TRUMP'S ELECTION VICTORY AND HIS BILLIONAIRE FRIENDS

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Category: Opinions

By Prof. Alan Whitehorn, Kingston ON, 25 November 2024

The overall global political landscape following the 2024 US presidential election is troubling. We remain transfixed with the polarizing and violent political rhetoric of Donald Trump, an elderly billionaire populist politician who is now US president-elect. Increasingly, he has seemed more erratic and dangerous in recent weeks. He continues to preach the fiery gospel of hate and violence, not the love and non-violence of the spiritual inspiration of the New Testament, that many of his followers supposedly profess.

We also have witnessed the Fox American television network of the Australian-American billionaire media tycoon Rupert Murdoch airing non-stop political distortions that seem more reminiscent of the propaganda of authoritarian regimes of the 1930s. Elon Musk, the world's mega-billionaire, high-tech entrepreneur, while a brilliant innovator in electric vehicles, rockets and communications satellites, is increasingly a fawning, yet powerful political ally and confidant to Donald Trump.

We continue to be shocked by the Russian dictator Vladimir Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine. Reflecting neo-imperialist ambitions, Russian troops have previously occupied parts of Georgia and Transnistria. The ongoing invasion of Ukraine and current levels of fighting indicate a more reckless conflict escalation by Putin. Given Donald Trump's historic deference to the Russian dictator, Putin's ambitious aggression towards other neighboring states is likely to continue. Not surprisingly, Putin congratulated Trump on his electoral victory.

These seemingly diverse billionaires shared converging interests in Trump becoming the next American president. The US Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris repeatedly warned about Trump and his fellow billionaires and asked "Whose side are they on?". A key part of her unsuccessful 2024 campaign theme was that: 'These billionaires are not on your side'. Instead, she argued the billionaires seek to accumulate more wealth, power and status. Instead of a more egalitarian, peaceful and just world, they are intent on a path towards autocracy, plutocracy, propaganda and oppression. Their preferred global scenario seems that of a bleak Orwellian future.

The 'super-rich' Russian oligarch' Putin oversees a 'petro-dictatorship' which is an increasingly brutal totalitarian regime, intent on invading and controlling a growing number of neighbouring states. Murdoch's television and communications global conglomerate seems determined to eradicate truthful and accurate reporting. In its place are centrally-scripted ideological rants. A number of Fox TV hosts have just been nominated to serve in Trump's new cabinet. Trump seems to be on an authoritarian path to become a would-be strongman or even perhaps a Putinesque dictator. As president-elect, his current calls for mass deportations and greater domestic use of the military are profoundly troubling in terms of shattering democratic norms. Relatedly, the mercurial Musk seems to have shifted from that of respected, albeit erratic, entrepreneurial innovator to fostering misinformation on the internet, contributing financially to skewed election outcomes and the advocacy of an autocratic United States.

With Donald Trump's presidential electoral win on November 5, the aforementioned billionaires can celebrate their apparent collective victory. Ominously, the re-elected Republican presidential candidate has stated his intention of swift and forceful, perhaps even vengeful, deeds against his Democratic rivals. The already substantial political polarization in the United States seems likely to dramatically increase in the days and months ahead. Trump's cabinet nominations and proposed policies are likely to produce substantial domestic and international turbulence, if not turmoil.

Could we have anticipated such adverse developments sooner and done more to address the unfolding American and global democratic crises? One can even ask more fundamental questions: Does it reflect a new form of long-term economic class warfare in the 21st century? Are we witnessing an informal cabal of billionaires aligned against the disparate members of the working and middle classes? The billionaires' growing wealth and power and demands for even more tax breaks for the rich suggest so. Accordingly, the existential 19th century working class question of 'What is to be done?' remains as germane for our generation, as it was for earlier ones.

Tomorrow is another day and we need to live in hope of a more just and democratic world. But it will require much dedication and efforts by many ordinary citizens. It will be a challenging path ahead. But together, we can take up the call of freedom and justice for all. It is our best hope for a better and safer world.

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Collage: *Elon Musk, Donald Trump, and Rupert Murdoch*

Comments

Keghart – 2025-01-16 03:33:22
"Today, an oligarchy is taking shape in America of extreme wealth, power and influence that literally threatens our entire democracy, our basic rights and freedoms,…" Joe Biden, final US presidential address to the American nation, January 15, 2025

Vrej M. – 2024-12-11 11:33:03
I have spoken to a bunch of americans over the years. In general, they don't want to tax the rich more and transfer the wealth to the lower classes. They consider it stealing, they consider it communism or socialism. If they were really lower classes and working classes, I do not know. I speak to them via the internet. There is a good reason why socialism won in Canada and elsewhere: the country is democratic and the majority wants high taxes on the rich. The majority are poor. They can't afford healthcare and university. The rich don't need millions of dollars in the bank, so might as well take it from them and use it. I don't know why americans are voting for republicans. They are voting against their own interests. Maybe they are too afraid of the word "communism". Maybe they confuse some of these topics with the communism bloshevik thing of the USSR.