

# Imperialism and Fascism in the 21st Century

Declining Capitalist order descends into fascism  
Neo-colonial and metropolitan instances



## Chris Hedges:

“Walmart, Amazon, Apple, Citibank, Raytheon, ExxonMobile, Alphabet and Goldman Sachs will easily adapt. **Capitalism functions very efficiently without democracy.**”

fascism is an amorphous and incoherent ideology. It wraps itself in the most cherished symbols of the nation, in our case, the American flag, white supremacy, the Pledge of Allegiance and the Christian cross. It celebrates hypermasculinity, misogyny, racism and violence. It allows disenfranchised people, especially disenfranchised white men, to regain a sense of power, however illusory, and sanctifies their hatred and rage. It embraces a utopian vision of moral renewal and vengeance to coalesce around an anointed political savior. It is militaristic, anti-intellectual and contemptuous of democracy, especially when the established ruling class mouths the language of liberal democracy but does nothing to defend it. It replaces culture with nationalist and patriotic kitsch. It sees those outside the closed circle of the nation-state or the ethnic or religious group as contaminants who must be physically purged, usually with violence, to restore the health of the nation. It perpetuates itself through constant instability, for its solutions to the ills besetting the nation are transitory, contradictory and unattainable. Most importantly, fascism always has a religious coloring, mobilizing believers around rites and rituals, using sacred words and phrases, and embracing an absolute truth that is heretical to question.”



“



# How did we get here?

A photograph of a man in a dark jacket carrying a large Confederate battle flag on a wooden pole through a grand, ornate hall. The hall features high ceilings, large framed portraits on the walls, and a patterned carpet. In the background, another person is visible, and a bust of a man stands on a pedestal near a doorway.

“It has taken too long for for the American media, analysts, educators, and cultural critics to connect Trump and his MAGA movement to fascism, regardless of the fact that their rhetoric, actions and policies echo a dark and dangerous past. Underlying such silence was an **inability to recognize that fascism comes in many shapes, elements, forms, and symbols.**”

Henry A. Giroux (Fascism on Trial)

**“It will not happen  
here!”**

Not understanding capitalism, fascism, or imperialism leads to another American exceptionalism: thinking fascism is not suited for the US

But WHICH fascism?

Will fascism appear exactly like it did in the 1920s, 1930s in Europe?

**“When fascism comes to America, it will come wrapped in the flag and waving the cross.”**

A silhouette of a person's head and shoulders in profile, facing right, speaking into a microphone. The background is a solid blue color. The text is overlaid on the image in white and red.

**“Fascism, however, has many shapes and sizes...** Fascism bundles ideological ingredients such as: authoritarian, antidemocratic, and supremacist nationalism; xenophobic population and immigration policies; favored economic status for a few, suppressed rights for unions and labor; intentional and intensified political divisiveness; weaponizing courts and police to exact retributive punishment of internal enemies; disrespect for truth; political control of media and schools; religious legitimation.

Trump and MAGA Republicanism bundle such elements in 2020s America. **Fascism is alive in the United States. So much so, that it is not hyperbole to say that American fascism's face is Donald Trump's.** As Charlottesville and the January 6 insurrection testify, American fascism harbors antisemitism, and it can be added that antisemitism in the United States, whenever and wherever it is found, favors fascism. The tropes of antisemitism are both old and renewed as they are recycled and amplified with modern technology and social media. “

(Leonard Grob, Holocaust Scholar)

- Although Trump has become the face of fascism in the US, the leaders don't define the movement. It is the movement that creates its leaders. To create a **fascist movement**, a leader must be created.
- The US, the leading metropolitan country, has come to a certain level of capitalist development, and the world situation was mature enough to merit a **transition to fascism**.
- Soviet Union is gone, capitalism can't provide for the masses, capitalism has turned into a monopoly, oligopoly system, masses are hopeless, disillusioned, quality of life is down the drain, production moved offshores to greener pastures, black and brown faces are freer in the eyes of the white, male, nationalist, racist masses who long for the good old days of slavery, Jim Crow and male-dominated society so they can get their **"right" to good jobs as white males**. As Simone Signoret expresses, **"Nostalgia is not what it used to be."** The US needs more wars to hold on to the leadership role in the world as new rivals snip at its feet. The time is right for fascism to appear.





Matthew Stockman/Getty Images



The conditions that brought fascism to Spain, Italy, and Germany are nearly identical: A deep economical and political crises, contradictions between the ruling class factions, a vacuum of hegemony, the failure and collapse of liberal democracy, the destruction of the petty bourgeoisie, the disillusionment of the masses and the failure of the revolutionary forces.



