agreements reached during that meeting are nearing completion.

The United States and other world powers are watching her leadership with interest, albeit cautiously, as a possible transitional option. A transition led by Machado and her alliance (MCM-EGU) will have to confront the contradictions between her neoliberal agenda and popular social expectations. Its success will depend on her ability to build a broader consensus, negotiate with other factions of the bourgeoisie, including the new bourgeoisie, and manage social tensions, which seems unlikely. However, the Maduro regime's missteps in managing the domestic situation and international relations—and even within the progressive bloc composed of Boric, Lula, Petro, and the late Pepe Mujica—have paved the way for the temptation to impose a forced transition.

María Corina Machado represents not

only electoral opposition to the Maduro regime, but also a military-institutional ideological project explicitly continuing the neoliberal shift initiated by Maduroism, while incorporating the illiberal forms currently promoted by the Trump administration. The MCM programme is based on the interests of the old bourgeoisie, transnational capital, free competition, and the shrinking of the state. The MCM political practice aims to liquidate the new bourgeoisie. Its leadership rests on concrete material foundations: the social emergency faced by millions of people who have suffered the degradation of their livelihoods, the effects of sanctions, inflation, and migration under the Maduro administration (2014-2025). Machado acts as the spokesperson for this discontent, despite her programme, which aims to preserve the interests of capital, not social rights. The illusion that Machado, if she came to power, would represent a progressive or democratic solution for the popular sectors is misleading: her project presents fundamental differences with social justice initiatives and is part of a logic of bourgeois restoration to move from neoliberalism to illiberalism.

## **The crisis preceding the 2025 Nobel Prize**

Since 1983 Venezuela has been going through a structural crisis of the accumulation model of a rentier bourgeoisie that appeared in 1958 – based on oil, extractivism and imports – and of political representation – from which it has not been able to escape, despite the neoliberal recipes (PAC, 1988), the popular revolt (1989), the military uprisings (4F and 27N, 1992), the broad-based government (Caldera, 1994), the Chavista period (1999-2013) and that under the aegis of Maduro (2013-2025).

The onset of the national crisis coincided with the advent of neoliberal globalization, the financialization of the global economy, and the rise of technopolitics as a substitute for global ideological

assumptions. This combination of local and international factors necessitated a new model of bourgeois accumulation combining local and international capital, tangible investments, and speculative financialization based on oil rents. It also necessitated a new model of partisan mediation capable of transcending Fordist assumptions and social security models, and of liberalizing relations between social classes. This implied not only the emergence of new political paradigms but also the creation of a new generation of leaders—a development that those in power could not accept without reacting. Moreover, the Venezuelan bourgeoisie, parasitic due to its rentier accumulation, lacked the experience to integrate into the internationalized, competitive market promoted by globalization, which exacerbated the crisis.

Chavism's particular effort (1999-2013) to overcome the crisis on the basis of a social agenda of wealth democratization – which never turned into an anti-capitalist revolution, but which included progressive elements – clashed with the emergence of a new bourgeoisie, with its own class interests, which, in the period 2013-2025, has slowed down and eliminated the remnants of radicalism.

Chávez's candidacy (1996-1998) called for the development of a humane capitalism, a third way, that would overcome the domination of the old bourgeoisie, not eliminate it. This is why sectors of this old bourgeoisie, represented by Miquilena and others, supported him until the 2002 coup. From then on, the Bolivarian Revolution experienced a dual situation that would mark its dramatic outcome. On the one hand, the promotion of a national, popular, and community-based project, the construction of popular power—albeit still directed and controlled by the party—with the so-called 21st-century socialism (starting in 2005); on the other hand, the emergence of a new bourgeoisie, which benefited from the old rentier model based on imports. The rise in oil prices would contribute to this dual orientation, fostering a new form of multi-classism.

The 2009-2010 financial crisis in

Venezuela, which implicated key figures of Chavism who now owned banks, demonstrated that the neo-bourgeois project was underway. Between 2009 and 2012, the persistent but growing confrontation between the two paths of the Bolivarian process (the communal path and the bourgeois path) was evident. Chávez, who aspired to the role of mediator—some claim, without any way to verify it, that his strategic bet was on the national popular movement—fell ill and eventually died, suddenly giving way to a successor (Maduro) who lacked the leadership and the internal balance of power necessary to maintain the mediating ties inherent in a multi-class mass project.

Maduro's rise to power thus inaugurated a new phase: Madurism, which relies on the supremacy of the neo-bourgeois programme and the subordination and then liquidation of the popular national community project. 21st-century socialism is reduced to a slogan, which maintains the solidarity of sectors of an international left incapable of grasping the structural crisis of Venezuelan rentier capitalism, but which, internally among the masses, becomes an obstacle to the possibility of achieving socialism. For the ordinary citizen, 21st-century socialism translates in practice into authoritarianism, the absence of political freedoms, the unprecedented deterioration of material living conditions, the fracturing of families due to the explosion of economic migration, and the loss of hope in the role of the state as guarantor of fundamental rights. The damage inflicted by Madurism on the possibilities of a socialist alternative to the Venezuelan crisis is enormous, and its consequences remain unpredictable.

Madurism is a form of government guided by the new bourgeoisie, born from the 2002 coup. In the absence of strong leadership like Chávez's, Maduro's government is building a diffuse identity based on internal power dynamics, with various leaders serving the central government. But those who fail to recognize Maduro's ability to construct his own leadership model and make it functional in

maintaining power are mistaken. His weakness has been transformed into strength through what he calls a civil-military-police alliance.

The Maduro administration has experienced three key periods. The first, between 2013 and 2017, focused on eliminating the remnants of the old bourgeoisie's political representation by contact—primarily indirectly—with right-wing parties and by forcefully repressing urban uprisings instigated by this political sector, with a worrying impact on human rights (especially in 2017). Simultaneously, it succeeded in fragmenting the political right, clearly forming the "alacranes" (scorpions) camp, right-wing factions that claimed to remain in opposition to the government but, more than ever, negotiated behind the scenes with it. The segment of the old bourgeoisie that escaped—and resisted—this assimilation was represented by María Corina Machado (MCM), who had previously been a minority within the opposition electorate (2 to 5 per cent), but who began to emerge during this period as the only genuine right-wing opposition.

During this period, the Maduro government isolated leaders of the PSUV and the government who sought to support the Chavist government's agenda (Giordani, Navarro, Márquez, and others), while simultaneously distancing itself from key elements of the Chavist model of accumulation and multi-class leadership (Ramírez, Rodríguez Torres, among others). This transformed the Maduro government into an entity with its own identity, distinct from its original core, Chavism.

The second phase of the Maduro government unfolded between 2018 and 2024, a period during which he prioritized the subjugation of the left which was beginning to distance itself from his political orientation (PPT, Tupamaros, Redes, PCV, among others). The abandonment of the social agenda was justified by the implementation of unilateral coercive measures (UCM), which had a significant impact starting in 2017. While these measures significantly affected the country's income, they were insufficient to explain their devastating effect on the national

programme of popular and social justice, which had been central to policy during the Chavist era. The monthly minimum wage, which serves as a retirement indicator for some five million people, plummeted, reaching unprecedented levels of nearly half a US dollar per month, while the average wage hovered between 15 and 20 dollars per month. The provision of additional bonuses—approximately \$120 per month—falls far short of offsetting widespread inflation, which has driven the price of basic goods and services to two to three times the Latin American average. Remittances from the eight million migrants help alleviate the precarious situation of those who remain in the country. Money from the sale of assets such as houses, cars, and land belonging to the middle class and professionals is used to meet daily needs, creating a new pattern of accumulating wealth at depreciated real estate market prices.

In 2018, the Maduro government promulgated Decree 3332, which reformed the Organic Labour Law by restricting the right to strike and collective bargaining agreements. It also issued Memorandum 2792, an unprecedented blow to the labour movement, paving the way for a drastic reduction in the cost of Venezuelan labour. All of this was accompanied by legal actions against all left-wing parties and the persecution of union and social leaders, marking a significant authoritarian shift under the Maduro regime.

During this period, negotiations began with the American administration, initially secret and later public. This rapprochement aimed to rebuild relations with the American imperialist power by using oil as a bargaining chip to overcome the effects of the UCM. To this end, it sought to present itself as a government capable of fostering a meeting between the old and new bourgeoisie, restoring bourgeois order, and thus ushering in a new era of governance.

Several obstacles stand in the way of this initiative. First, the accumulation model of the new bourgeoisie has remained rentier, based on imports and extractivism—just like that of the

old bourgeoisie—meaning that the constituent elements of the local capitalist structural crisis that began in 1983 have not been overcome. The United States does not wish to replicate the model of economic and trade relations with Venezuela typical of the liberal bourgeois period, but rather engages in a combination of neoliberal and illiberal relations that favours greater rent capture and the transfer of the effects of its structural crises to the capitalist periphery. Despite a public and well-known agreement between the Maduro regime and the employers' association FEDECAMARAS, a rebellious sector of the old bourgeoisie remains, favouring the total liberalization of the economy, and claiming to be represented by María Corina Machado.

Secondly, Maduro's shift has significantly eroded his social and electoral base, thus limiting his ability to play an effective mediating role within a framework of democratic freedoms. Indeed, the increase in oil revenues following the war in Ukraine marked a brutal transfer of resources to the financial bourgeoisie—a form of exchange control—as well as to accumulation processes via imports, speculation, and outright corruption (as in the case of PDVSA's cryptocurrencies), but it did not improve the material living conditions of the working class or restore wage levels.

Third, while the Biden administration appeared to follow this course of action supported by Maduro—particularly since the war in Ukraine, with Venezuela returning as a reliable source of oil supply—the Trump administration is betting on placing the Venezuelan question on the US neo-colonial repositioning agenda in the region.

Fourth, by limiting the possibility of a left-wing alternative to Maduro and co-opting a significant portion of the right (the "scorpions"), Maduro ultimately strengthened the legitimacy of the leadership of María Corina Machado, who established herself as the true representative of the opposition to Maduro. Maduro's clumsiness in attacking the left when it could have been a source of support, even allowing him to negotiate on

more favourable terms, clearly demonstrates the ideological nature of the new bourgeoisie in relation to the old bourgeoisie.

For both the old and new bourgeoisie, the essential point is to foster polarization, which would eliminate any project of a popular, national, or genuinely socialist nature. The Maduro-MCM polarization benefits the Maduro regime and the United States, as it helps to ward off any possibility of a radical and genuinely anti-imperialist solution, while maintaining control over a bourgeois solution to the Venezuelan crisis.

The third phase of Madurism began with the elections of July 28, 2024. Maduro was aware that the disaster wrought by his political programme had allowed the entire opposition to his administration to rally around María Corina Machado. But this seemed less dangerous to him than the emergence of a mass bloc to his left, as this would jeopardize the interests of the new bourgeoisie he represents. It is wrong to say that the Venezuelan electorate has shifted to the right; on the contrary, the impossibility of building an electoral bloc distinct from the polarization that appeared functional, opposing Maduro to the United States, forced large segments of the electorate opposed to the government's structural adjustment plan to vote for the only option that seemed viable and clearly opposed to the existing reality. Even part of the left was caught in the trap, an illusion quickly abandoned in the face of the American military threat against Venezuela. The electorate's distrust of other right-wing and centrist political options, largely infiltrated by the Maduro government via the political scorpions, has unfairly affected even organizations with some autonomy from the Maduro government, such as those represented by Enrique Márquez and his centrist party.

In this third phase, the Maduro government attempted to reach an agreement with the United States based on Venezuela's oil and mineral resources. The problem is that time seems to be running out, as Trump's illiberal agenda and the emergence of a new capitalist world order now

demand a new role for Venezuela in this reconfiguration.

## Trump sparks a Caribbean storm

The Trump administration is working towards an imperial repositioning in the region. In this sense, Venezuela plays a central role in its strategy. Everything seems to indicate that Trump, unlike Biden—who advocated laissez-faire as long as the United States obtained Venezuelan oil—wants to exert territorial, political, and military control over Venezuela, in order to use it as an example of his illiberal and neo-anti-communist strategy of ideological hegemony.

To do this, he follows a clear path. First, aware that the Maduro regime is showing itself to be subservient to American interests, he accuses Maduro and his leaders of being drug traffickers—the Cartel of the Suns—seeking not to integrate, but to weaken the Venezuelan government, taking advantage of the Maduro regime's hesitations to create an even more favourable situation for the North.

Secondly, by promoting the image of a Maduro regime composed of drug traffickers—without objective evidence—it seeks to portray progressivism as degenerating into criminality and to weaken potential anti-American resistance to military intervention. The anti-invasion resistance is beginning to be presented as remnants of criminal gangs.

Third, by deploying ships, equipment, and combat troops in the Caribbean, it demonstrates its regional military supremacy, pushing for a cost-effective transition of power in Venezuela with significant regional geopolitical implications. Its primary aim is to create divisions within the Maduro regime, facilitating his internal ouster by military leaders and thus paving the way for a Grenada-style scenario (an internal coup followed by a US military intervention).

Fourth, it disproportionately attacks

fishing boats, accusing them of being part of the logistics of drug trafficking, in order to accustom regional public opinion to open military operations, with collateral damage in terms of human lives.

Fifth, it promotes the succession of María Corina Machado—directly or initially through Edmundo González—as a governing solution paving the way for an illiberal resolution to the structural crisis that began in 1983. The United States is aware of the instability of a potential government led by María Corina Machado, as her economic and political measures would quickly lead to a loss of popularity and render her presidency unstable, jeopardizing US interests. Given that Machado has repeatedly stated she will seek US support, including military support, the US strategic objective appears to be to facilitate her rise to power, paving the way for a “Haitian-style situation” in which government instability would lead Machado to request foreign intervention, occupying the territory and thus enabling the establishment of permanent military bases in Venezuela to ensure more direct control of oil reserves. From then on, MCM would become a simple, easily replaceable pawn on the American chessboard.

Sixth, criminalizing any potential resistance to this scenario would necessitate maintaining the state of emergency in Venezuela (following the US military attack), which fits perfectly within Trump’s illiberal political agenda. This would aim to prevent the regrouping of progressive, democratic, and left-wing forces, and to avert the danger of a revolution in Venezuela.

Therefore, the awarding of the Nobel Prize to María Corina Machado must be seen as part of an imperialist strategy aimed at gaining much more direct control over Venezuela’s wealth.

The tragedy of the Maduro regime lies in the fact that the only way to maintain power would be to revive the Popular National Programme that it decided to bury in 2014, abandon the bourgeois Bonapartist programme it attempted to implement in 2018, and develop genuine anti-imperialism, not

just rhetoric. Certainly, the Maduro regime rightly denounces the deployment of American warships in the Caribbean, but it remains silent on the growing number of oil tankers that crisscross Lake Maracaibo daily, transporting crude oil to the United States, sold under neo-colonial conditions worse than those that prevailed before Chávez came to power. However, taking five steps backward in Maduro’s neo-bourgeois programme would limit its capacity to accumulate wealth, paving the way for internal crises within this bourgeois bloc. Moreover, a return to the Popular National Programme would frighten both the new and the old bourgeoisie.

The dilemma seems to lie in Maduro’s ability to build a genuine internal power dynamic that would make the Americans more cautious, a phenomenon impossible to predict except by returning to the Chavist agenda. This took on a dramatic urgency on October 15, 2025, when the *New York Times* announced that the Trump administration had authorized the CIA to launch destabilization operations on Venezuelan territory, to trigger the transition to a government led by María Corina Machado, now a Nobel Peace Prize laureate. This announcement should spur all progressive and anti-imperialist forces to denounce and carry out mass actions to stop the attack on continental national sovereignty; this attack on Venezuela is an attack on the entire region.

