

The Re-election of Donald Trump

A Critical Concern for the US and the World

As the dust settles on the 2024 U.S. election and Donald Trump's return to the White House for the second term is approaching, the concerns of global people about exacerbated aggressive imperialist policy of the Pentagon regime become further grave. His cyclonic triumph in the election was not anticipated by many. While all the burning problems of spiralling unemployment, layoffs, low wages, fiscal savagery, crushing debts, price rise, lack of proper shelter and healthcare, growing climate disasters, unbridled police terror against the poor, spurt in social crimes and cultural degeneration wrecking the American people were simply shoved to the backburner, both Trump and Kamala Harris, the nominees of the Republican and Democratic parties respectively, were locked in staged debates on a slew of non-issues as well as cooked up issues to divert attention of the electorates. In such an election, Trump defeated Harris by a slender margin to regain power after 4 years.

The Two-party system

For long, US has established a two party presidential system to ensure that electoral mandate is restricted between the Republican and Democratic parties, both subservient to ruling US monopolists and multi-nationals who, in the unipolar world, are ceaselessly buttressing the singular agenda of dominating throughout the world, both economically and politically, alongside continuing to exploit the common toiling Americans more and more. So people's choice is restricted by design to the two political managers of the ruling class. There are of course stage-managed verbal duels and campaign trails. But come the question of addressing, let alone redressing, the burning problems wrecking the life of common US citizens, they both show superb skill in either skirting or diverting the issues. The past has borne out this truth. This election too has been no exception. It is in this background that we need to reflect on the second term of Donald Trump as US President.

First term of Donald Trump

During his first term as US President from 2016-2020, people found in him a shrewd and unscrupulous business tycoon, a reality showbiz man adept in using rhetoric and slogans right to tap into people's sentiment, their sense of economic insecurity and grievances that globalization and monopolist rule have brought down upon them. At the same time with a gingerly racist note, he put immigrants on the dock, stoking up hatred for immigrants alleging they take away jobs from the US white people while the latter had to pay for the social welfare of the immigrants. He designated the Mexican immigrants as "criminals, rapists and drug peddlers" proposing, as a policy, building a wall at Mexico's cost between that country and the US and called for deporting all of America's undocumented immigrants. His use of the adjective 'undocumented' proved ornamental, as his pungency against immigrants had by that time been transmitted as wrath in the mind-set of a section of confused American people who always tended to gulp the cheap but dubious theory of immigrants blocking their jobs. Similarly, another important slogan of his was to end the H-1B visa programme that has brought so many foreign workers to the US,

not excluding the Indians, created the same hateful mindset in some people. Another instigating pivot of Trump's rhetoric was ban of entry to Muslims designating all of them as terrorists, of racist protectionism, with high tariff bar raised around the US. Glaringly, no people's issue featured in his policy of governance. His rhetoric loaded with lies and empty promises has not failed to leave its impact on a section of the downtrodden, on people left behind by globalization and outsourcing of production, on those are languishing in poverty, unemployment or underemployment, on the poverty stricken whose sufferings has been exacerbated by continuous price rise, and a section of those who are angry about the help and support provided under the Biden presidency for Israel in its genocidal war against Palestinian common people.

Another most enduring legacies of Trump has been his assault on democratic norms, most notably his refusal to accept the results of the 2020 election. His false claims of voter fraud have created a chasm of distrust and division in society. Yet, the stakes of Trump's resurgence extend far beyond the immediate political fray and he made way to White House for a second tenure.

A few aspects of Trump's campaigning

Significantly, Trump was whole-heartedly backed by the US tycoons like Elon Musk, the world's richest person, a bevy of the most prominent billionaires and technology executives in the United States, as he indicated to lower corporate tax if voted to power. His 26 biggest billionaire backers, worth a combined \$143 billion, have poured \$162 million into his election fund. Musk, even publicized the \$1 million prize by his political action committee (PAC) aiming to increase voter registrations in hotly contested 'swing' states. As we know, many super rich business tycoons do prefer to have political figureheads on their payroll to do the "dirty work" of pressuring for certain policies, blocking any initiatives which would threaten their bottom line (profit) while they pull the strings behind the scenes. Musk too has not only leveraged his political clout to convince Americans that Trump embodies salvation, but he also subverted electoral laws and using his fortune to get the candidate of his choice elected. Much of this year's presidential campaign money paid for the design and promotion of some of the most racist, misogynist, xenophobic and anti-working-class propaganda ever seen in a major election. Ad after ad contained vicious lies about immigrants with totally false claims linking them to alleged rapes and crime sprees.

