

Post-Trump Trumpisms

Via [Viento Sur](#)

May the spectacular nature of the nativist fox fur, the jamiroquaian false horns and the ultra coven not prevent us from seeing the forest. Why not: it was not a coup d'état. And not only because of its final result. It wasn't even a frustrated attempt, but rather a trumpists revolt or, as Mike Davis recently wrote, an insurrection only in a black humorous version.

What happened this Wednesday, January 6, at the Capitol in Washington was many things and has numerous possible derivatives and necessary readings, but we would be mistaken if we read it through the prism of a failed coup d'etat. Because it was neither his intention, nor did he have a plan for it or the resources to carry it out. This does not mean that this was not the motivation and wet dream of a good part of those who participated in the action, nor that it was not organized or that it did not respond to a strategy. Only that this strategy was not to take power right there. And yet, on that day, elements and phenomena that should be followed very closely were clearly shown and accelerated. Here are some of them.

The amalgamation of trumpism

For years we have been immersed in a somewhat inoperative debate about what is and what is not fascism, and to what extent characters like Trump are fascists in essence. And yet, there is a much more palpable and verified reality: Trump has managed to give a flag that brings together from libertarian neoliberal sectors, white supremacists, nativists, incels, anti-feminists, conspirators and deniers, to the new Christian right with a strong evangelical presence. Without forgetting the imprint of the closest antecedents: the Tea Party

mobilizations in 2009 or the rise of a troll counterculture on the internet and social networks called Alt Righth.

In fact, the scenery of the protesters who occupied the Capitol was very reminiscent of that of the tea parties against the bank rescues, in the same way that social networks such as Discord were key in coordinating the protesters on January 6. As they had already been in the 2017 Charlottesville protests and riots led by the extreme right, for example, which resulted in the death of a civil rights activist and 19 injuries.

All of these crumbs were already there. However, the great novelty that Trump has contributed is that he has managed to bring together all this far-right magma by transporting it from the margins of the US political scene to the White House itself. This trip to the center of presidential power has been shaping a sort of diverse political movement that we could call Trumpism and has accompanied the president throughout the legislature. With an important presence in the streets and in social networks, this nebulous Trumpist has maintained an unprecedented and unique relationship of support and pressure towards the government and towards the Republican Party itself, becoming in some cases authentic Trump's paramilitary shock groups, as we could see in the actions against the Black Lives Matter mobilizations.

This tension of support and pressure has sharpened a political polarization that has not only widened the traditional gap between Republicans and Democrats that structures the mirror game of the US party system, but has also radicalized positions within the Republicans themselves, who have been deeply divided for years between Trumpists and their detractors. The YouGov poll of January 7 shows that the majority of Republican voters approve of the assault on the Capitol, in open contrast to the almost unanimous condemnation of the Republican Party apparatus.

Trumpism beyond Trump

On the next 20th, Biden will take office as President of the United States, evicting Trump and his entourage from the State's resorts. A situation that raises an important question about how this will affect the recent rise of right-wing organism and collective action (and yes, also terrorism), whether in its lone wolf version or in ultra-terrorist, conspiratorial, racist, ultramisogynist, denialist, or all of the above mixed up and shaken up. And this, in a country so given to spectacularity and weapons, should not be taken as a mere anecdote during the next cycle.

It is true that, when the institutional path is closed that day, one option will be demotivation and demobilization. As Richard Seymour writes, "demoralization is demobilizing." However, the undercurrent of anger, the myth of betrayal ("our vote has been stolen"), and the alternative reality elaborated by Trump and widely shared by Republican voters, will be fueled in the coming years by an elaborate and skillful far-right "disinfotainment" industry. We cannot underestimate Trump's ability to take advantage of the rise of what Daniel Bensaïd called "dark identities" in the face of the retreat of class solidarity ties.

Although, perhaps, the first challenge that Trumpism will have to face will be the internal ruptures, which have already sharpened in recent times and which the assault on the Capitol has made evident, especially between its vice president Mike Pence, representative of the theocons of the new evangelical Christian right, and Trumpism. In fact, since January 6, pressure has increased on Pence from the Democrats and a good part of the Republican apparatus to apply the 25th Amendment, which would not only depose Trump, but also disqualify him from running for reelection. Of course, this situation is what the whole of the American establishment would like, since in the short term it would allow them to reduce Trumpism to the madness of a Nero who tried to set fire to Rome,

psychiatrizing these years like the nightmare of a madman instead of facing the hard task of analyzing the political phenomenon of Trumpism and, above all, of assuming their own responsibilities.

But, although electorally a minority and defeated, we cannot obviate the fact that Trumpism is a mass social phenomenon which, once it has lost its way in the White House, could seek unexpected ways out and subterfuge. The life and extra-institutional path of Trumpism has yet to be written, but the assault on the Capitol the other day is not exactly the first episode of its demonstrated capacity and tendency to explore other much less formal and peaceful ways of stirring up the political waters. Whatever finally happens to Trump, from the application of the 25th Amendment to a harassment of his business galaxy as soon as he loses presidential immunity, any attack will only reinforce the outsider and anti-establishment label that he has so willingly cultivated and exploited over the years. Not to mention positive reinforcement for his victimhood and image as a popular martyr. Although, if things got too complicated, it wouldn't be so relevant either, because, if it did, who needs Trump having the Trumpism?