## **Why award the Nobel Prize to MCM at this precise moment?**

The awarding of the Nobel Prize to María Corina Machado is based on several geopolitical reasons. The first is to consolidate her local and international leadership, protecting it from erosion due to the lack of political solutions after the elections of June 28, 2024, particularly due to the realignment undertaken by the Maduro regime, with legislative and

regional elections where it obtained an apparent majority.

Secondly, to repolarize the Venezuelan political debate. Nothing is more dangerous for the United States and the Venezuelan bourgeoisies—of the Fourth and Fifth Republics—than, in the face of the disenchantment caused by the lack of resolution to the terrible situation created by the Maduro regime and the impossibility of an orderly transition in the interest of capital, the emergence of a mass movement independent of bourgeois and imperialist interests. In fact, over the past year, the social fabric of resistance to the various forms of neoliberalism and illiberalism has been considerably rebuilt, even if it has not yet taken the form of a mass movement. The Nobel Prize for MCM aims to repolarize the debate between the Maduro regime and the faction of María Corina Machado, reducing the space necessary for building an alternative that is not aligned with the objectives of the White House and the Pentagon.

Third, it is essential to ensure that the agenda of a transitional government, or even a permanent government, is one of neocolonial dependence on the United States. The American administration cares little for the fate of the Venezuelan people; it uses them as mere pawns in the game of imperial power.

Fourth, given the possibility that the United States might launch direct military and intelligence operations on Venezuelan soil, it is important to present its intervention as an action in support of regional peace and the leadership of a Norwegian Nobel Peace Prize laureate. The imprisonment or physical disappearance of MCM during these events would provide further justification for US military intervention in Venezuela.

In this sense, the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize is part of the strategy to consolidate the role of the United States in the region.

## The tasks of revolutionaries

This is a difficult time for those who embody the anti-capitalist struggle in Venezuela. Denouncing any attempt at an American attack or invasion of Venezuela is undoubtedly central to their political stances and actions. But this does not allow for hope that the survival of Maduro's neo-bourgeois regime will lead to the emergence of a government that guarantees the two conditions necessary for change from the working class's perspective: improved material living conditions and political freedoms to organize into unions and left-wing parties, enabling

them to work, express their opinions, and mobilize with broad guarantees. This duality poses the challenge of building an anti-imperialism that transcends geopolitics, an anti-imperialism rooted in the reality of those who live by their labour. Is this achievable?

A potential government of María Corina Machado would not only continue the anti-popular programme initiated by the Maduro regime, but would intensify it even further. Indeed, María Corina Machado has not stated that her rise to power would mean the return of workers' rights to freely unionize, the right to strike, and the mobilization of the

working class. Rather, she has outlined an illiberal structural adjustment programme that would allow for a way out of the bourgeois crisis that began in 1983, using market-driven solutions.

So, who to support? That is the question that is posed in Venezuela's confused situation. The answer can only be: the working class and its interests. Without them, all anti-imperialism is futile and only serves the bourgeois reorganization of Venezuela.

*October 18, 2025*

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## Takaichi Administration established by the LDP-JIP Coalition : How to interpret the current Japanese political situation

7 November 2025, by [Toshizo Omori](#)

This brief essay analyzes the political character of the newly formed Takaichi administration and the framework of Japan's immediate political situation, situating it within the broader international political context. It also seeks to clarify the challenges and tasks facing the left.

The LDP-Komeito coalition lost its majority in the July Upper House election and subsequent political realignment

In the Upper House election in July, the ruling LDP-Komeito coalition suffered a major defeat, losing its majority in both houses of the Diet. Taking responsibility, Prime Minister Ishiba was forced to resign less than a year after taking office. Meanwhile, the far-right populist party, the Sanseito (Party of Do it Yourself), gained significant support. Combined with the results of last year's House of Representatives election, this meant that parties positioned to the right of the LDP within Japan's political landscape formed a single bloc in parliament for the first time. This

development significantly influenced the LDP leadership election following Prime Minister Ishiba's resignation. Contrary to widespread expectations that Shinjiro Koizumi would win the leadership election and continue the policies of the Ishiba administration, Sanae Takaichi, a politician representing the LDP's right wing who publicly declared her intention to continue Abe's policies, became the new party president. Subsequently, a series of major political realignments unfolded for the first time in the 21st century: the Komeito withdrew from the coalition, disliking the prospect of a coalition government with Takaichi; the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP) attempted but failed to field a unified opposition candidate in the prime minister nomination election; an agreement was reached for a LDP-JIP (Japan Innovation Party) coalition with JIP providing support from outside the cabinet; and finally, Takaichi was elected Prime Minister in the Extraordinary Diet session.

However, in this wave of political realignment, the left-liberal

faction—including the parliamentary left and the center-left forces within CDP—was completely left out in the cold. The CDP's leadership tried to unify opposition candidates behind Tamaki, the leader of the Democratic Party for the People (DPFP), in the prime ministerial nomination election—a move designed to further cozy up to the center-right—was flatly rejected by Tamaki himself. Instead, it only served to force him into accepting the party's stance on “accepting nuclear power” and “accepting the security legislation.”

A major feature of the political realignment since the Upper House election is that it has progressed among conservative-centrist political forces, under conditions where, on one hand, pressure from far-right populism exists, while on the other, there is absolutely no threat (or even a hint of disruption) from the left.

How to consider the global political framework

While examining the various

developments surrounding the coalition government during this period is certainly necessary for our analysis of the current political realignment, the most crucial issue is how to grasp the overall framework of the political situation, particularly from an international perspective. Based on this understanding and taking into account the current position of the left, we must clarify the tasks and duties facing the left, including ourselves.

In the position paper submitted by the Japanese section to the 18th Congress of the Fourth International, the following points were made regarding the Japanese political situation:

Generally speaking, as the capitalist system has already lost its ability to encompass the entire society, societies in many countries are becoming more polarized and the far right have been on the rise. Some sectors of the bourgeoisie are turning to support the authoritarian domination and are coming to politically support the far right. The political structures in many countries, mainly in Europe, the United States and Latin America, have more and more tripolarized into the far right, the conservative/centrist (which is often called the "extreme centrist") and the left, where the conservative/centrist becomes increasingly drawn to the right wing. The political structures common to those in Europe are also emerging in East Asia, although not as significantly as in Europe.

In Japan, while the ruling coalition (Liberal Democratic Party and Komeito [Komei Party]) lost its majority in the general election last fall, two far-right parties (Japan Conservative Party and Sanseito [Party of Do It Yourself]) got a certain number of seats in the parliament for the first time after World War II. On the other hand, political cooperation between the ruling coalition and center-right parties is developing, and it is said that there is a possibility of a so-called "grand coalition" in a way that excludes the left parties.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party has both center-right and far-right tendencies within itself, and the current leadership is dominated by

center-right politicians, and losing its majority, it is seeking for strengthening its cooperation with the center-right opposition parties. Depending on the result of the July 2025 Upper House election, the possibility of a "grand coalition" cannot be ruled out. In this way, even in Japan, there are signs of a tripartite structure of the far right, conservative/centrist (what is sometimes called "extreme center") and the left, but unfortunately, the left in Japan is decisively weak.

As analyzed here, internationally, within the tripartite structure of far-right, conservative center, and left—typical in Europe—the rise of the far-right is dragging not only traditional conservative forces but even centrist reformist forces to the right. This also reflects the depth of the current crisis of the capitalist system. Within this framework, trends such as global military rearmament, the rise of authoritarian regimes, and the spread of xenophobic sentiment have become pronounced.

A prime example is the UK (England), where the far-right Reform UK has gained ground in local elections and surged to first place in opinion polls. In response, the Conservative Party leader replaced the right-wing faction's Bede Nock in November 2024. Bede Nock had campaigned on pledges to withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights and repeal climate change legislation, decisively breaking with the party's centrist conservative line. In response to this situation, the British liberal newspaper *The Guardian* reportedly published an article expressing concern over the disappearance of the Conservative Party as a moderate conservative force. This evokes similarities to the "Don't Let Ishiba Go" demonstrations that unfolded in Japan for a time, primarily among liberal circles.

Japan's political situation should be seen as trying to catch up with developments in Europe, albeit a step behind. However, unlike in Europe or the Americas, Japan has persistently faced a situation where the left is decisively weak, lacking influence over the political landscape, and where mass movements and social

movements have been unable to gain significant power. It is within this context—where there is no need to consider pressure or threats from the left—that political realignment within the conservative-centrist forces has progressed in recent times.

The crisis of neoliberal globalism is "narrowing the range of policy choices."

In that sense, the observation by Professor Koji Aikyo of Waseda University, published in this paper's Issue 2883 (October 20th edition) (based on the summary of his lecture at the "Stop the Constitutional Revision! Osaka Network" lecture), aptly explains the political situation described above.

In a global society of growing inequality, the range of policy choices narrows. While citizens have increased opportunities to participate in democratic processes, dissatisfaction is rising over the perception that public opinion is not reflected in national governance. In advanced industrial nations, regardless of which party holds power, consistent pressure is exerted to ensure national policies benefit the wealthy. The notion that corporations hold a knowledge advantage over governments has become an unquestioned ideology.

Precisely because the scope for policy is narrow, they resort to culture wars. Massive inequality becomes entrenched, propaganda replaces policy, and politics shifts from the politics of necessity to the politics of eternity. The politics of necessity brings democratization through economic development, but in the politics of eternity, the government's role is not to promise future happiness, but to protect the present society from perceived threats. Permanent politicians fabricate crises and manipulate the resulting emotions. In today's complex societies, unable to present a vision for the future, they gravitate toward culture wars. Trump politics is the archetype.

Furthermore, the interview with Enzo Traverso titled "Authoritarianism and Democracy in the 21st Century"

(International Viewpoint, August 7) also provides an accurate analysis of the significance of the current rise of the far right and the emergence of authoritarian regimes. Traverso, author of "The New Faces of Fascism: Populism and the Far Right", positions today's far right as "post-fascism," describing its differences from past fascism as follows.

Today, I see nothing comparable in the new right. There is no utopian horizon or project for civilization per se. That's why I find the concept of "post-fascism" useful, because these radical right-wing movements are profoundly conservative. Their impulse is not forward but backward: what they seek is to restore a traditional order. The values they champion—sovereignty, family, nation—form a kind of red thread that connects them.

This return to the traditional [by Trump] is also evident in its hostility toward environmentalism, its rejection of any global agenda on climate change, and its commitment to domestic production over international agreements. "Make America Great Again" is a slogan that fosters a certain imagination of the future, but it is a regressive imagination: a return to a time when the United States was strong, prosperous, and dominant. This isn't a new proposal, but rather an idealization of the past.

The far right (and also conservative centrist forces), unable to articulate political differences or offer a vision for the future, seek to alleviate anxiety and stagnation by expelling perceived enemies close at hand ("culture wars") in order to achieve political stability. This serves as one reason why conservative centrist forces are being pulled toward the far right.

What does Takaichi's LDP leadership election and Komeito's exit from the coalition signify?

In my analysis article on the July Upper House election (August 11, Weekly Kakehashi), I wrote as follows:

If Prime Minister Ishiba were forced to resign and the LDP's right wing were to win the leadership election,

the Sanseito would become a potential partner for policy consultations, non-cabinet cooperation, or even a coalition. However, the Sanseito currently holds only three seats in the House of Representatives. This would make it a minority ruling party, necessitating an early general election to significantly increase its seats in the House (Sanseito leader Kamiya has stated that "25 to 30 seats is a realistic figure for the next general election"). Simultaneously, this choice carries the risk of the LDP losing even more seats. Therefore, the LDP's immediate options are limited. The most realistic path is to pursue policy discussions, extra-cabinet cooperation, and even the expansion of the coalition government through a de facto conservative-centrist "alliance" encompassing the Democratic Party for the People, the Japan Innovation Party, and the Constitutional Democratic Party. Consequently, the LDP will likely choose a president who can advance this strategy (or retain Prime Minister Ishiba).

This prediction proved significantly off the mark regarding the prospects for political realignment, given Sanae Takaichi's election as LDP president and Komeito's withdrawal from the coalition. I believe the reason lies in underestimating the impact of the rise of far-right populism, as seen in the Sanseito's surge, on the LDP (and its indirect ripple effects on Komeito). The sense of crisis within the LDP over the defection of the "rock-solid conservative base" that had supported the Abe administration, triggered by the Sanseito's surge, was likely stronger than we had imagined.

Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Aso, who backs Takaichi, reportedly envisioned forming a coalition government with the LDP, Komeito, and the Democratic Party for the People, dissolving the Diet early for a general election, securing a majority for the LDP and the Democratic Party for the People, and then expelling Komeito from the coalition (Hokkaido Shimibun Online, October 11).

Komeito may have anticipated Aso's intentions and proactively dissolved the coalition beforehand. It is also said that continuing the coalition with the LDP led by Takaichi could have led to

a situation where the dissolution of the party itself was a real possibility for Soka Gakkai and Komeito.

The realignment of conservative-centrist forces and the formation of the LDP-JIP coalition government

Now, let us also review the realignment process of conservative-centrist forces following the July Upper House election, leading up to the formation of the Takaichi coalition government on October 21. Of course, it is important to note that this realignment process is not complete and remains ongoing.

First, the Komeito, which disliked a coalition with LDP President Takaichi because of her right-wing stance, withdrew from the coalition government that had lasted for 26 years. While Komeito initially seemed to explore some cooperative relationship with the LDP, following the formation of the LDP-JIP government, it has clearly positioned itself as a centrist opposition party. It has now also begun mentioning the possibility of electoral cooperation with the Constitutional Democratic Party.

The DPFP appears to have been most ideologically and politically aligned with Takaichi on issues like constitutional revision, accepting Yasukuni Shrine visits, and pursuing an expansionary fiscal policy. It seems to have been aiming for a coalition government under a Takaichi-led administration comprising the LDP, Komeito, and DPFP. However, faced with Komeito's withdrawal from the coalition—effectively dissolving the LDP-Komeito alliance—it could not commit to a coalition solely with the LDP. "With Komeito gone, even if we joined the government, we wouldn't reach a majority, so the discussion has become rather meaningless," stated Representative Tamaki. Moreover, the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (Rengo), the largest and pro-capitalist national center of trade unions, had made clear its stance that it would not accept its supported parties, the DPFP and the CDP, being divided between the ruling and opposition camps. Meanwhile, one of the CDP's Diet leaders Azumi proposed the idea of "making Tamaki, chairperson of DPFP,

the unified opposition candidate for the prime minister nomination." The DPFPP also declined this proposal, citing fundamental policy differences. As a result, they were 'scooped' by the Japan Innovation Party, leading to complaints like, "If only they had said something sooner." Even in post-nomination polls, DPFPP saw a significant drop in support, with the Takaichi administration gaining support from relatively younger generations.

The Japan Innovation Party (JIP) was initially eager to join a coalition government with the LDP and Komeito, assuming Koizumi would become LDP president and hoping to realize its secondary capital concept under his leadership. However, seizing the opportunity created by the DPFPP's reluctance to join the coalition following the LDP presidential election results, it swiftly moved to form a coalition with the LDP under Takaichi. They then reached a coalition agreement with Takaichi, who was desperate to become Prime Minister, essentially forcing her to swallow their policy demands whole. However, the LDP attached numerous reservations to many policies. Furthermore, by choosing the form of "cooperation outside the cabinet" (a factor said to be the difficulty of electoral cooperation with the LDP in the Kansai region, including Osaka), it became a half-hearted and unstable "coalition" that could be abandoned at any time.

The reason for such an eagerness to form a coalition lay in the critical situation: successive defections of Diet members and poor performance in local elections, including in their stronghold of Osaka. Following the three House of Representatives members who announced their departure on September 8th and formed the new faction "Reform Association", House of Representatives member Hayashi Yumi, elected from the proportional Kinki block, also submitted her resignation from the party. Furthermore, Seiki Sorimoto, a House of Representatives member elected from Hiroshima's 4th district, also indicated his intention to run as an independent in the next election (forming the regional party

"Hiroshima no Taiyo"), hinting at leaving the party. It was necessary to put a stop to this. Additionally, in five local council elections held in Osaka in September, the party suffered significant declines in votes compared to the previous elections. It lost three seats in Settsu City and one seat in Hannan City, facing a severe decline in its political strength.

The Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP) called for a unified opposition (centrist) candidate in the prime ministerial nomination election during the extraordinary Diet session, but this effort was forced to fail because Tamaki demanded a policy shift from CDP's line on "nuclear power policy" and "security policy." Currently, the party positions itself as a centrist opposition force allied with Komeito. However, as former leader Edano, a party liberal, has altered his previous stance, stating that the security legislation—including the recognition of the right to exercise collective self-defense—contains "no unconstitutional elements, so there is no need to change it," the shift towards a center-right stance advanced under leader Noda is accelerating. This is further isolating the party's left wing.

## **How to view the character of the Takaichi-led LDP-JIP coalition government**

The Takaichi-led LDP-JIP coalition government emerged from the realignment of centrist conservative political forces. How should we assess its political character? First, regarding security and defense policy, it will undoubtedly accelerate the military expansion course charted by the Kishida and Ishiba administrations.

The coalition agreement signed by the LDP and JIP on the 20th clearly reflects the shift from an LDP-Komeito alliance to an LDP-JIP one. It immediately steered toward hawkish policies, starting with promoting an "independent nation," further

increasing defense spending, and pushing for submarine acquisition with nuclear submarines in mind. Numerous other policies emphasize the "nation," including a policy to enact a "national emblem defacement crime" in the 2026 ordinary Diet session to punish acts damaging the Hinomaru flag, and a clear statement to begin examining "anti-espionage legislation" to crack down on espionage by foreign powers.

These are all policies long sought by the LDP's conservative faction but difficult to advance under the coalition government with Komeito. The most symbolic move is the abolition of rules limiting weapons exports to five categories, such as "rescue operations." Conservative LDP factions strongly pushed for scrapping these categories to fully lift restrictions on lethal weapons exports, but Komeito maintained its cautious stance, leaving these rules barely intact." (October 22, Hokkaido Shimbun Online)

Additionally, Kimi Onoda, an Upper House member whose xenophobic remarks had previously caused controversy, was appointed to the newly created position of Minister for Foreigners' "Coexistence" under the coalition agreement. The coalition document states: "We will formulate a 'Population Strategy' by fiscal year 2026, which will include quantitative management of foreign residents from the perspective of potential social friction if the foreign population ratio increases, along with numerical targets and basic policies for accepting foreigners." In her policy speech, Prime Minister Takaichi stated, "We draw a clear line against xenophobia," but also declared that "the government will respond resolutely" to "illegal acts and rule violations by some foreigners," clearly signaling a move toward tighter foreigner regulations.

In economic policy, it aims to carry forward Abe's policies and develop not "Abenomics" but "Sanaenomics." While this thoroughly pursues the interests of the wealthiest 1%, it still must ostensibly cite "addressing high prices" as its "top priority." Consequently, the range of feasible policy options is unlikely to be entirely

unrestricted. This is because Japan's bourgeois ruling class seeks political stability above all else. In this sense, the unstable and fragile LDP-JIP coalition government, reliant on "cooperation outside the cabinet," is merely transitional, and a more substantial political realignment is inevitable. This could potentially include a "grand coalition" that further pulls the Constitutional Democratic Party to the "right." The Japanese bourgeois ruling class lacks a clear vision for the future shape of society. Consequently, it will likely seek numerical stability through conservative centrist forces. However, this very approach creates space for the growth of far-right populism. Here too, the marginalization and isolation of the left, coupled with its failure to present and make visible a new alternative, remains the decisive problem.

## How will the Left confront the current political situation?

In the Miyagi Prefectural gubernatorial election held on October 26, candidate Masamune Wada—who received full support from the Sanseito through a policy agreement—engaged in a fierce contest, narrowing the gap with incumbent candidate Yoshihiro Murai to just over 15,000 votes. Moreover, within Sendai City, the most populous city in Miyagi, candidate Wada led by more than 36,000 votes. In his "policy memorandum" with the Sanseito,

candidate Wada pledged to "review water privatization and promote re-municipalization," "oppose immigration promotion policies," "reject the policy of permitting burials," and "curb or halt large-scale mega-solar and wind power projects." This strategy skillfully incorporated leftists' anti-globalization and ecological policies (while linking them to nationalism over "selling water utilities to foreign capital") and combined them with xenophobic policies. It was precisely the same stance adopted by Europe's far right. In the fight against the rise of these emerging far-right forces, it is not enough to merely criticize xenophobia. We must also present policies and slogans from a leftist perspective that can break through the distrust and sense of stagnation in the existing system that is fueling the far right's growth, and concretely build these into movements. Moreover, we must challenge this situation precisely because the existence of the left is not visible, especially to younger generations.

Under conditions where the political situation is fluid and political realignment is underway for some time, space opens up for various mass movements and social movements to reflect their demands in politics. As a result, these mass movements and social movements have the potential to become more active. Moreover, with left-wing forces within parliament being extremely weak, the importance of mass movements and social movements will likely increase. However, there is also the possibility that the fruits of such movements could be reaped by far-right forces.

Today, in countries around the world—Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Morocco—young people of the so-called Generation Z are at the forefront of mass movements and uprisings. Rebellions led by Generation Z often lack clear organization or leadership, a feature prominently seen in the 2019 Hong Kong uprising. Yet this is also the responsibility of the left.

In Japan, younger generations, including Generation Z, have only experienced the LDP-Komeito coalition government and thus lacked a tangible sense that "politics can be changed." However, this situation is clearly shifting. The Reiwa Shinsengumi (we see it as a progressive populist party), led by Taro Yamamoto, was the first to keenly sense this change, appealing that "politics can be changed" and gaining significant support. In the general election in 2024 and the Upper House election this year, these younger demographics shifted their support toward parties like the DPFP and the Sanseito. However, this support is not fixed. We should consider that Japan's Generation Z is catching up, albeit five or ten years behind, to the emergence of Generation Z on the political stage seen in Europe, America, and Asia. This represents a significant opportunity for the left. Preparing ideologically, programmatically, and organizationally for this is the challenge facing the left, including us.

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Translated by Tsutomu Teramoto from [Weekly Kakehashi](https://x.gd/zvDYP) or <https://x.gd/zvDYP>.

## Three years of Meloni: A model for the international far right

6 November 2025, by [Fabrizio Burattini](#)

The right, with its 12 million votes (out of an electorate of around 46 million), with less than 44% of the votes cast, and therefore with only 26% of the electorate's support,

elected almost 60% of the deputies and senators. As we said at the time in a commentary article, 'the victory of Giorgia Meloni and Fratelli d'Italia has a symbolic value unprecedented in the

history of the Republic: Italy ends up in the hands of a coalition dominated by the heirs of Mussolini, Almirante and Rauti'.

Of course, we must not overlook all

the other factors that influenced the result and paved the way for the success of the party that is the direct heir to fascism:

- the cultural and institutional transformations already imposed on the country by Berlusconi's governments
- the gradual disappearance of a left wing capable of representing an alternative for the working classes
- the institutional constraints imposed on politics by left-wing and 'technical' governments
- the heavily 'social-liberal' choices of these same governments
- the stubborn acquiescence to these choices by the majority trade unions
- the failure of the illusions created in the country by the demagoguery of the Five Star Movement.

The fact remains that Giorgia Meloni's victory appears much more solid and 'project-oriented' than Silvio Berlusconi's success almost thirty years earlier, which was continually marked by the mixing of the political objectives of the right with the personal and business interests of the prime minister. Unlike Berlusconi, Giorgia Meloni presents herself and, to a certain extent, is, as a 'pure politician'. She was born in 1977 and was raised in the shady circles of the Roman far right, a neo-fascist youth activist since the age of 15 and since then always involved in political activities. Meloni was elected to increasingly powerful institutional positions, from councillor of a municipality in the capital to an MP, then minister and now prime minister. Her response to an interview made headlines when, shortly after her appointment, a controversy arose between her and Berlusconi. She replied curtly, 'I cannot be blackmailed', thereby asserting that, unlike the elderly leader of Forza Italia, she had no interests to hide other than political ones.

It must be said that she has never wanted to hide her fascist political roots either. Faced with the ineffective insistence of the opposition and certain media outlets that she declare herself 'anti-fascist', she has consistently managed to sidestep the issue. Her distancing of herself from historical fascism has always been tactically limited to relatively minor

issues. She has even managed to consolidate a relationship with the Jewish community, particularly in Rome, once a bastion of the left, by putting its spokesperson, Ester Mieli, the granddaughter of a deportee to Auschwitz, on her Senate slate. This is despite numerous media investigations that have revealed how the base and nomenclature of Fratelli d'Italia continue to cultivate the Mussolini myth, fascist ideology and even anti-Semitic hatred.

## **The balance sheet she claims and the real one**

The balance sheet for these three years of government is marked by the generally depressed economic situation, with the budgetary constraints that Italy has been experiencing for years due to its abysmal public debt (€3,053 billion in July 2025, equal to almost 140% of gross domestic product). The government's fiscal policy, mainly based on tax cuts mostly in favour of its social base among small businesses, commerce and the liberal professions, has also caused the debt to increase by almost €300 billion over the three years.

Despite this, the government can boast a significant reduction in the spread between the interest rate on Italian government bonds and that on German bonds, which has fallen from 244 to 86 between 2022 and today. Of course, the economic crisis that has been troubling Germany for some time and, therefore, the increase in interest on its government bonds, has contributed greatly to lowering the spread. Nevertheless it is certainly true that the yield on Italian treasury bonds has fallen from 4.79% to 3.57% in three years, which indicates that the 'markets' have significantly increased their confidence in the Italian economy... because it is in the hands of a government considered 'more reliable' by the 'markets'. This has also translated into a slight improvement in the rating defined by the main financial rating agencies, which Giorgia Meloni has presented as 'confirmation that the government is

on the right track'.

GDP at constant prices has been essentially flat during Meloni's three years in government, with growth between the fourth quarter of 2022 and the second quarter of 2025 of just under 1.5%. Despite this, the government boasts a growth trend in the employment rate, which is expected to reach 62.80% this summer (in 2013 it was 54.70%). These results, which are very modest, even in a depressed global context marked by a slowdown in international trade, are largely 'inflated' thanks to the 194 billion euro provided by the European Union as part of the post-Covid Next Generation EU programme. This comes partly as grants (€71.8 billion) and partly as subsidised loans (€122.6 billion). These are enormous sums that are pouring into Italian businesses, clearly supporting GDP and employment by at least one percentage point, it is said.

Despite the right wing's proclamations about the dangers of 'ethnic replacement', the demographic decline remains unresolved. In 10 years, the Italian population has fallen from 60.2 million in 2016 to 59.0 million this year. The decline would be even more striking if it weren't for the significant influx of foreign residents in recent years, which has gone from around 500,000 in the early 1990s to over 5 million today, of whom 4.3 million are registered with the Social Security Institute. This comprises 3.8 million workers, just over 300,000 pensioners and around 250,000 recipients of income support benefits: redundancy payments, disability or unemployment benefits. In addition to the sharp decline in births (no more than 340,000 births are expected in 2025, 8% less than in 2024), it should not be overlooked that every year around 100,000 young people (generally university graduates) emigrate to other EU or non-EU countries.

The situation of the working class is easily illustrated by consumer prices, which have risen by around 17% over the last five years (2021-2025), while average wages have risen by only 9.6%, resulting in a loss of 8 points of purchasing power, equivalent to the loss of an entire month's salary. The

International Labour Organisation (ILO) has repeatedly highlighted that Italy is one of the few G20 countries where wages are now lower than in 2008.

Poverty, particularly in certain areas of the country, is a real chronic emergency. Between 2022 and 2024, households in absolute poverty rose from 8.3% to 8.5% of all resident households. This is equivalent to approximately 2 million 234 thousand households; they were 'only' 6.2% in 2014). Individuals in absolute poverty will rise from 9.7% to 9.8% (over 5.7 million people). The phenomenon is getting worse, both because of inflation, which is impoverishing households that were just above the poverty line, and because of the elimination of the Citizenship Income benefit in 2023, which has left many already poor households without any income support. According to the Institute of Statistics, the rate of the population at risk of poverty will be 23.1% in 2024.

Absolute poverty particularly affects minors, who are more numerous in poor families: minors under the age of 18 in absolute poverty account for 14% of the total (1.3 million). It also affects a significant portion of the working population (the working poor). Households with a person in employment living in absolute poverty increased from 8.3% to 9.1% between 2022 and 2023. The opposition to the government, in all its forms, has called for the introduction of a 'minimum wage' law. The position of some trade unions, such as CGIL and UIL, which were previously opposed has even changed. However the government has managed to scupper every proposal to this effect.

Italy has been the second largest manufacturing power on the European continent for many years, but its industry remains heavily characterised by low labour productivity :in 2024, it represented €65 per hour worked: in France it was €75.12. This data also contributes to reducing, if not cancelling out, the government's triumphalist data on employment growth and its quality. In 2023, for example, hours worked grew by 2.7%, while value added grew by only 0.2%, indicating that most entrepreneurs,

especially small and micro businesses, prefer to hire low-wage employees rather than make innovative investments. It is no coincidence that the European Commission ranks Italy only 14th among the most innovative EU countries in 2025 in its reports.

However, the small increase in employment, which the right-wing government boasts about, shows signs of fragility. In fact, the number of people in employment in the over-50 age group is growing, while the number of younger people is falling, demonstrating the employment consequences of the extension of the retirement age, decreed in 2011 by Mario Monti's 'technical' government and never changed by subsequent governments. Older people are staying in work longer, skewing the employment statistics, to the detriment of a more significant rejuvenation and turnover in the workforce.

## **The deindustrialisation of Europe's second largest manufacturing sector**

The phenomenon of so-called 'deindustrialisation' began in Italy (as in much of the Western world) in the 1970s and accelerated in the 1990s, with a gradual reduction in the importance of the manufacturing sector in favour of services. However, in recent years, the Meloni government, with its economic policy and in an attempt to raise cash in order to balance the public accounts, has facilitated a further process of divestment of 'strategic' companies. The state has sold off companies that were once essential to the country's economic development. These divestments have had a significant impact on employment.

The steelworks in Taranto (formerly Italsider, formerly ILVA, now 'Acciaierie d'Italia Spa') have been struggling since their privatisation in the 1980s with a serious

environmental and employment crisis. Now the government is essentially planning to give them away to the US financial company Bedrock Industries, which is asking for the sale to be accompanied by €700 million in non-repayable public funding to proceed with the 'decarbonisation' of the plants. Bedrock also plans to make sweeping job cuts, laying off 7,000 of the 10,000 workers currently employed.

Just a year ago, the government sold the telecoms network of TIM (formerly Telecom Italia) to a consortium led by the American fund KKR, resulting in a reduction in TIM's workforce from 37,000 to 17,300. Already in 2022, the national airline Alitalia (now ITA) was privatised, and a few months ago, the Meloni government decided to sell it off completely to Lufthansa, with the latter refusing to reabsorb the 2,000 workers currently on furlough. The IP (Italiana Petroli) oil brand, once part of the ENI group, is in the process of being sold to the Azerbaijani group Socar for £3 billion, as part of the 'diversification of energy sources' following the Russian war in Ukraine.

The former Fiat (now Stellantis) production facilities have been in the process of being decommissioned for years, and the crisis in the car market has only accelerated this trend. The former Fiat IVECO factory (industrial vehicles) has already been sold in part to India's Tata Motors and the military vehicle sector to a partnership between Leonardo and Germany's Rheinmetall. In total, this puts more than 10,000 additional jobs at risk. The government also plans to convert Italian automotive production to military production by providing new public subsidies to Stellantis. Despite this, the company has continued to distribute dividends to shareholders, thanks to production relocation, wage compression, generous public subsidies and the transfer of profits to 'tax havens'.