Algorithms played a vital role in determining the outcome of the US election. These invisible powers on social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and TikTok have evolved from tools meant to connect people into powerful influencing forces that determine what people see, believe and, eventually, whom they vote. If a post goes viral, the algorithms decide that more people should see it. The viewers are unaware that an invisible force is shaping political conversations and directions. If people want to preserve the integrity of the elections and ensure that public debate remains grounded in truth, the algorithms which have been shaping the political landscape must be tamed.

Notably, at the heart of Trump's propaganda war political appeal is his ability to weaponize identity politics, turning societal fractures into political currency. The continued embrace of these tactics under a second Trump term risks inflaming social and racial tensions to a breaking point, while amplification of

conspiracy theories and dog whistles to extremist groups could embolden actors who see violence a legitimate tool for political expression.

Stepping into second term with same agenda

Now, spectre of "Trump 2.0" whose rhetoric-steeped in white supremacist dog whistles, anti-immigrant vitriol, flagrant denial of climate issues, and demagoguery cloaked in nationalist fervour—serves as a clarion call to forces of reaction, bigotry, and class oppression. By making immigrants scapegoat for unemployment and inflation and attributing rising costs to Biden's foreign policy spending on Ukraine and Israel, Trump tapped into deep-seated economic anxieties. Trump also successfully exploited societal divisions and economic despair. A second Trump presidency would likely exacerbate these divisions, further delegitimizing democratic institutions among his base while intensifying polarization and political violence. By projecting himself as a saviour of the "forgotten American" he tapped into the insecurities of toiling people left behind by globalization and grappling with automation, outsourcing, stagnant wages, price rise etc. But at the same time Trump's rebranded "America First" agenda is not merely a campaign slogan but a battle cry for the ruling bourgeoisie to deepen capitalist exploitation while pushing the nation toward the precipice of racist violence and even fascism. A second term could see further federal restrictions on abortion, intensifying the struggle for reproductive rights. Beyond abortion, Trump's conservative agenda threatens women's access to healthcare and workplace equality.

America First: A Doctrine of Bourgeois Chauvinism

Under the guise of restoring American "greatness," Trump's "America First" doctrine reveals its true face: an unabashed platform for capitalist hegemony at home and imperialist aggression abroad. This nationalist rhetoric seeks to obscure the fundamental class contradictions tearing at the fabric of American society. It pits worker against worker-native-born against immigrant, White against Black and Brown—while leaving intact the mechanisms of exploitation that enrich the ruling elite. At its core, "America First" reflects the desperation of a declining capitalist-imperialist super-power to somehow befool the US citizens by fomenting national jingoism just like the way PM Modi in India harps on "Make in India" slogan for playing to the gallery. Instead of addressing systemic inequality or the erosion of working-class livelihoods, it finds scapegoats in the immigrants, minorities, and leftist agitators. In doing so, it fosters a culture of racist-communal division and fear, which are the lifeblood of fascism.

The Fascist Drift: inevitability in imperialism-capitalism

Fascism, as Marxist-Leninists understand, is not an aberration but an expression of capitalist crisis. It emerges when the ruling class, unable to maintain its dominance through traditional bourgeois democracy, resorts to a pre-emptive move to stave off revolution and preserve its hegemony. To crush dissent, authoritarian methods may or may not be used for Trump's presidency—both past and prospective—represents a textbook case of this tendency. His first term saw the militarization of the police, the demonization of protest movements like 'Black Lives Matter', and the flirtation with open insurrection, epitomized by the 6 January 2021 attack on the Capitol Hill.

Trump 2.0 promises to escalate these tendencies. His campaign has already signalled its intent to purge the federal bureaucracy of non-loyalists, strengthen executive power, and institutionalize repressive

measures against political opponents and marginalized communities. The goal is clear: to dismantle even the limited democratic safeguards that impede the bourgeoisie's unfettered rule.