Liberal rhymes with illiberal

In the broken glass of the Trump mirror almost everyone else looks better. The Republican Party apparatus will try to finally let go of the burden, to disassociate itself from Trump's heritage and thus begin its supposed regenerative operation (it's another thing to manage a base that worships the defenestrated). Undoubtedly the uproar on Capitol Hill favors this operation in the short term, as shown by the fact that before the riots, at least 13 Republican senators (out of 53) and more than 100 representatives (more than half of the total 197 Republicans in the House) had planned to challenge the election results of several states. After the riots, most of these representatives changed their focus and did not contest the election results. In spite of this, the above data

demonstrates to what extent right-wing radicalism has permeated the Republican Party and its representatives, which does not seem to be easy or quick to redirect on the part of its apparatus.

For his part, the incoming Biden will begin with ample credit to launch himself into the game of transformism. In this way, the Democratic Party will be able to present itself once again as the maximum exponent of progressive neo-liberalism and a great redeeming alternative with carte blanche to do almost the same thing without greater demands than the formal contrast with its predecessor. And anyone who criticizes the coming social cutbacks, police repression or military invasion will be referred to the long legitimizing shadow of the redheaded fringe. And to silence. That will be the moment to glimpse to what extent the anti-racist movement or the new US democratic socialism will be able to differentiate itself from Biden and Kamala Harris' marketing operation, by putting forward an agenda of its own independent of the Democratic government.

In short, in the agenda of the establishment, things are clear: to turn the page as soon as possible and for the US two-party system to return to the wheel of the turn and, with it, business as usual. In this way, the extreme neo-liberal center will rewrite the history of the End of History and from Alaska to Florida, passing through Paris and Jaén, the apology for democratic institutions and the rule of law will echo once again after passing the acid test of the special chapter of The Walking Dead Capitol edition. But, spoiler alert, it turns out that the liberal dream of the neutral state was the one that produced monsters.

And speaking of monsters, nothing like referring to a future great America again to unsuccessfully hide the insecurities and fears of those who believe to see their self-assigned privileges of yesterday and always questioned. Finding women in the busy halls of the Capitol seemed like a televised re-

edition of Where's Wally? Because, okay, Not all (white) men, but almost everyone who was there is. How many damaged and frightened masculinities are behind the violent political reactions that fuel the Reactionary International?

Mutant discomfort in global disorder

One is a superpower for better or for worse. That for something Hollywood was always in charge of establishing on the ground and Yankee type accent both the heroic salvations of humanity and the alien invasions and runways of the destructive meteors. And they were not going to be less to show live to the world the umpteenth proof of the decline of the American empire. The inability of the United States to continue generating seduction beyond its obvious and harsh objective capacities is the long history of the lack of leadership of a power that has been losing its hegemonic role on a global board in full recomposition for years. A process that has been going on for a long time, but that this January 6 marked a major milestone in the eyes of the entire planet, no matter how much the US establishment tries to turn it around and sell it as a catharsis to wake up from the Trumpeterian nightmare and thus try to retake the global leadership of the free world.

The other side of the coin will be to see how the other xenophobic populisms of the Reactionary International are recomposed once their main exponent leaves the White House. In Brazil, in the Philippines, in India and in Europe important mutations are to be expected in the coming years. Let everything change again so that nothing changes. Except the planetary lepenization of the spirits that is growing in the chiaroscuro of the global disorder. And if this global reactionary wave has demonstrated anything in the last period, it has been its enormous plasticity and capacity to adapt to changing times.

In *The Light That Fades* [01], a good book on the rise of

reactionary illiberalism, the window of opportunity that the Trump presidency has created throughout these years for the rise of this Reactionary International is explained. "Authoritarian leaders of a reactionary character who imitate Trump, at present, do so to give a sophisticated patina of legitimacy, without more, to what they intend to do anyway. The right-wing president of Brazil does not imitate Trump because he wants to be Trump, he imitates him because Trump has made it possible for Bolsonaro to be himself" (3).

Like Le Pen, Vox or Salvini, the Trump's of the moment offer a scarecrow to the rest of the elites to hide their own miseries and continue to feed a social discontent and a global disorder with impunity from the justification of the lesser evil. But both are children of common ruin and grow up, among other things, occupying the vacuum left by the absence of alternatives in a socialist, feminist and ecological key. That the extreme neoliberal center is not the only alternative to the trumpisms is also the responsibility of those of us who work to raise other projects of society and other ways to organize ourselves. Otherwise, when we wake up from the Trumpist nightmare there will only be the same long neo-liberal night.

Meanwhile, the chapter is already being recorded in which we will discover if what happened on Wednesday, January 6 at the Capitol should be read as the folkloric and impotent stertor of Trumpism or, rather, as the dawn of its mutation to adapt to the new scenario: a Trumpism without the White House and even without Trump.