## **The growth of inequality**

In the banking sector, the case of Monte dei Paschi di Siena (MPS) stands out. One of the oldest banks,

once largely publicly owned (more than 60% of the capital) and in financial distress for a long time, it was 'restructured' a few years ago thanks to a €5.4 billion bailout from the public purse. Now that the bank has become 'attractive' again, the government wants to sell off the remaining 11% of shares still held by the state. In the meantime, MPS has acquired the country's leading 'investment bank' (Mediobanca), earning its main shareholders (the Del Vecchio and Caltagirone families and the American fund BlackRock) over €1.5 billion in profits, on which nothing will be paid to the tax authorities as they are all residents of tax havens.

In 2024, Italian banks recorded a new high in terms of net profit, amounting to €46.5 billion, an increase of €5.7 billion (+14%) compared to 2023. The total profits made by banks in the Meloni three-year period (2022-2024) reached €112 billion, clearly thanks in part to the high interest rates set by the ECB. In its financial manoeuvres in recent years, the government had repeatedly proclaimed its intention to levy a tax (albeit a very modest one, no more than €2 billion) on these extraordinarily high profits. However, opposition from bankers, 'authoritatively' delegated within the government to the Forza Italia party, quickly led the executive to abandon the idea. Finance Minister Giancarlo Giorgetti (Lega) seems to want to try again this year, but it appears that the difficulties will remain the same as in previous years.

## **Laws to consolidate consensus**

As for the government's legislative activity, this has been particularly limited. Despite pressure from the EU and the EU's policy of 'protecting competition', the Meloni government has chosen the path of 'protection from competition' and has continuously renewed the monopolistic concessions and rents of certain corporations from which the right wing draws significant electoral support (beach resorts, taxis, notaries,

etc.).

Furthermore, since his first budget at the end of 2022, which he renewed and expanded in subsequent budgets, he has chosen to pursue a blatantly favourable fiscal policy towards certain categories of income earners. Consequently, employees and pensioners continue to be taxed at progressive rates (23% for incomes up to €28,000, 35% for incomes up to €50,000, 43% for incomes above €50,000). However, freelancers and sole traders are subject to a so-called 'flat tax' of 15%, which is reduced to 5% for five years for 'new entrepreneurs'. As a result, for the same income, an employee can end up paying three times as much tax as a freelancer. The electoral advantage that the right wing has gained from this move is quite clear, especially in Italy, where the proportion of 'self-employment' and small businesses is well above the average for developed countries.

Giorgia Meloni's government, in perfect continuity with Berlusconi, has persevered with a policy of leniency towards Italy's colossal tax evasion (around €100 billion per year) and equally significant tax avoidance - in 2024, there were around 23 million taxpayers in debt to the tax authorities, with debts amounting to the colossal figure of almost €1.3 trillion. This policy was expressed through demagogic and propagandistic operations, such as the Prime Minister's statements in 2023 in Catania. Here is a region in Sicily where tax evasion reaches record levels and where the mafia still reigns supreme. There she compared the fight against tax evasion to 'state protection money', i.e. the 'contributions' that organised crime extorts from citizens through violence. But it has also and above all been expressed through numerous and repeated amnesties (condone) - about twenty measures during the three years of government, that have wiped out or reduced to negligible amounts the tax debts of evaders or defaulters.

Therefore, with all citizens on fixed incomes such as employees and pensioners being penalised, inequalities continue to grow in Italy. Italian real estate and financial

wealth, which has exploded in recent years, amounts to 11.7 trillion (five times GDP) and places the country eighth in the global ranking for financial wealth. There are 517,000 millionaires in the country, i.e. people who hold at least one million dollars in financial wealth, less than 1% of the population. There are 2,600 individuals in Italy who hold more than \$100 million in financial wealth. This profitability of financial assets and the fact that they are lightly taxed triggers a 'rent-seeking spiral' that diverts investment away from the productive economy.

The government, with other demagogic and propagandistic operations, also aims to entice important sectors of business and finance to organise themselves to speculate on areas of the world that are victims of war and devastation. In January 2024, Giorgia Meloni organised an 'Italy-Africa summit' in Rome, attended by representatives of 45 African states, at which the prime minister outlined the 'partnership' proposals set out in the so-called Mattei Plan. But that's not all. In July this year, she organised the 'Conference on the Recovery of Ukraine' in Rome, in collaboration with the Kiev government, proposing major investments in the reconstruction of the country devastated by the Russian invasion. In the coming days, we can be sure that the government will work to involve Italian industries in the 'reconstruction of Gaza', if the fragile agreement between Netanyahu and Hamas holds.

## **Racism, security crackdowns and the distortion of the Constitution**

The government's activity, therefore, has been more explicit on the political level than on the purely legislative one. For example, the numerous and important initiatives aimed at 'preventing illegal immigration' have not produced any significant concrete results. It just reinforces the image of a government that is 'strong with the

weak', an image that is useful for safeguarding the political and electoral support of large sections of the electorate infected with racism. A barrage of decrees in 2023 served this purpose, such as the one that severely hampered the activities of NGO ships engaged in rescuing shipwrecked migrants in the Mediterranean, the one passed after the Cutro massacre (with over 100 drownings) or the one that extended the maximum stay in the hell of the 'Repatriation Centres' (CPR) to 18 months.

A separate story concerns the memorandum of understanding with the Albanian government in February 2024, which led to the construction of two CPRs on Albanian territory, a very expensive project that has so far remained largely unused.

The whole affair that saw a clash between the government's desire to define the countries to be considered 'safe' for the repatriation of asylum seekers and the contrary initiatives of numerous Italian judges (and the European judiciary) was also useful for the government's racist propaganda and its campaign against the independence of the judiciary.

In economic policy, in addition to decisions to pardon tax evaders, the government has adopted important measures to facilitate business, such as the establishment of a single 'special economic zone' (SEZ) covering the entire south of the country. It has relaxed tax and regulations both contractual and environmental, for companies operating in the Mezzogiorno (South). To the benefit of employers, it was also decided to extend the reduction in the so-called 'tax take', which did indeed add a few dozen euros to employees' pay packets at the expense of the public budget. Its explicit aim is to reduce wage and trade union pressure for the renewal of collective agreements and wage increases.

Furthermore, the possibility for companies to use subcontractors and fixed-term employment contracts, even without a valid reason, has also been extended.

Important and disturbing laws have been adopted on the repressive front. The government had already made its

debut in 2022, just one week after taking office, by adopting the so-called 'Rave Decree', which penalised 'unauthorised' gatherings of more than 50 young people with heavy fines and imprisonment. But the most significant law in this regard is the one adopted last April by decree, thus bypassing a vote in parliament, despite the government's large majority in both chambers. This is the so-called 'security decree', which introduces new offences relating to public order:

- road blockades
- occupation of buildings
- revocation of citizenship for foreigners who have obtained Italian citizenship and who have been convicted even for minor offences
- compulsory imprisonment even for women with children under one year of age
- more flexible use of weapons, including firearms, by the police
- greater repression of all protests in prisons,

This decree manages to worsen the repressive nature of the penal code inherited by the Italian Republic from the fascist regime.

The government's intentions, however, go much further. A year ago, parliament approved the law on so-called 'differentiated autonomy', strongly supported by Matteo Salvini's Lega party. This law aims to eliminate all forms of fiscal solidarity between the richer and poorer areas of the country and to give greater and almost unlimited powers to the leaders of the richer regions. This law, passed with the support of the entire right-wing majority in June 2024, was positively, albeit partially, weakened by a ruling of the Constitutional Court in December 2024, but it continues to represent a significant distortion of the constitutional structure adopted in 1948 by the Italian Republic.

A further constitutional reform law, particularly desired by Forza Italia, was recently adopted by the government majority on the subject of justice. It separates the careers of defence lawyers from those of public prosecutors and heavily modifies the system of self-government of the judiciary. The explicit intention is to subordinate it to the power of the

government and thus undermining the separation of powers also provided for in the Constitution. The latter has already been heavily compromised by the abuse of emergency decrees; the Meloni government has adopted 91 decree-laws in three years. This abuse is undermining the role of parliament by subordinating it to the executive. In accordance with constitutional rules, this reform of the judiciary will be put to a confirmatory referendum next spring. However, polls currently predict a favourable outcome for the right.

However, the main point of the constitutional reform programme proposed by the right wing is the 'premierato reform', a complete redesign of the country's institutional functioning. This proposal has been described by Giorgia Meloni as 'the beginning of the Third Republic' (the 'second' being the one governed by Berlusconi) and the 'mother of all reforms'. This is a proposal for a very serious and heavy-handed tampering with the institutional architecture adopted by Italy after the twenty years of Fascism. It is a blow that Giorgia Meloni intends to inflict on the parliamentary institutional structure of our country, with no justification other than the ideological fixation of Italian post-Fascists on the centralisation of power.

The proposal is presented as a remedy for the governmental instability that characterised the country in the second half of the last century. But today, particularly in this legislature, that instability no longer exists. So much so that to all observers, Giorgia Meloni's Italy seems a model of stability in a Europe where many countries are in the throes of deep crisis, first and foremost Macron's France.

The Meloni government is, in fact, set to be the longest-lasting in the country's history. Therefore, the reform of the premiership has nothing to do with so-called 'governability' but, in the intentions of the prime minister and other promoters, aims to politically and symbolically mark the definitive overcoming of the anti-fascist and democratic roots of the 1948 Constitution. It aims to create, among a much broader populist

electorate, the illusion of a renewal that promises to lead the country out of the difficulties of recent decades.

The abstruse institutional mechanism identified by the drafters of the bill effectively nullifies the role of parliament's assemblies, reducing them to mere venues for ratifying decisions made by the government and its prime minister. It would be, even formally, the 'dictatorship of the majority', a majority which, under the new electoral rules, could have at least 55% of parliamentarians even with only 30% of the vote, and moreover only of the electorate that votes, in a context in which abstention is constantly growing. The executive power (i.e. the government) would become independent of parliament, because the proposed direct election of the prime minister makes him or her the central power, heavily prevailing over all other institutional bodies (the president of the Republic and parliament), which are structurally weakened. This would be a 'democracy' similar to that of many of Giorgia Meloni's 'friends', particularly Hungary's Viktor Orban.

This reform is still under discussion in Parliament, and the government will probably choose to let it mature over time (unless unforeseen opportunities arise), perhaps postponing its final approval until the next legislature, which will be elected in autumn 2027. This is because it is entirely predictable that the reform will be put to a confirmatory referendum, and confirmatory referendums on constitutional reforms have often turned into a resounding rejection of governments, as shown by the 60% 'No' vote that overwhelmed the Renzi government in 2016. But this time, the test will be particularly tricky for the opposition as well, because in order to prevent the reform, it will be necessary to 'defend' a Constitution which, thanks to repeated tampering, is no longer based on the anti-fascist 'social compromise' of 1948. Also because, in any case, that Constitution has painfully demonstrated its formal, demagogic character over the decades, betraying in practice all the commitments to equality and justice promised in the text.

## International reliability...

Among Giorgia Meloni's successes, we must not overlook her ability to effectively insert herself into European Union politics, even if this choice blatantly contradicts her demagogic stance against the 'technocrats of Brussels' adopted when she was still in opposition. It must be said that, after some initial scepticism, even the European Commission and its president, Von Der Leyen, have largely opened the door to collaboration with the Italian prime minister. This collaboration has resulted in:

- the Italian government's contribution at EU level on immigration
- the revision of the Dublin Regulation
- new rules on the right to asylum and rules on repatriation
- on the environment, the rewriting of the European Green Deal
- on the economy, the relaxation of certain rules of the Stability and Growth Pact.

This collaboration led the Italian right-wing government to differ in its vote on the new commission, with Fratelli d'Italia and Forza Italia voting in favour of Ursula Von Der Leyen while the Lega voted against her along with the rest of the European far right. In return, Fratelli d'Italia secured the appointment of its Raffaele Fitto as executive vice-president. Taking stock of the European policies of other right-wing leaders (such as Matteo Salvini), Giorgia Meloni realised that a confrontational 'sovereignist' and anti-European approach does not pay off. She has therefore implemented and continues to implement a policy of gradual integration into the EU institutions, with undeniable results so far.

In foreign policy, there are still some differences between the parties in the right-wing coalition, with Fratelli d'Italia and Forza Italia more clearly Atlanticist with regard to Ukraine, but Trump's activism seems to be unanimously supported, and Giorgia Meloni is certainly best placed to take advantage of the rise to power of the American far right.

Given that the Italian government was the first among the major Western countries to fall into the hands of the far right, it must be acknowledged that Giorgia Meloni has succeeded in normalising the presence of a fascist (or at least post-fascist) far right at the helm of Europe's third largest economy, becoming an international reference point for all right-wing parties.

She has skilfully managed to surround herself with an aura of respectability, to project an institutional and 'moderate' image, and to establish herself as a key player in addressing the main challenges facing the EU, not only on Ukraine but also on other issues. She has managed to establish and display an explicitly cordial and symbolically significant relationship with the President of the Commission. She even organised a joint visit with her to the island of Lampedusa, the main destination for migrants arriving from North Africa, precisely to demonstrate harmony and collaboration on the sensitive issue of immigration. This is an issue on which European politics as a whole seems to be shifting towards the xenophobic and racist positions of the Italian right. At the same time, she has managed to combine all this with an ostentatious harmony with the Trump administration, which in some ways reciprocates by presenting her as a privileged interlocutor.

Despite the largely ineffective criticism levelled at Giorgia Meloni from the right by Matteo Salvini's Lega and neo-fascist General Roberto Vannacci, it must be said that Meloni, with her pragmatism, has managed to win over more and more of the business community, even the most powerful, once perplexed by the 'sovereignty' of the far right, to her government and her policies. It should also be added that her 'model' contributes to the 'rise' to power of other far-right parties at the international level, because it leads increasingly broad sectors of the ruling classes to say: 'Well, you see, in the end there is no need to be afraid of them; on the contrary, as Giorgia Meloni demonstrates, they can do useful work for us'.

... and reactionary aggression towards those who disagree

In contrast to this 'institutional' image, at the national level the prime minister is increasingly using aggressive and contemptuous tones towards the opposition. She recently described the timid solidarity of the institutional opposition towards Palestine as 'complicity with Hamas'. Although until a few weeks ago he was a totally unknown figure in Italy, she immediately used the assassination of Charlie Kirk to attack both the ultra-moderate and extreme left, going so far as to organise a grotesque commemoration of the pro-Trump reactionary activist in the Italian parliament.

The reactionary stance of the right continues to dominate its actions within the country. We have already mentioned the 'security decree'. Other measures have been taken against 'rainbow' families, i.e. non-binary families, preventing the regularisation of adopted or heterodox children, and it has done everything possible to impose strict control over the media, particularly television.

Giorgia Meloni's tactic is to exploit and try to deepen as much as possible the crisis of credibility of the entire opposition in all its nuances, from Matteo Renzi's vacuous centrism to the impotent residual demagoguery of the Five Star Movement to the shaky late-Labour approach of Elly Schlein's PD. The entire opposition continues to pay the price for:

- its long and disastrous season in government - between 'political' governments led by the PD or the Five Star Movement and 'technical' governments supported by the PD, this lasted from 2011 to 2022,
- its anti-social policies,
- its perverse institutional reforms,
- its pandering to racist and security-driven forces,
- and its contribution to the definitive pulverisation of what was once the unity of the working class.

This translates into a gradual but inexorable decline in active voters. In the last regional elections, the figure remained around 50%, if not below, a decline that penalises the opposition significantly more than the forces of the right-wing government. An interesting analysis based on the percentage of votes cast not only for the slates but also for a specific candidate shows that this abstention is much lower for the right-wing vote (especially for Fratelli d'Italia) while it is very high (sometimes reaching or exceeding 70% for the PD) for the opposition. This phenomenon indicates the persistent ability of the right to 'speak' to the public, to those who are less organised and less tied to parties, while the opposition is unable to attract the votes of the undecided electorate.