The implications for the toiling people are dire. Under the pretence of protecting "law and order," Trump's agenda would accelerate the erosion of labour rights, environmental protections, and social safety nets. Simultaneously, his administration would empower corporate interests, further entrenching the economic inequalities that fuel social unrest. This confluence of authoritarian governance and capitalist exploitation constitutes the essence of fascism in the contemporary American context.

The Spectre of racist clashes

The racial polarization stoked by Trumpism is not merely ideological but increasingly material. Who can overlook the continuous assaults on the African Americans (blacks) by the racist whites plaguing US society? In the United States, such tensions are exacerbated by the country's unique legacy of slavery, settler colonialism, and systemic racism. Trump's politics tap into this legacy, mobilizing reactionary forces under the banner of "restoring order" while intensifying the exploitation of the proletariat. "Black Lives Matter" movement is sustained after George Floyd, an innocent 46 year-old black American citizen was brutally strangled to death in the open street in Minneapolis by Derek Chauvin, a 44 year-old white police officer seemingly out of racist mindset. Now the armed racist militias, modelled on infamous white supremacist Ku Klux Klan emboldened by Trump's rhetoric, are preparing for exacerbating racist frenzy, while leftist organizations and movements face growing repression. The fault lines are stark: urban versus rural, multiculturalism versus white supremacy, and labour solidarity versus capitalist divide-and conquer tactics. These divisions raise the chilling prospect of civil war—not as a hypothetical scenario but as a logical outcome of the contradictions inherent in ruling imperialism-capitalism driven on by most ruthless exploitation of man by man and fostered by divisive policies and demagoguery in its last moribund and really obsolete stage.

Yet, the ruling class is not monolithic; some sectors of capital may balk at the chaos Trumpism engenders, potentially setting the stage for a violent turn in intra-bourgeois conflict. But no matter their conflicting interests, when it comes to preventing people's growing wrath against increasing exploitation and oppression from taking an anti-capitalist turn, the capitalist class as a whole is firmly united. Hence some sections of the people, 'the others', need to be demonized as the enemy or enemies who are responsible for all the ills -- and Trump has clearly risen to that task! For the working class, this moment demands vigilance and organization. Precipitation of divides among people sparked by Trump's aggressive racism would not serve proletarian interests but rather deepen the fragmentation of the oppressed. However, such a scenario also presents an opportunity: to unite workers across racial, ethnic, and gender lines in a revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system itself.

Imperialist Aggression: America First on the Global Stage

Trump's "America First" agenda extends beyond domestic repression to encompass a belligerent foreign policy aimed at reasserting US dominance. This doctrine derived from US capitalist-imperialist compulsions, threatens to escalate tensions with China, deepen the proxy war in Ukraine, and perpetuate the occupation and oppression of nations in the Global South. From Palestine to Venezuela,

Trump 2.0 would likely double down on the imperialist policies that have made the United States a pariah among oppressed peoples worldwide.

Yet, this imperialist aggression is not a mark of strength but of despair. Trump's bluster cannot reverse this trajectory but only hastens the contradictions that will ultimately undermine the imperialist system.

A Call to Action: Building a Revolutionary Alternative

The question before us is not merely how to resist Trump but how to build a revolutionary alternative to the capitalist system that has given rise to him. As Marxist-Leninists, we understand that the defeat of fascism requires more than electoral victories; it demands the mobilization of the working class as a conscious political force imbued with higher culture and ethics. The road ahead is fraught with challenges, but history teaches us that revolutionary change often emerges from moments of profound crisis if both the objective and subjective conditions for accomplishing revolution are matured.

As Trump's second innings begin, the leftists need to move beyond the attempt of "saving democracy" within the confines of bourgeois institutions and embrace revolutionary path as illumined by the lofty ideal of Marxism-Leninism further elaborated, developed and enriched by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the Founder General Secretary of the SUCI(C) and an outstanding Marxist thinker of the era. Revolution in the prevailing socio-economic-political-cultural context cannot come by without following the teachings and analyses of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. The task at hand is far greater: to expose the capitalist roots of Trumpism, to unite the working class in revolutionary struggle, and to lay the foundation for a socialist America. Only by addressing the objective causes of exploitation, oppression, racial violence and all-out fascism engineered by imperialism, can be built a society based on equality, solidarity, and collectiveness.