

Theses on Trump: Personal reflections in the form of 10 axioms

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1. The victory and support for Trump reflects the crisis of neoliberal globalization and the underlying dynamics of capitalism, i.e. both the environmental externalities such as peak resources (not contrary to current oil glut, but a paradoxical part of it, see Bio-Physical Triggers of Political Violence),¹ and climate change; and the social externalities, essentially the impoverishment of the western working and middle classes.
2. Hence a struggle between the pro-neoliberal forces who want to maintain the benefits of Empire at the cost of both the internal population and the nationally bound industries, and those of the forces that backed Trump, and accept that they can no longer dominate Empire and are ready to endanger the latter to save the USA. Other right-populist forces have broadly similar designs for their own national realities. Hence the support for Trump from the more nationally oriented business leaders, the sectors that fear climate change costs and regulations (the energy sector). Hence, the retreat from imperial policing and responsibilities. The idea is to retreat back to the nation-state, only accept trade which does not endanger national capital, and to repatriate the trillions that are stashed abroad through the 'imperial' multinationals. This explains the opposition to Trump from the neoliberal elite.
3. The class compromise of neoliberalism, to accept the cultural aspects of the 1968 uprising, and thus the acceptance of cultural and gender rights with the postmodern, (while actively de-industrialization at the detriment of western industrial labor), post-labor left that supported it, is no longer workable. Hence the Trump forces promise an alignment with the white working class (but also others who share certain laborist or productivist values), at the cost of Otherization. It's mobilizing and creates a convergent enemy, i.e. both the neoliberal business elite and the cultural elite. It is important to understand that just as the labor left institutions got coopted in the New Deal / Welfare state model, so did also the pro-rights left represented by identity politics, or at least large parts of it (see Boltanski book). Hence the alignment between pro-neoliberal politics and the cultural left, represented by the Clinton-Obama coalitions.
4. Since the cultural left is focused on cultural rights, they are understandably opposed to the Otherization and overt racism/genderism of the Trump coalition, and feel largely obliged to support to some degree the neoliberal regime which granted the cultural rights and reforms, but given the undermining of the neoliberal compromise, this seems like a mistake.
5. More realistically, the Sanders forces represent those sectors of the left focused on recreating a synergy between progressive labor and the cultural left, intent on creating a new coalition. Hence the moderate language used by Sanders so as to maintain the links with the parts of labor who voted Trump. However, this also means maintaining a broad orientation towards restoring the New Deal principles, support for Keynesian politics, but also crucially, the same orientation towards re-industrialization and the restoration of the nation-state.
6. Both coalitions therefore have their contradictions. For example, Trump needs the support of both labor and their unions, but also of the no-tax Republicans, meaning he has to cut the budget at the same time as he

needs trillions for infrastructural investment. He needs to retreat from Empire, but needs to pacify the defense establishment. He needs Big Oil, but at the cost of environmental disruption.

7. The Obama and Sanders coalitions have their own contradictions, being wedded to a dismantling globalization and n impossible to really restore nation-state reality.
8. The p2p/commons approach has a crucial role to play in making the Sanders coalition more realistic, by offering new strategies for re-industrialization which are not based on going back to the old models, but on going forward towards a cosmo-local model of production,² which offers solutions not just for the US workers, but for the populations of the world, and through its stress on mutualization and the commons, has solutions for the ecological and climate crisis. This requires that commoners make their own turn towards focusing not on knowledge workers only, but to all workers and the rest of the population, by offering perspectives for sustainable livelihoods. While at the same time, constructing trans-national institutions that can supplement the likely failings of both corporate neo-globalization AND neo-statist restorations.
9. However, the big issue for the commons movement and emergence is the immaturity of a lot of these potential solutions which are far from being embraced by sufficient critical masses. Thus, the commons needs as much to align with the progressive nation-state restorers, as the other way around, as such huge transitions are impossible to carry out in good conditions without the support of state institutions (what we call the Partner State approach).³ Hence, one of the strategic priorities is a dialogue between the labor left (a la Sanders and Corbyn), the cultural rights movements, and the emerging commons movement, as well as with regenerative business orientations (and sustainability coalitions). Indeed, the only interesting coalition with potential elite forces are those that fully support ecological transitions and ‘fair deals’ with the larger population on the fruits of labor and the commons. However, there are numerous grassroots generative and ‘entre-donneurial’ forces that could be aligned with the commons as its livelihood branch.
10. In the meantime, as Arthur Brock and other have suggested,⁴ we have to speed up the construction of the prefigurative commons economy, which respects the sharing of knowledge (free movements), a just distribution of the social surplus (solidarity economy), and ecologically viable production for human need (political ecology). This is the micro-coalition of the commons, which undergirds our participation in the larger social and political mobilizations which are unfolding.

This paper was originally published and taken from: https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Theses_on_Trump

Notes

1. See: https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Bio-Physical_Triggers_of_Political_Violence
2. See <https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Cosmo-Localization>
3. See https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Partner_State
4. See https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Arthur_Brock

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