This is enough to describe the impotence of the political and institutional opposition, with the crisis and decline of the Five Star Movement, miraculously kept alive after the death of Gianroberto Casaleggio and the 'betrayal' of Beppe Grillo by Giuseppe Conte's leadership. The PD is currently forced to put a good face on Elly Schlein's 'movementist' management but continues to be totally infested by a nomenclature of administrators nostalgic for the moderate Matteo Renzi. All this has facilitated some growth in the left wing of the opposition, the 'red-green' wing of Nicola Fratoianni and Angelo Bonelli's AVS (Green Left Alliance), but it is a wing that continues to scrape by in total subordination to the PD and others.

As for the 'radical left', one would prefer not to talk about it in order to draw a 'veil' over its 'existence'. However, it must be said that the extraordinary movement that has

developed in recent weeks to condemn the genocide perpetrated in Gaza by Netanyahu and his government and the complicity of many governments (including the Italian one) is allowing a new displacement of forces in the field, significantly marginalising what remains of the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC). It is pushing to the forefront the more openly 'campist' wings of the Italian radical left: the USB trade union and the political organisation Potere al Popolo. Their political and social activism and also thanks to some tactical choices that have proved to be far-sighted, have meant they have taken on a leading role in that movement.

The demonstrations that have swept across Italy (as in other countries) during the Global Sumud Flotilla action show the potential that still exists in the country. A cold political assessment shows that there are no political and social actors in the country capable of channelling this potential, except in the dead end of dangerous factionalism. However, the new mass mobilisation and the new willingness to engage in political militancy are creating new spaces for political work, so that a consistently internationalist option can challenge the hegemony of the factionalists in the radical left.

Meanwhile, Giorgia Meloni, with her tactical pragmatism, combining verbal arrogance and simulating moderation, is waiting for the 'Trump effect' to spread around the world, for other European countries (France? Britain? Germany?) to fall into the hands of other far-right comrades, and is offering them a model for action.

25 October 2025

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **lRefrattario e controcorrente**.

## The Gulf of Gabès between pollution and

# successive policies of marginalization

5 November 2025, by [Collective](#)

What the Gabès governorate is experiencing today is not so much a surprise as a continuation of the struggle waged by the region's inhabitants for their right to live in a healthy environment. The first demonstrations date back to 2011 in the municipality of Ghnouch, where this complex is located. This region was, and remains, to put it mildly, a disaster zone due to the scale of the damage caused by the phosphogypsum discharge.

It is estimated that 14,000 tons of this chemical were dumped near the complex, rendering the beach uninhabitable and leading to the accumulation of a thick layer of the chemical. Numerous heavy metals, such as platinum (a radioactive substance), mercury, and lead, are also deposited there. Thousands of tons of sulphur dioxide are also released into the depths of the sea. This has made the waters of neighbouring beaches highly acidic. The beach sand has been transformed into an acidic clay, most fish species have disappeared, and the number of pollution-resistant species has decreased in areas far from the chemical complex. At atmospheric levels, thousands of tons of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) are released daily, resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of people suffering from respiratory illnesses, particularly cancer.

Most of the residents living near this complex also suffer from osteoporosis... That is why one of the main demands of the region's inhabitants at the time was the creation of a university hospital. This demand was postponed at every stage of government that followed... But it was perhaps in 2013 that this demand was strongest, when a group of regional executives presented a series of studies, as well as a project aimed at recycling some of the chemical waste and using it industrially to reduce pollution, according to the authors of the studies. But the decision-makers did not respond

seriously to these studies and did not seek to find concrete solutions through their official institutions.

## Chronology

October 2016: A wide-ranging debate erupted following the announcement of the death of a worker asphyxiated by gases at the Gabès ammonia plant, and the subsequent official denial of any ammonia leak. This event remains a stark indicator of the fragility of industrial safety in the region.

Year 2017: According to archived local publications, a gas pipeline explosion was recorded at the entrance to Ghnouch, which revived residents' fears about gas-related risks in the industrial zone.

But these protests took a decisive turn in 2017, when they ceased to be the preserve of an elite and of some associations and became a grassroots movement. Policies of procrastination, ignorance, and indifference may have allowed the region's inhabitants to become aware and convinced that they had the right to fight for a clean environment and that there was no other way to improve their situation than to struggle and protest against the authorities. This led the government of Youssef Chahed to open a dialogue with the region's inhabitants and to decide to dismantle the Gabès chemical complex in 2019.

2019: Repeated protests in Ghnouch due to "suffocating gas" emitted by units of the complex, according to documents collected on the terrain and videos shot by activists, and complaints reporting isolated cases of suffocation.

March 2020: Fire in the ammonia plant of the Gabès chemical complex, according to local records, with renewed discussions about the dangers of emissions to public health.

2021-2024: Complaints about suffocating odours and emissions in the vicinity of Ghnouch, Bouchem

and Chatt al-Salam continue, and press articles and civil organizations confirm repeated exposure to gases irritating to the respiratory tract, although official figures on the number of cases are not available.

September 2025: A wave of suffocation cases in Gabès is dubbed the "month of suffocation" by the media. Multiple reports document dozens of cases in Ghnouch, Chatt el-Salam, and Bouchema over several consecutive days, including schoolchildren. Documented examples include 36 cases in two days according to *Tunisie Numérique*, 50 cases transported to the hospital according to Al-Ain Al-Akhbar, and other isolated cases recorded at the Ghnouch hospital.

September 30, 2025: 14 students hospitalized after a toxic gas leak in the complex.

October 10, 2025: Cases of asphyxiation among students at Chatt Al-Salam College, some of whom were taken to hospital, with confirmation of the repetition of similar incidents in the same establishment during the week.

October 10-14, 2025: Intensification of protests and dozens of additional cases of suffocation and breathing difficulties. Local authorities report more than 120 cases requiring emergency intervention or hospitalization in early October.

October 16-22, 2025: Mass demonstrations and a general strike in Gabès due to a wave of suffocation incidents. International agencies document the increase in cases of poisoning and acute respiratory distress, as well as clashes with security forces. Reports confirm the age of the facilities and the increase in emissions of ammonia and nitrogen dioxide.

The demands of the region's inhabitants, initially limited to improved safety conditions, the treatment of polluted gas and water,

and the establishment of medical facilities, have evolved into a demand for the implementation of the decision to close the chemical complex, scheduled for 2019. However, like all government decisions that affect the interests of capital, this measure has been postponed. On the contrary, under the current administration, production has doubled, in blatant disregard of all safety standards. The complex has also decided to create a new manufacturing unit for DAP18-46, which is in high demand on the global market.

This measure is considered a provocation by the region's inhabitants and a direct attack on the environment, not only in the affected area but throughout the region, particularly in the fishing and agricultural sectors (whose incomes have declined due to decreased profitability and the shrinking of areas suitable for these activities). These policy choices aim to maximize production by 2025 so that the state can gather as many financial resources as possible to repay its debts to the International Monetary Fund and international lenders.

## A mass struggle

The environmental struggle in the Gulf of Gabès has shifted from a minority movement to a popular one, as evidenced by the general strike on Tuesday, October 21, 2025. The strike was 100 per cent effective, with over 135,000 citizens participating in the protest march, meaning the entire population of the region took part. This reflects both a growing awareness of the severity of the

environmental crisis and the extent of the pollution, which has reached an intolerable level.

Moreover, the increase in the volume of stored materials, according to testimonies from workers inside the complex, is accompanied by a glaring lack of safety conditions, particularly in the storage stations, making an accident similar to the Beirut port explosion the greatest threat to the region.

It is also ironic that farmers in the region, like all Tunisian farmers, are suffering from a decline in agricultural production due to supply problems with ammonia (DAP18-46) and its persistent shortage in distribution channels, which allows speculators and monopolies to manipulate prices. On the one hand, this product is imported from Russia in lower quality in some years to meet farmers' needs, while at the same time, Tunisia supplies the European market with most of its ammonia requirements, with France perhaps being one of the largest importers of these chemical products.

This environmental crisis merely reflects capitalism's desire to exploit the environment as a source of quick profits, even at the expense of local populations' lives and the future of generations to come. The choices made by the chemical complex necessarily reflect the political and economic choices of the authorities in power, who, through successive governments, defend the interests of the local bourgeoisie. This bourgeoisie profits from the production of these hazardous substances for its various chemical industries, perhaps the most

important of which are energy storage industries. Global capitalism also profits from these materials to develop its industry and agriculture and meet the needs of the global market, even if this is at the expense of the local market. This essentially translates into direct economic colonization, on the one hand through economic agreements and, on the other hand, through the use of debt, particularly the directives of the International Monetary Fund. And even if Kais Saïed [1]. denies any bias in favour of policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the European Union, practice clearly reveals that all the governments that have succeeded one another during his term of office have adopted external financing policies and focused exclusively on eliminating subsidies and raising funds to free up as much liquidity as possible to repay IMF instalments. The current government's desire to maintain full production at the Gabès chemical complex undoubtedly falls within this logic, and the fact that the army is being tasked with protecting the complex during this period is the most blatant proof that this policy reflects not so much the government's policy as Kais Saïed 's own, which consists of serving the interests of global capitalism.

October 26 , 2025

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from **Inprecor**.

## Footnotes

[1] Kais Saïed has been President of Tunisia since 2019.

# Radicalisation on right and left while centre crumbles in Britain

4 November 2025, by [Dave Kellaway](#)

## 1. Creeping

## fascism ratchets

## up a gear

The forms of creeping fascism are:

- the continued rise of Farage's racist Reform UK
- this overlaps, including in membership, with a Tommy Robinson/fascist led street mobilisations
- a disintegrating Tory party adopting increasingly hard right authoritarian policies.

### **Reform support still growing**

The Caerphilly by-election, where Reform failed to win but went from 2 per cent in the previous election to 36 per cent shows that the national polling, consistently showing it over 30 per cent is, if anything, underestimates its support. Taking all the council by-elections since the last general election, Reform averages the highest of all parties at 30 per cent. This figure is not dependent on exceptionally low turnout. Analysts have explained how Reform are bringing previous non-voters to the poll. Caerphilly had a bigger turnout than most Senedd elections.

Reform is aiming to consolidate by forming branches in as many constituencies as possible. Its progress towards over 900 local councillors helps this base building. Funds are plentiful and it is professionalising its operation with many staff defecting from the Tories. It aims to contest many more seats than ever before in the May 2026 local, Scots and Welsh elections. Tory MP Danny Kruger, who was still on the up in Badenoch's party, is the latest recruit and recently twenty councillors in Hampshire and Dorset have also changed camp. Voices inside the Tory Party are openly calling for an electoral agreement with Reform to save what is left of the party.

At the moment polls show there is still a majority in against having Farage as prime minister and Caerphilly shows there a potential for tactical voting to block Reform's progress. Unfortunately for Starmer, Labour is so unpopular that it may not be seen as the fulcrum around which anti-Farage forces will coalesce. Nationalist, Green or left parties like Your Party could well be that focus. It would be a disaster for the Left, and would not even necessarily work, if the majority of movement thought the

only way to stop Reform were to rally around Starmer's bankrupt government in some vaguely progressive alliance.

### **Fascist current is building**

Tommy Robinson certainly pulled off a political coup with the 100,000 plus demonstration on 13 September in probably the biggest fascist led demonstration ever in this country. Apart from the anti-migrant, anti-Islamic slogans we also saw the emergence of the sort of Christian Nationalist sentiments we have seen in the USA. Linking all migrants and asylum seekers to sexual violence and paedophilia was another reactionary falsehood that animated the mobilisation. In the weeks before and after this mobilisation we have seen the 'Raising of the Flags' campaign led by fascists. Union Jacks and the flag of St George have been put up, Six Counties style, on lamp posts. Kerbs or even roundabouts have been painted red, white and blue. Robinson also presents himself as a Zionist fighting anti-Semitism and was invited by senior politicians to visit Israel. When the controversy about Tel Aviv Maccabi fans erupted he immediately said he would be calling on his supporters, many of whom are football fans, to come out in their support.

### **Tories still shifting right**

Within the Tory Party, there is a language and developing policies which mark a total break with the historical trajectory of this hugely successful political current. One nation conservatives like Michael Heseltine have openly condemned it. Robert Jenrick, defeated leadership candidate, on the other hand has enthusiastically joined up with the fascists raising the flags and has made a video in Handsworth in Birmingham where he whined about not seeing any white faces. Just last week a junior minister, Katie Lam, has called for a retrospective expulsion of millions of people who already have indefinite right to remain in this country - because we need a 'coherent culture'. This pivot to the right has not benefitted the Tories - they lost their deposit with only 2% of the vote in Caerphilly.

We cannot exclude an electoral deal between the Tories and Reform or an absorption or reconfiguration of both currents into one party by the time of the next election. Like Starmer, Badenoch might not make it as leader that far.

### **A growing shift to right internationally**

Creeping fascism here is integrally connected to the shift to the right internationally. Trump leads this with his assault on bourgeois democratic institutions - using and manipulating the law to attack political enemies, witchhunting the left and even progressives from universities, media and other institutions. He has sent the military and ICE (migrant control force) into cities to mostly harass and expel Black, Latinos and migrants. It is reported that many actual fascists from groups like the Proud Boys have been recruited to ICE.

Meanwhile Le Pen's National Rally is looking well placed to win the next French Presidential elections, Meloni is consolidating her electoral coalition in Italy, Orban continues to rule Hungary. Across the world hard right or neofascist currents like Modi in India are growing.

Key sectors of the imperialist states and of the ruling class have concluded that the relative open democracies that stood alongside the post war boom can no longer be allowed. To re-establish their profit rates, wages need to be held down and social spending further radically reduced.

They are also refusing to pay for real solutions to the climate and ecological crisis. Reform and Badenoch have followed Trump in abandoning serious targets for net zero carbon emissions. They are increasingly supporting more robust, authoritarian political parties to carry out this offensive against working people. Senior civil servants are already in contact with Reform and corporate lobbyists are paying much more attention to Farage.

## **2. The centre is**

## not holding

Starmer's Labour government elected with its hollow parliamentary landslide on barely 33 per cent of the popular vote is in a deep crisis. It lost 35 per cent of its vote in Caerphilly and its national polling has been around 12 percentage points lower than its general election score. A recent poll – an outlier no doubt – placed it neck and neck with Zack Polanski's Greens. As the by-election showed it is losing support to its right – to Reform and to its left – to Plaid. Elsewhere the Scot Nationalists, the Greens, the left independents and potentially Your Party are winning on the left of Labour.

### Strategic partnership with capital

Starmer's poorly elaborated strategy is fundamentally to develop a partnership with private capital to build more houses, maintain the NHS and to achieve growth so that it will be seen as providing some necessary services in contrast to the Tories but without breaking with the fundamental framework of austerity. . Extending public ownership or taxing wealth have been ruled out as an alternative way of providing funds for meeting people's needs. This strategic partnership further dilutes an already timid environmental strategy. Its £28 billion eco energy strategy has been cut back sharply, developers have successfully sabotaged regulations that protect biodiversity and fossil capital has already got Labour to row back on its 100% green energy electricity generation by 2030. It looks like Labour will cave in on the further extraction of oil and gas from the Rosebank field.

*The Guardian* has revealed how the big corporate donors to Labour have got an early payback with many contracts:

The Autonomy Institute identified a total of 125 companies that were awarded central government contracts worth £28.8bn after previously making £30.15m of donations to a political party. About £2.5bn worth of those

contracts were awarded within two years of the donation.

They include consultancy firm Baringa Partners, which donated £30,061.50 to Labour in January 2024 and received £35,196,719 worth of government contracts between July 2024 and March this year. Grant Thornton donated £81,658.37 between March 2023 and July 2024 and has since been awarded £6,541,819 in contracts.

### Labour isn't working

Certain limited, positive reforms such as extending nursery provision, increasing breakfast clubs, giving renters a few more rights and improving the labour laws are meant to keep its MPs and unions onboard and show electors it can bring real change. However these crumbs do not in any way balance the continued cost of living crisis, the dramatic housing crisis, the ecological crisis, devastating poverty with food banks still flourishing, the deficiencies of the NHS or the crumbling infrastructure such as water supply.

Growth is still weak, food inflation is still above 5%, sewage is still being spewed into our rivers and seas while profits flow to the shareholders and a lot of the other proposals are still having no effect.

Housing plans are in complete disarray as specialists say the 1.5 million target for houses built by the end of this parliament is a joke. Worse the response to this setback is to double down on the strategic partnership with the private developers. The latter will be allowed to build even fewer 'affordable houses' and the number of social rent houses will make hardly a minor dent into the homelessness figures. In any case, the housing crisis is not a crisis of supply or red tape but fundamentally one of affordability and the eradication of local authorities ability to build significant number of homes.

### Labour is out-Reforming, reform - with little success

During the general election campaign Labour's response to the threat of

Reform was to practically ignore it because it was eating into Tory support. Since then it has desperately tried to mirror its anti-migrant narrative. Each week the Home Secretary, first Cooper, now Shabana Mohammed have searched for new ways of showing it is as tough on migrants and asylum seekers as Reform. So the period before you can claim permanent leave to remain has been doubled to ten years and new reactionary conditions imposed like A level English and volunteering. Predictably none of this has stopped Reform's progress.

Labour has continued the Tory offensive against the right to protest and democratic rights. Mass arrests of people holding up cardboard signs continue. Starmer is said to be considering banning certain slogans on pro Palestine marches. Despite this, hundreds of thousands – mostly people who were more likely to vote Labour – are continuing to turn out regularly on the streets. Labour still does not recognise Israel is carrying out a genocide and is fully behind the Trump plan that is a colonial mandate rather than even a small step on the way to Palestinian self-determination.

### Incompetency of Starmer and his team

Another reason for Starmer's poor ratings is his faltering political leadership and management of his team even in delivering his own policies:

- failure to check out Mandelson's relationship with the paedophile Epstein
- the regular loss of ministers like Rayner and others for infringements of the ministerial code of conduct
- the flop of the digital ID cards launch
- exaggerating the impact of smashing the gangs or the one in, one out plan
- the attempt to smear a Your Party MP with anti-Semitism over the ban of racist Maccabi football hooligans.

Of course a week after Starmer made it a national controversy these Islamophobic fans, whom he defended against the opposition of the local Birmingham communities, rioted in Israel at another match. The club is now not even organising away tickets.

As the chant says, it has all gone quiet over there. It seems now Starmer is not even bothering to overturn the ban imposed by police, council and safety groups.

Starmer's response to the government unpopularity is on show at the Labour conference is to step up verbal attacks on Reform while continuing the anti-migrant messaging and to make a few tweaks ever so slightly to his left. Labour looks like (partially?) ending the two child benefit gap and taking some tax measures that will to a minor degree hit the pockets of the wealthy. But this is all relative, since plans to further slash disabled people's entitlement to benefits, cut motability allowances and 'reform' special needs support show that cuts to public spending will continue.

### **Deputy Leadership won by Powell**

As expected the candidate of the loyal, 'constructive' opposition, Lucy Powell, duly won the deputy leadership by eight points, scoring 54%. Given she was the official Starmer candidate, Phillipson did better than the polls indicated.

Although Labour is deliberately not providing a breakdown between the membership vote in the constituency parties and those of affiliated trade union members who bothered to vote polling organisations have roughly calculated that perhaps 43% of the former voted. Survation estimates a party membership of 280,000 - well down of the last official declaration on membership and probably an over-estimation.

For those on the left still in the Labour party this was a small encouragement. Many are banking on this being a sign that someone like Andy Burnham could win a leadership challenge after the predicted electoral disaster of the May 2026 elections.

One thing you can count on after this vote is that Downing Street Chief of Staff Morgan McSweeney and his team will be working flat out to prevent Burnham being allowed to get a seat anytime before May next year. More in the shadows they will be assessing which candidate on the right and centre of the party will be best

placed to replace Starmer if he cannot be saved.

### **Labour left weakened**

The small number of meetings and attendance at hustings during the deputy leadership campaigns suggests that party activism is very subdued. If Your Party successfully organises branches and does not score any more own goals we could see a combined Green/YP membership approach and perhaps overtake LP membership. In terms of activists on the ground those to the left of Labour will have the upper hand.

Those on the left of the party hope that Powell will somehow be able to apply pressure to get the apparatus to stop its war on the left. Recent candidate selections up and down the country seem to be following the McSweeney slogan of putting the left into the tomb. At the same time the fall off in members and unpopularity of the government means even finding people willing to stand has not been easy. For Starmer, one positive consequence of the Powell win will be prominent left MPs will not be jumping ship, at least for a while.

We should not write off what remains of the left inside Labour. The inept launch of Your Party and Powell's win has meant they are staying in a wait and see mode and are not yet making the step to break with Labour. Their number is much reduced but Your Party should not ignore them and activists should work alongside them in the campaigns and trade unions.

## **3. A radicalisation on the left**

All is not doom and gloom in today's political situation. There is a counter offensive against creeping fascism. In the USA the No Kings mobilisations are big and getting bigger. In Italy and France the left has successfully brought millions out on the streets.

The Palestine solidarity campaign here and elsewhere has become a true mass movement. Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in London just a couple of weeks ago directly

after the government and the mainstream mass media have mounted a narrative that the Trump ceasefire is a great step forward towards a two state solution. Palestine has been one of the key reasons so many activists and voters have abandoned Starmer's Labour. Many people, particularly younger activists are joining left of Labour groups as a result of getting involved in Palestine solidarity. We are in a different position to the demoralisation we experienced at the defeat of the Corbyn project inside Labour.

### **Greens surge with Polanski**

The Greens are also benefitting from all this mobilisation on Palestine but also from continued protests to defend our environment. Zack Polanski's leadership victory on a platform that included socialist demands as well as a radical green agenda has had a huge impact. Today the Greens have more members than the Lib Dems and the Tories.

Zack is a good communicator on the media and has not backtracked on his progressive policies on migrants, Palestine or the wealth tax. He defends common ownership and reducing the dizzying levels of inequality in Britain. We see him on the streets on protests for Gaza and against fossil fuel corporations.

Importantly he is open to electoral arrangements between the Greens and Your Party. Already in Hackney for example there is cooperation between Green and independent Left councillors, not just on electoral arrangements for next May, but in action bringing disinvestment campaigns into the council chamber.

In the discussions around setting up Your Party some sectarian and ultra left voices have denounced the Greens and opposed electoral deals with them. Many of those who have joined the Greens are ex-Corbyn supporters and some who have joined recently could well have joined Your Party if there had not been all the missteps along the way. Sneering (often inaccurate) about the whiteness or middle class character of the Greens is just unhelpful.

We have an historic opportunity of seriously weakening the hegemony of Labourism on the labour movement but that cannot be done if we fail to get unity in action and in elections with the Greens. Some on the left just do not see the importance of Your Party adopting a clear eco-socialist programme which connects all issues threatening our planet with inequality and the class struggle. What we have seen of Zack Polanski so far is somebody is pretty good at making those links.

Potential and problems with Your Party

Your Party has its problems no doubt. There does seem to be a group around Jeremy - we could call them his courtiers - who are not that keen on Sultana overshadowing their leader and who are extremely wary of losing their position in the leadership of the project. To a degree their reluctance to adopt a delegate type structure for the assemblies and conference seems to arise from a concern that activists opposed to their views (maybe in the organised left groups) would have too much of a platform. The line in the proposed constitution about not having dual membership of YP and another current could be used to stop the intervention of left formations.

Despite all this we need to focus on to the big picture. Up to 300 meetings of 'proto' local YP branches have been held. Some big rallies and meetings have produced positive feedback from participants. Some meetings so far have successfully brought people together, some have not.

The revolutionary left has to understand that if YP is going to be a mass left party then they have to tread carefully and not see all the members just as people they can recruit to their group. To be successful, we need tens of thousands of activists who do not define themselves as Marxist or who do not currently see their priority as smashing the bourgeois state.

Hopefully the fact that lots of left groups will be working inside the new party will help their members reflect on how to work with new activists in an open and friendly way which does not lead them to vow to never return for another local meeting with all those paper sellers. Sometimes it is about language and presentation. For example if you have 10 of your group in a meeting they don't all have to speak and when they speak they should not all sound like the same article in that week's newspaper.

## **Fighting back for the planet and all our futures**

Another positive by product of different left currents working in the same environment may be a less antagonistic approach between them. Working together to steer the new party could encourage militants to question the need for so many left groups given they often have agreements over about 80 to 90% of their policies.

We should not allow the difficulties of having to organise at this stage through the sortition mechanism hold up the progress for the establishment of strong branches in every area. Sometimes goodwill and positive attitudes can work wonders, even in politics.

In Britain and internationally we are involved in a race between creeping fascism producing further defeats for working people and an uncertain future for our planet and the development of a socially progressive alternative that could lead to a truly eco-socialist future. If our side loses the results would be catastrophic.

*30 October 2025*

Source: [Anti\\*Capitalist Resistance](#).

# **Trump Takes Food from the Poor Poor during Budget Crisis**

3 November 2025, by [Dan La Botz](#)

The Republicans and Democrats have not been able to come to agreement on the federal budget, largely because the Democrats refuse to vote for a new budget without guarantees that the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which provides health insurance coverage to 44 million Americans, would be continued. Open enrollment for ACA began on November 1, but many have been shocked to find that their ACA insurance premiums have risen, in some cases astronomically. A single person earning \$32,000 a year who way paying \$58 a month will now have to pay about \$180, an increase of \$1,468 per year. Similarly, a family of

four earning \$66,000 annually could see the payment rise from about \$121 to \$373 per month, an increase of roughly \$3,025 annually. While ACA is a federal program, some states provide subsidies that make it more affordable, so costs can differ from state to state. In New Jersey premiums would rise more than 175 percent and in Colorado by 101 percent.

In an attempt to protect their constituents from these rising costs, Democrats refused to vote for the budget, and the government shutdown. Trump has taken advantage of the government closure to fund

programs he likes, such as the military and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), while shutting down others.

Trump has stopped funds for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as "food stamps," that provides food to 42 million people with low or no income, that is, to 12.5 percent of all Americans. Most recipients are children, the elderly, or the disabled. One has to understand that in the United States Poverty and economic inequality are endemic. There are 100,000 children from homeless

families in New York City alone.

The program distributes over \$90 billion a year, about 10 percent of all spending on groceries, a benefit therefore to grocery stores. In some poor neighborhoods, the small, family-owned store's customers may be 75 to 90 percent food stamp customers. The SNAP program, run by the Department of Agriculture, also subsidizes the farmers who provide the food and therefore benefits rural communities.

Federal judges have ordered Trump to fund SNAP using the government's six-billion-dollar contingency fund, but Trump told his lawyers to ask for more

specific instructions.

Trump has also stopped funding for about 10% of the Head Start Program, a pre-school education program that serves 750,000 children from low-income families. Head Start also provides food and health services to these children.

The first U.S. food stamp program was set up in 1939 under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democrat, and the current program began in 1964, created under Democrats President Lyndon B. Johnson. And Head Start was created by President Johnson in 1965. As Trump says these programs were created by Democrats,

but many of the beneficiaries are Republicans, and Trump's cuts will hurt them too.

Many of those who marched on October 18 in the No Kings protests held in 2,700 cities and towns and involving seven million protestors had signs criticizing Trump's attack on working people and the poor. And this month there will be elections for governors and state legislators as well as six special elections to Congress to replace representatives who have resigned or died. We will see how Trump's latest act of cruelty affects those races.

*2 November 2025*

# **“We Are The Working Class”?: Indonesia’s Labour Party and the Limits of Reformist Politics**

2 November 2025, by [Mark Johnson](#)

## **Introduction**

On 5 October 2021, exactly one year after Indonesia's controversial Omnibus Law on Job Creation was passed, more than 50 labour unions gathered in Jakarta to formally establish the Partai Buruh (Labour Party). This marked a significant moment in Indonesian politics: the revival of a workers' political party after years of fragmented labour representation and defeats at the hands of a political establishment dominated by elites with roots in the authoritarian New Order regime [1].

The party's formation was driven by a stark realisation amongst union leaders that traditional tactics—mass demonstrations, general strikes, and lobbying—had failed to prevent the passage of legislation that fundamentally undermined workers' rights. The 2020 Omnibus Law on Job Creation, a sweeping 812-page piece of legislation, had relaxed rules on firing workers, expanded outsourcing without restrictions, weakened severance protections, and extended

overtime limits, all whilst reducing environmental safeguards and threatening indigenous land rights. Despite massive protests that drew hundreds of thousands of workers onto the streets, the law passed with minimal consultation from labour unions or civil society groups.

## **Historical context: Labour politics in post-Suharto Indonesia**

The Partai Buruh represents the latest attempt to build working-class political representation in Indonesia's electoral system. The history of labour-based parties in the post-Suharto era has been one of repeated failure. After the fall of the authoritarian regime in 1998, labour activist Muchtar Pakpahan established the National Labour Party (Partai Buruh Nasional), which competed in the first democratic elections in 1999 but attracted only a tiny fraction of

votes. The party competed again in 2004 as the Social Democratic Labour Party and in 2009 as the Labour Party, but failed to secure any seats. In 2009, it garnered just 0.25 per cent of votes—approximately 265,000 ballots.

This electoral weakness reflected deeper structural problems. Indonesia's labour movement emerged from decades of repression under Suharto, during which all unions were forced into a single state-controlled organisation. The legacy of this control has been a fragmented labour movement with over 100 specialised unions and multiple competing confederations. Of Indonesia's approximately 127 million workers, only 2.7 million are registered union members, and these are scattered across numerous organisations with competing political allegiances.

## **Party structure and founding**

## coalition

The 2021 revival drew support from several major labour confederations: the Confederation of Indonesian Trade Unions (KSPI) with 2.2 million members, the Confederation of All Indonesian Workers' Unions (KSPSI) [2] with 3 million members, and several smaller confederations. The core initiator was the Federation of Indonesian Metal Workers' Unions (FSPMI), which represents 300,000 workers primarily in the automotive, electronics, and manufacturing sectors concentrated in the industrial zones around Jakarta and Bekasi.

To expand beyond its industrial union base, the party aligned itself with farmers' organisations, fishers' groups, informal sector workers, domestic workers, migrant workers, online transportation workers, teachers' unions, and urban poor movements. With more than 80 million workers in Indonesia's informal sector—representing 60 per cent of the workforce—the party aimed to build a broad coalition of the marginalised.

Said Iqbal, president of both the KSPI confederation and the FSPMI metal workers' union, was elected unopposed as party president at the founding congress. Born in Jakarta in 1968 to parents from Aceh, Iqbal began his working life in 1992 at an electronics factory in Bekasi District. His experience with poor working conditions drew him into labour organising, and after the fall of Suharto, he helped establish the FSPMI, eventually becoming its president. Under his leadership, the KSPI organised major national strikes and demonstrations, including protests against outsourcing practices and minimum wage violations.

## Political platform: Towards a welfare state

The Labour Party's programme centres on what it calls a "welfare state" agenda, directly challenging the neoliberal economic policies that have

dominated Indonesia since the 1990s. The party's key demands include:

- Rejection of the Omnibus Law on Job Creation and restoration of labour protections that existed under the 2003 Labour Law
- Ending the system of unlimited contract renewals that keeps workers in precarious employment indefinitely
- Abolishing outsourcing for core production work whilst maintaining direct employment relationships
- Establishing a living wage rather than the current minimum wage, which covers only 82 per cent of basic needs
- Adequate severance pay protections
- Humane working hours with limits on overtime
- Menstrual and birthing leave enshrined in law
- Universal social security coverage including health insurance and pensions
- Protection for domestic workers, ship crews, and migrant workers who currently lack legal safeguards
- Agrarian reform and food sovereignty

The party's demands extend beyond traditional labour issues to encompass broader social justice concerns, reflecting its attempt to position itself as a voice for all marginalised groups rather than narrowly representing unionised industrial workers.

## The 2024 elections: High hopes, disappointing results

The party's registration for Indonesia's 2024 parliamentary elections attracted considerable attention from commentators and civil society activists. For the first time in decades, a party backed by the

country's largest unions would compete in national elections. The party claimed it could mobilise 10 million members across 25 provinces and needed approximately 7 million votes to surpass the 4 per cent threshold required to enter parliament.

However, the election results on 14 February 2024 proved deeply disappointing. According to the official count from Indonesia's Electoral Commission, the Labour Party secured only 0.62-0.73 per cent of the national vote—well below the parliamentary threshold. In Jakarta, where the party had its strongest organisational presence, it performed slightly better but still failed to gain significant traction.

The party's electoral strategy faced numerous challenges. Committed to rejecting "money politics"—the widespread practice of vote-buying that dominates Indonesian elections—Labour Party campaigners distributed pamphlets and engaged in door-to-door canvassing without offering cash or gifts. Residents repeatedly asked why party workers hadn't brought rice, cooking oil, or other necessities that other parties routinely provided. Some voters scoffed at candidates who "couldn't enrich themselves," revealing how deeply transactional politics has penetrated Indonesian electoral culture.

A survey of 709 workers in Central Java found that none of the surveyed workers supported the Labour Party, instead aligning with mainstream parties such as the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) and Gerindra—the same parties that had supported the Omnibus Law. Workers' votes fragmented across the political spectrum, with the top five parties chosen by working-class voters being Gerindra (20.1 per cent), PDI-P (17.3 per cent), Golkar (10.7 per cent), the Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (8.5 per cent), and Nasdem (7.2 per cent).

## Contradictions and

## critiques from the left

From its inception, the Labour Party has faced sharp criticism from more radical elements within the labour movement and the Indonesian left. Critics point to fundamental contradictions between the party's rhetoric and its leadership's political practice.

Most problematically, Said Iqbal's history of collaboration with political elites has raised questions about the party's genuine commitment to opposition politics. In both the 2014 and 2019 presidential elections, Iqbal campaigned for Prabowo Subianto, a former general under Suharto's regime with a controversial human rights record. Iqbal allegedly expected to be appointed minister of manpower in a Prabowo government. After Prabowo's defeats, Iqbal quickly pivoted to expressing support for President Joko Widodo, participating in friendly photo opportunities and initially supporting Widodo's controversial plan to relocate Indonesia's capital.

During the 2024 presidential campaign, whilst the Labour Party officially maintained that it could support none of the candidates because all backed the Omnibus Law, party leaders reserved the right to change policy if circumstances shifted. After Prabowo's victory, Iqbal declared that the party and KSPI would support the Prabowo-Gibran government, prompting accusations of inconsistency from party members. At a May Day event in 2025, Iqbal claimed that 95 per cent of workers supported President Prabowo—a statement far removed from oppositional politics.

Furthermore, the appointment of Andi Gani, president of the KSPSI confederation and a Labour Party supporter, as special staff to the national police chief for labour affairs has raised concerns about co-optation. Critics argue that these developments demonstrate the "trade union bureaucracy" remains fundamentally oriented towards accommodation with the political establishment rather than

building genuine working-class power.

Internal tensions have emerged between two streams within the party: the "Iqbal stream" that prioritises lobbying and negotiation with elites, and the more oppositional Political Committee (Kopolnas) stream associated with the Confederation of United Indonesian Workers (KPBI) that advocates for continued mass mobilisation and civil society activism.

Significantly, some of the most militant unions have remained outside the Labour Party entirely. The Congress of Indonesian Unions Alliance (KASBI) [3], which represents a key part of Indonesia's independent labour movement, stayed away from the party. KASBI's scepticism stems partly from distrust of Said Iqbal's political history—including his 2014 statement that "human rights are not important to workers" when defending his support for Prabowo Subianto, a man accused of serious human rights violations during the Suharto era. KASBI activists also question whether electoral politics within Indonesia's oligarchic system can deliver meaningful change, or whether it inevitably leads to co-optation.

In May 2025, the divisions within Indonesian labour manifested dramatically in two separate May Day events in Jakarta. The Labour Party, under Said Iqbal, participated in a state-aligned event held at the National Monument with President Prabowo, military commanders, police chiefs, and parliamentary leaders on stage—an event that looked more like an official state ceremony than a workers' demonstration. Meanwhile, KASBI and 35 other critical civil society groups organised the Labour Movement with the People (GEBRAK) coalition [4], holding an oppositional protest outside the parliamentary building. GEBRAK's demands went beyond workplace issues to include repeal of the Law on the Armed Forces, opposition to military interference in civilian affairs, and a denunciation of "capitalism, oligarchy and militarism" as "the enemies of the working class." This split reveals a fundamental divide in the Indonesian labour movement between those pursuing accommodation with state power and those maintaining an

oppositional stance.

Left-wing organisations including the Socialist Union (Perserikatan Sosialis) issued a manifesto during the 2024 elections calling on the Labour Party's left wing to maintain an independent position and avoid collaboration with pro-Omnibus Law politicians. They argued that the party risked becoming just another vehicle for elite interests rather than a genuine force for working-class transformation.

## Far left critiques: "The Labour Party has failed"

By 2025, disillusionment of anti-capitalists with the Labour Party had deepened. The Indonesian People's Movement (Solidaritas Perjuangan Rakyat Indonesia, SPRI) [5] issued a scathing assessment declaring that "the Labour Party has failed to become a political vessel for the oppressed people. The Labour Party has actually compromised with the powers it was supposed to fight. Instead of becoming a tool for the working-class struggle, it submitted to the logic of parliament and the elite."

The SPRI critique represents a broader frustration amongst Indonesia's revolutionary left with both the Labour Party and the trajectory of the once-radical People's Democratic Party (PRD). The PRD, which emerged from student movements in the late 1980s and played a heroic role resisting Suharto's dictatorship—with leaders like Budiman Sudjatmiko serving long prison sentences—had itself undergone a rightward shift. In 2021, the PRD merged into the Just and Prosperous People's Party (Prima), which subsequently aligned itself with President Prabowo Subianto's government. This represented, in the words of SPRI activists, "a betrayal of the spirit of the people's resistance."

The far left argues that Indonesia now faces an "alternative political vacuum" with no parties that "truly represent the voices of the poor, workers, farmers, fishers, and the oppressed." They contend that "all the major

political parties and those claiming to be 'left' have been co-opted by the elite system." This analysis extends beyond mere electoral failure to encompass a fundamental critique of reformist politics: that any attempt to work within Indonesia's oligarchic parliamentary system inevitably results in co-optation and betrayal.

These groups call for building a new party that would differ fundamentally from the Labour Party model. Rather than being led by trade union bureaucrats with histories of elite collaboration, it would be grounded in mass movements—labour, farmers, indigenous peoples, students, and environmental activists—united under a strategic framework explicitly aimed at challenging capitalist power. Such a party would not "adapt" to elite politics but would "shake the status quo," standing "at the forefront with the oppressed people, not the owners of capital."

The Socialist Union's 2024 manifesto articulated a maximalist programme that goes far beyond the Labour Party's reformist demands: nationalisation of strategic assets under popular control, redistribution of national wealth, liberation of women from sexism and sexual oppression, full equality for traditional communities and youth, environmental protection, support for international solidarity and self-determination, and elimination of foreign debt for all Third World countries. Critically, they called for "national industrialisation to develop productive labour for the welfare and progress of the ordinary people"—a programme of economic sovereignty that challenges Indonesia's dependent relationship with global capitalism.

Within this far left perspective, the Labour Party's emphasis on achieving a "welfare state" within the existing capitalist framework represents inadequate reformism. They argue that Indonesian capitalism, dominated by oligarchs with deep roots in the Suharto era and increasingly integrated into global supply chains, cannot be reformed to serve workers' interests. Only a revolutionary transformation that breaks with imperialism and establishes popular democratic control over the economy

can genuinely address the working class's needs.

The critique extends to the Labour Party's failure to take clear positions on issues beyond immediate workplace concerns. The far left notes that the Labour Party maintained "deafening silence on the most controversial issues" including President Widodo's manipulation of democratic institutions to install his son Gibran as vice president, Prabowo's well-documented human rights violations during the Suharto era (including his alleged role in the disappearance of activists like poet Wiji Thukul), and ongoing repression of West Papuan independence movements. For revolutionary socialists, a genuine working-class party must link labour struggles with broader fights for democracy, human rights, national sovereignty, and anti-imperialism.

Yet the far left's own organisational weakness complicates these critiques. The revolutionary groups remain small, fragmented, and lacking mass base—a reality acknowledged in their constant calls to unite social resistance with a common political strategy. The PRD's trajectory from militant opposition to government alignment reflects not merely leadership betrayal but the immense pressures facing left organisations in a political system where money dominates, repression remains possible, and co-optation offers material rewards. The question remains whether a more radical alternative can be built without either retreating into sectarian isolation or succumbing to the same accommodationist pressures that have compromised the Labour Party.

## Structural obstacles: Why labour parties struggle in Indonesia

The Labour Party's difficulties reflect broader structural obstacles to working-class political representation

in Indonesia. Several factors combine to create a hostile environment for labour-based parties:

**Low union density and fragmentation:** Despite the large workforce, less than 2 per cent of Indonesian workers belong to unions, and these are divided across more than 100 organisations with no unified confederation to channel collective action.

**Patronage politics and money culture:** Indonesian elections are characterised by endemic vote-buying, with established parties distributing cash, rice, cooking oil, and other goods to voters. Parties refusing to participate in this system face massive disadvantages, particularly when voters have been conditioned to expect material benefits in exchange for votes.

**Elite domination of political space:** Until 2024, virtually all parties in parliament traced their origins to the New Order period or were vehicles for elite figures. The electoral system privileges parties with massive financial resources for television advertising, celebrity candidates, and elaborate campaign infrastructure.

**Lack of strong unifying figures:** Indonesian political culture continues to emphasise strong individual leaders. The Labour Party has struggled to produce a charismatic figure who can command broad appeal, whilst Iqbal himself carries political baggage from his previous elite alignments.

**Poverty and false consciousness:** Extreme wealth inequality and persistent poverty have fragmented the working class, preventing class-based political mobilisation. Many workers identify more strongly with middle-class aspirations or religious/ethnic identities than with their class position. This "false consciousness"—where workers vote against their material interests—helps explain why so many supported parties that passed anti-worker legislation.

**Gender and patriarchal structures:** Women workers, who dominate labour-intensive industries such as

garments and textiles, face particular vulnerabilities under the Omnibus Law. The expansion of outsourcing and contract work disproportionately affects women, who are often the first laid off and have less bargaining power in a patriarchal society. Yet the Labour Party has struggled to centre women's concerns or develop distinctly feminist political perspectives that address the intersections of class and gender oppression.

## A partial victory: Constitutional Court ruling

In October 2024, the Labour Party and several union confederations achieved a significant legal victory when Indonesia's Constitutional Court granted 21 of 71 petition points in their judicial review of the Omnibus Law. The court ruled that workers must be given priority over foreign workers in employment, that fixed-term contracts cannot exceed five years, that workers are entitled to two rest days per week rather than one, and that termination of employment can only occur through an order from an industrial relations institution.

Said Iqbal declared the ruling "a monumental victory for Indonesian workers," though critics noted the decision came through judicial channels rather than mass mobilisation or electoral power. The court ordered the government to enact a new law within two years, but President Prabowo Subianto established a Labour Welfare Council comprising union leaders to "advise" on labour affairs—a mechanism that could facilitate lobbying but also risks further co-opting labour leadership into elite decision-making structures.

## Future prospects: An uncertain path forward

The Labour Party's trajectory remains

deeply uncertain. Its failure to secure parliamentary representation means it has no direct legislative power and must rely on extra-parliamentary tactics—the very methods party leaders claimed had failed in 2020. Nevertheless, the party continues to organise demonstrations and campaigns, including protests demanding fairer public housing policies and opposing anti-worker provisions.

Some analysts suggest the party could grow if it maintains organisational discipline and continues mobilising at the grassroots level in preparation for the 2029 elections. The sting of the Omnibus Law continues to galvanise sections of the labour movement, and the party's willingness to reject money politics—whilst electorally costly—could eventually build credibility amongst voters disgusted with corruption.

However, the contradictions within the party leadership may prove insurmountable. The gap between the party's radical rhetoric about being "the working class" and its leaders' accommodation with elite politics undermines its claim to represent a genuine alternative. If the oppositional forces within the labour movement—represented by coalitions such as the Labour Movement with the People (GEBRAK)—decide to form their own political party, Indonesia could see competing labour-based parties that sharpen rather than resolve the movement's internal contradictions.

The Indonesian working class remains without effective political representation in the electoral sphere. The dominant parties in parliament—whether nominally left like PDI-P or right like Gerindra—all support neoliberal economic policies and have demonstrated little commitment to protecting workers' rights. The Labour Party's emergence represents an important attempt to challenge this consensus, but it is very unlikely that members will overcome the structural obstacles and purge its accommodationist leadership tendencies.

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## Footnotes

[1] The New Order refers to the authoritarian regime of President Suharto, which ruled Indonesia from 1966 to 1998. The regime was characterised by political repression, military dominance, and the subordination of civil society organisations, including trade unions.

[2] Although KSPSI claimed 3 million members, the confederation's leadership did not initially support the party's formation, with its president Elly Rosita Silaban expressing scepticism about the conditions for labourist politics in Indonesia.

[3] KASBI (Kongres Aliansi Serikat Buruh Indonesia) was formed in 2005 by 18 labour unions and has maintained a more militant and independent stance than the larger confederations. KASBI has engaged in direct action campaigns, including strikes against multinational corporations.

[4] GEBRAK (Gerakan Buruh bersama Rakyat) represents oppositional unions and civil society groups that reject alignment with state power and continue to emphasise mass mobilisation and protest tactics.

[5] SPRI is a coalition of radical left organisations in Indonesia advocating for a militant, democratic alternative that unites social movements under one strategic framework focused on genuine people's power.

# Venezuela's authoritarian turn and the repression of its Left

1 November 2025, by [Edgardo Lander](#)

**Anderson Bean: Since the disputed 2024 elections, repression against critical voices has intensified, with more than 2,000 people arrested and targeted cases of persecution multiplying. How would you describe the general climate of repression in Venezuela since the elections?**

Edgardo Lander: Those elections were, in many ways, a watershed moment in Venezuela's Bolivarian process. In recent years, what once seemed like hard limits—red lines that couldn't be crossed—have been crossed again and again.

Until Venezuela's presidential elections last year, the system was, by and large, trustworthy. Yes, there had been a few isolated cases where fraud was obvious, like gubernatorial races in Bolívar and Barinas, but those didn't affect results at the national level. Venezuela's automated electronic voting system, with its multiple safeguards, had made large-scale fraud very difficult.

The process was straightforward: you voted, the machine displayed your choice on a screen, then printed a paper receipt. You checked that it matched your vote, and deposited it in a ballot box. At the end of the day, the machines produced a report, and with witnesses present, the boxes were opened and compared to the machine tallies. The records were signed off by witnesses to certify that the electronic and paper counts matched. That's why, up until that moment, Venezuelan elections were, I repeat, fundamentally reliable.

But this time, when the government began to receive the results, it realized it was not just going to lose but lose badly. They may have thought they could afford a narrow defeat and then massage the results in a few states to scrape through with a win. But the margin of defeat was so overwhelming that this was

impossible. So they simply threw out the rules of the game.

They claimed the system had been hacked from North Macedonia. Then the head of the National Electoral Council appeared—literally with a napkin in his hand—reading out invented numbers that had nothing to do with the actual vote. Not long afterward, Maduro was declared the winner.

That was a very important red line, because it marked the shift from a government that, yes, manipulated public resources, threatened state workers, repressed and intimidated the opposition, blocked opposition parties from carrying out activities, and so on—but where, on election day itself, people's votes were at least faithfully recorded by the machines. For the first time, brazenly, they decided to break the rules of the game and remove the very notion of elections from the political or democratic game. That was a step toward a regime that revealed itself as openly authoritarian, disregarding both the Constitution and electoral norms.

Naturally, that sparked massive protests, which the government answered with mass arrests. Many of these arrests were absolutely arbitrary: young people who happened to be standing in front of their houses, or who had just gone out to buy bread, were accused of terrorism and taken away. The government has essentially admitted that it cannot receive majority support, and that if it wants to remain in power, it must do so through repression and instilling fear in the population.

That's why, after election day, there were two days of major demonstrations. At least 25,000 people took to the streets, and nearly 2,000 were detained amid brutal repression. With that, they managed to spread terror and drive people back

into their homes.

Since then, that logic of systematic repression has continued at every level. It has meant the arrest of journalists, the arrest of economists for publishing figures the government didn't like, the detention of trade unionists, of university professors. After the massive roundup in the days following the election, repression has become more selective, but it is moving steadily toward a total intolerance of dissent.

The government has closed more media outlets and invoked a series of laws in recent months—the "Anti-Hate Law," the "Anti-Terrorism Law," and others—aimed at criminalizing any act of opposition, no matter how peaceful, because any such act is immediately branded as terrorism.

Today, we are facing a government that is trying to deny any possibility of dissent finding expression, any space at all where it can exist. That explains the attacks on universities, on journalists, and the systematic campaign against NGOs. Since the government insists on framing everything as a battle between a "revolutionary government" and "imperialist aggression," NGOs are labeled as foreign-funded instruments, run by the CIA, whose aim is to undermine the government. Most recently, this has included targeting the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and branding denunciations of the Orinoco Mining Arc as attacks on the state.

A very recent and significant milestone in the authoritarian drift came with the assault on the vigil of the mothers of political prisoners. These mothers, whose sons are jailed, had gone from one state office to another, until they were told that only the president of the Supreme Court could decide their cases. They went to the court, requested an audience, were denied, and then decided to hold a vigil in the plaza outside. They

pitched a tent, joined by human rights activists, and even had children with them. Around ten o'clock that night, the permanent guard outside the court was withdrawn, the lights in the area were shut off, and then some 80 members of pro-government colectivos, some masked, arrived. They beat the mothers, stole their cell phones and ID cards, and drove them out of the plaza in the middle of the night. Many of the mothers had come from the provinces and were left stranded in the city, unable to communicate.

It was truly an outrage, another escalation of authoritarian logic. And when the mothers tried to file complaints with the Attorney General's Office and the Ombudsman, they were told nothing could be done, since it had been a "private action" by colectivos, not the police—an absurd claim.

This offensive against intellectuals, against the Central University of Venezuela—which has become an important space of thought and dissent—is part of a broader strategy: every single place where voices could exist that differ from the government's is to be treated as an enemy, as an agent of imperialism, to be persecuted. Those are the new rules of the game.

**Anderson Bean: In the past year we've seen cases where even people with Chavista backgrounds have been repressed — for example, Marta Lía Grajales, who was forced into an unmarked van and detained after denouncing the violent beating of mothers protesting for their children's release, an episode you just described, and María Alejandra Díaz, a lawyer and former Constituent Assembly member, who was stripped of her license after demanding transparency in the 2024 elections. What do these cases reveal about the Maduro government's readiness to target former allies and its own base? Could you also talk a bit more about their situations and why they are significant?**

Edgardo Lander: Marta Grajales was, in fact, disappeared for about two and

a half days. Her husband and human rights organizations went around to the usual detention centers where people are taken in these circumstances, and in every single one, they were told she wasn't there. The reaction was so strong—mobilization across Latin American public opinion, academia, networks of social organizations, and even among parts of the Chavista grassroots—that the government, apparently (I can't say for certain, but this seems likely), was taken aback by the strength of the response and decided to release Marta right away.

That doesn't mean she is free: she still faces extremely serious charges that could carry up to ten years in prison if her case goes to trial and she is convicted. But what's already clear is that this is not about repressing the right-wing opposition. Marta is no right-winger—she is a compañera, a long-time Chavista activist. The point is that it no longer matters if someone has a party card, a militant record, or years of identification with the government. Being a Chavista is no longer a protection.

That's why I highlight one of the key features of the current political moment, captured in a hashtag that has accompanied many government declarations in recent days: "To doubt is to betray." They repeat it over and over. And that is a sign of weakness, of insecurity, because there are people inside the armed forces, the police, and even the Chavista base who disagree with what is happening. In this context, not only is it forbidden to denounce abuses—it is forbidden even to doubt. Anyone with doubts must keep them silent, because voicing doubt is treated as treason.

This is a new authoritarian model in which not only are autonomous organizations banned, but even unions have been declared obsolete—Maduro has announced he will create a new structure to replace them. He also declared the creation of workplace militias: 450,000 armed people in workplaces across the country, supposedly to resist imperialism when the Marines arrive. All of this is closing off every possible democratic space, every outlet for free expression. The goal is to generate fear—fear of

going out into the street, fear of speaking up, fear among journalists who self-censor—so that in the end what we have is a closed regime with no options at all.

Maduro's relationship with the Left across the continent has deteriorated enormously. The only governments he still aligns with are Cuba, Nicaragua, and, to some extent, Bolivia, at least until its recent elections. Beyond that, Venezuela is very isolated. Of course, there is still a sector of the Left that clings to the idea that "the enemy is always imperialism—whoever opposes imperialism is my ally, whoever doesn't is my enemy." And so, even in this context of serious denunciations, the São Paulo Forum—the umbrella for many of Latin America's "official" Left parties (not all, but a significant number)—issued a statement that made no mention whatsoever of human rights, or of persecution, or of detentions. They spoke only of the threats that the United States represents for Venezuelan sovereignty—talking about something else entirely.

That is extremely serious. I always insist that the worst thing one can do to the Left, to any anti-capitalist or progressive option in the world today, is to call what exists in Venezuela "socialism" or a "left government." Because that provokes such rejection that people understandably say: "If that is the left, if that is socialism, then I'll vote for the right." That is why I consider the stance of the São Paulo Forum so perverse: it perpetuates the myth that the governments of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela are revolutionary, progressive, democratic governments. And yet anyone can read the newspapers to see the reality.

In Venezuela's case, it is even clearer because of the sheer number of migrants who have left the country. Their first-hand stories about what they endured cannot be silenced or denied—there are simply too many voices saying the same thing. Ask them why they had to leave, and the answers pile up: because of this, and this, and this. The testimonies are overwhelming.

**Anderson Bean: In this context,**

**you and other prominent academics have been accused in official media of being part of an alleged “network of political interference disguised as academic and environmental work.” Could you begin by explaining what these accusations actually consist of and where they come from? And from there, how do you interpret the broader meaning of these attacks for academic freedom and critical debate in Venezuela? Why do you think these attacks are happening now, and what do they reveal about the government’s priorities and fears at this moment?**

Edgardo Lander: I think these accusations are simply another expression of what I’ve been describing—a government that wants to prevent any form of disagreement with its policies. It’s not only about repressing workers mobilizing for wages, or mothers demanding the freedom of their imprisoned sons. It’s also about saying that the intellectual community itself, simply by researching state policies, is committing an offense.

Take the case of research on what has happened in the Orinoco Mining Arc. Just investigating—asking, what has happened to Indigenous populations? Studies show, for example, that Indigenous children have high levels of mercury in their blood. That is research: documenting what is actually happening. But for the government, this is an attack on its authority, on its right to define whatever policies it deems appropriate.

So, when they name me personally, it’s not because I’ve done anything out of the ordinary—beyond offering opinions, participating in debates, and circulating ideas across Latin America. But the government sees that as a danger, as a threat. And therefore it has to be silenced. It has to try to make intellectuals, even those offering only moderately critical opinions, censor themselves—or avoid doing research that could compromise the government or highlight inconvenient realities.

This is a tightening grip, a siege that, I repeat, keeps closing in and closing

in—until there is hardly even room to breathe.

**Anderson Bean: In addition to individuals like yourself, well-known institutions such as the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences at UCV, CENDES, and the Observatory of Political Ecology have also come under attack. Among them, the case of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation stands out, especially given its public ties to the German party Die Linke. For those who may not be familiar, could you explain what the Foundation is, what kind of work it has carried out in Venezuela, and why it might now be a target of attacks?**

Edgardo Lander: First, for those who may not be familiar with the German political foundations, it’s worth explaining how they work. In the German political system, parties that have parliamentary representation above a certain threshold receive public funding for a political foundation linked to that party. The Social Democrats have a foundation, the Christian Democratic Party has one—the Adenauer Foundation—and the Left Party, Die Linke, has the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation.

These foundations work mainly outside Germany, and their focus is on cultural and political debate. They are by no means political activists intervening directly in the affairs of other countries. In the case of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, it has offices across Latin America: in Mexico (covering Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean), in Brazil, in Argentina (for the Southern Cone), and in Quito, which covers Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

During the years of the progressive governments, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation—and especially its Andean office in Quito—worked on an issue that has been central to Left and social movement debates in Latin America since the turn of the century: extractivism. The issue of what it means to keep pushing the mining frontier into new territories, and the devastation this causes to Indigenous lands across the continent.

On the one hand, progressive governments encouraged, celebrated, and activated processes of popular organization—from urban popular sectors to Indigenous peoples, pastoralists, and peasants. But extractivist policies also meant that when Indigenous peoples resisted the occupation of their territories, the state responded with repression.

So the question of extractivism, and of the broader development model pursued by progressive governments, is bound up with the civilizational crisis we face. It touches on the limits of the planet, on the rights of Indigenous peoples, on environmental threats. These are inherently political issues—they are not neutral, purely academic matters. They affect people’s lives directly.

That is why, in Venezuela today, even research or public criticism of extractivist policy—such as challenging the government’s strategy in the Orinoco Mining Arc—is treated as a direct attack on the state. Most recently, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation has been singled out as a principal enemy, precisely because it has supported debates, studies, and movements that question the social and environmental costs of mining and extractivism. What is, in reality, the work of academic inquiry and movement-building is reframed by the government as political subversion.

Think, for example, of water. It’s hard to imagine a movement anywhere in the world today in defense of water that wouldn’t be political. Because if people are defending water, it’s because someone is doing something to contaminate or deplete it. That necessarily makes it a matter of debate, and debate always involves political positions.

So, the point is not that the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation is apolitical. The issues it works on—extractivism, Indigenous rights, environmental threats—inevitably have a political dimension. But it is in no way a foundation that supports or finances policies aimed at undermining the Venezuelan government.

If there are groups investigating the Orinoco Mining Arc, and their reports

show the extremely negative effects of illegal mining in that region, the government takes that as an attack against itself. And from there, the only alternative they leave is silence—no one says anything about anything.

The claim that the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation is funded by the German government and therefore part of a U.S. imperial project to undermine Venezuela is, apart from being paranoid, just an attempt to throw everything into the same bag and attack NGOs as a whole.

Of course, there are many small, diverse organizations working on issues like elections, the environment, human rights, women's rights, and so on. Across Latin America, many of these groups receive external funding—sometimes from churches, sometimes from the European Union, sometimes from other sources. And the government tries to present all of this as part of one grand imperialist strategy to finance these organizations in order to subvert the government.

That doesn't really make sense in any concrete way, but politically it makes perfect sense as a way of convincing the government's base that Venezuela is under attack, and that anyone who appears neutral—or even sympathetic to Chavismo—but then criticizes government policies on issues the state considers vital, immediately becomes part of the enemy camp. And the enemy must be confronted.

This, of course, places the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in a very difficult situation. It becomes extraordinarily hard for it to carry out its work. And the communities it has been working with—small farmers, peasants, and others—end up losing the support they had until now.

In any case, it's important to be clear: this is a small foundation. It's not sitting on millions and millions of dollars. Its projects are modest.

**Anderson Bean: Why do you think these attacks are happening now, and what do they reveal about the government's priorities and fears at this moment?**

Edgardo Lander: I think what's

happening right now has to do with what I've already mentioned—the government feels increasingly isolated. It feels more and more isolated internationally, and increasingly discredited within the global Left, even if there are tensions and contradictions in that field. And of course, it also sees discontent within its own base.

First and foremost, this is because the living conditions of ordinary people are not improving. Today, the minimum wage in Venezuela is less than one U.S. dollar per month. It's partially offset by various bonuses, handed out arbitrarily to whomever they want, whenever they want—used as a tool of political control over the population.

What we have is a government that long ago abandoned any political project. The whole discourse of deepening democracy, of socialism—those have simply disappeared from the horizon. The government's practically sole objective now is its own survival in power.

To preserve itself, it used to rely on a certain level of popular support. But as that support has dwindled and dwindled, repression has become its only option. That's why its rhetoric now leans so heavily on appeals to patriotism, nationalism, anti-imperialism, and external threats. In that narrative, everything gets thrown into the same bag. NGOs, too, are lumped in—because the government needs to frame all of this not as threats to itself, but as threats to Venezuela.

**Anderson Bean: Finally, many of those under attack, including yourself, are long-time collaborators with movements and comrades abroad. What forms of international solidarity are most useful at this stage?**

Edgardo Lander: First, speaking not just about the present situation but in a more permanent sense, I want to return to a point I made earlier. For sectors of the Venezuelan Left who have lived through, and suffered from, what has happened in this country over these years, it is very painful to

see intellectuals, organizations, and left-wing journalists who continue to describe Venezuela as a Left government, a socialist government, or a revolutionary government. That is heartbreaking, deeply painful—because it means ignoring all the evidence of what is happening in the country, shutting one's eyes to reality, all in the name of confronting imperialism.

But confronting imperialism necessarily has to mean offering a way of life that is better than what imperialism offers—not worse. That is why I think the work you are doing, and the initiative of your book, is so valuable: it creates space for a serious, thoughtful, reasoned discussion of what is actually happening, rather than falling into a simplistic, Manichean debate between “good guys and bad guys,” or “anti-imperialists versus pro-imperialists.”

This is a matter of solidarity—not solidarity with a government, but solidarity with peoples. And this matters not just for Venezuela but also internationally. The word “socialism” is becoming more popular in certain parts of the world; in fact, the word attracts many people. But when “socialism” is equated with Venezuela, it undermines the appeal. That's why it is absolutely essential to distinguish the Venezuelan experience from the dream of another possible world.

Now, in terms of the current moment, the international reaction to the detention of Marta Lía Grajales, and then to the accusations against the Central University of Venezuela, CENDES, and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, must have come as a surprise to the government—because of the sheer level of rejection it provoked. And one of the defining characteristics of the Left has always been the notion of internationalism.

If we are to think about civilizational crisis, alternatives to development, resistance to extractivism—these cannot be thought within the confines of a single nation. They have to be approached through networks that cross borders. For example, during the struggle against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA/ALCA) twenty years ago, there was a

remarkable level of articulation across the continent: unions, students, public sector workers, peasants, Indigenous organizations, feminist movements, from across Latin America and including Canada and the United States. Those articulations created networks, knowledge, personal

contacts, ways of sharing information.

Those networks and that knowledge are still alive in Latin America. They no longer have the vigor they had during the fight against the FTAA, but they endure. That's why, so often, when something happens in one country of the region, there is a

reaction across the continent—because the channels to communicate what is happening and to call for responses are still there.

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