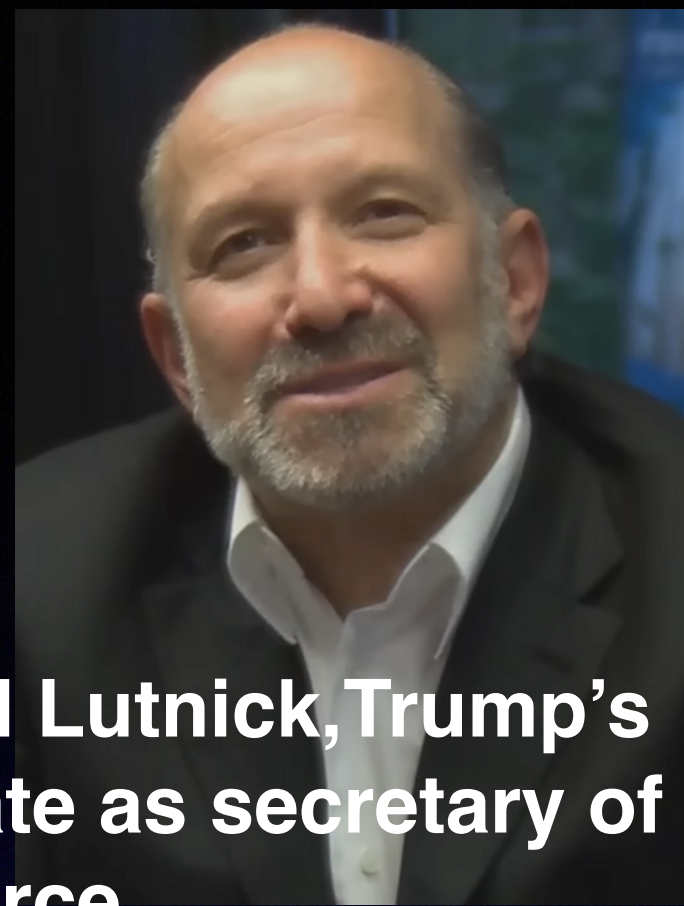
A state of hopelessness and no solution to daily miseries lead to a longing of an authority to come and fix the issues. A strong leader was needed, a no-BS commander who would solve the crisis. In the 21st century, the crisis is permanent and can not be solved. A permanent crisis then develops the feeling of the requirement for a permanent, strong, fierce, unwavering leader since capitalism is no longer able to and is unwilling to share its booty in the age of monopoly capitalism, even in the metropolitan centers.

**“Fascism should more properly be called corporatism because it is the merger of state and corporate power.”**

**Benito Mussolini\***

*“The Fascist State lays claim to rule in the economic field no less than in others; it makes its action felt throughout the length and breadth of the country by means of its corporate, social, and educational institutions, and all the political, economic, and spiritual forces of the nation, organised in their respective associations, circulate within the State. “*





## Howard Lutnick, Trump's nominate as secretary of commerce

Ranked #4 Most Important People in Commercial Real Estate Finance by Commercial Observer

Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation, Vice Chairman

Horace Mann School, Board of Trustees

National September 11 Memorial & Museum, Board of Directors

Haverford College, Board of Managers Co-chair

Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, Board of Trustees Vice Chairman

Solomon Guggenheim Museum Foundation Trustee

Partnership for New York City Board of Directors



## Scott Bessent, Trump's Treasury Secretary

Western governments have emerged from the pandemic with crippling debts just as increasingly bellicose rivals such as China and Russia assert themselves. Without dramatic economic surgery, Bessent reckons, America will tip into a “**permanent, European-style malaise**” and cede supremacy to China. “I think we are at a very unique moment here. **We are the last-chance bar and grill for growing our way out of this.**”

Bessent became wildly wealthy through years working for Soros and running his own funds back in New York, but he largely stayed out of the spotlight. That was until last year, when he decided to “come out from behind my desk” and go all-in on Trump. He donated millions of dollars to Trump’s election campaign, suddenly began popping up at events, and publicly stroked the incoming president’s famously outsized ego.



**Pete Hegseth, Donald Trump's pick for defense secretary** wrote that in the event of a Democratic election victory in the US there would be a “national divorce” in which “The military and police ... will be forced to make a choice” and “**Yes, there will be some form of civil war.**”

## **There is no “one-size fits all” fascism**

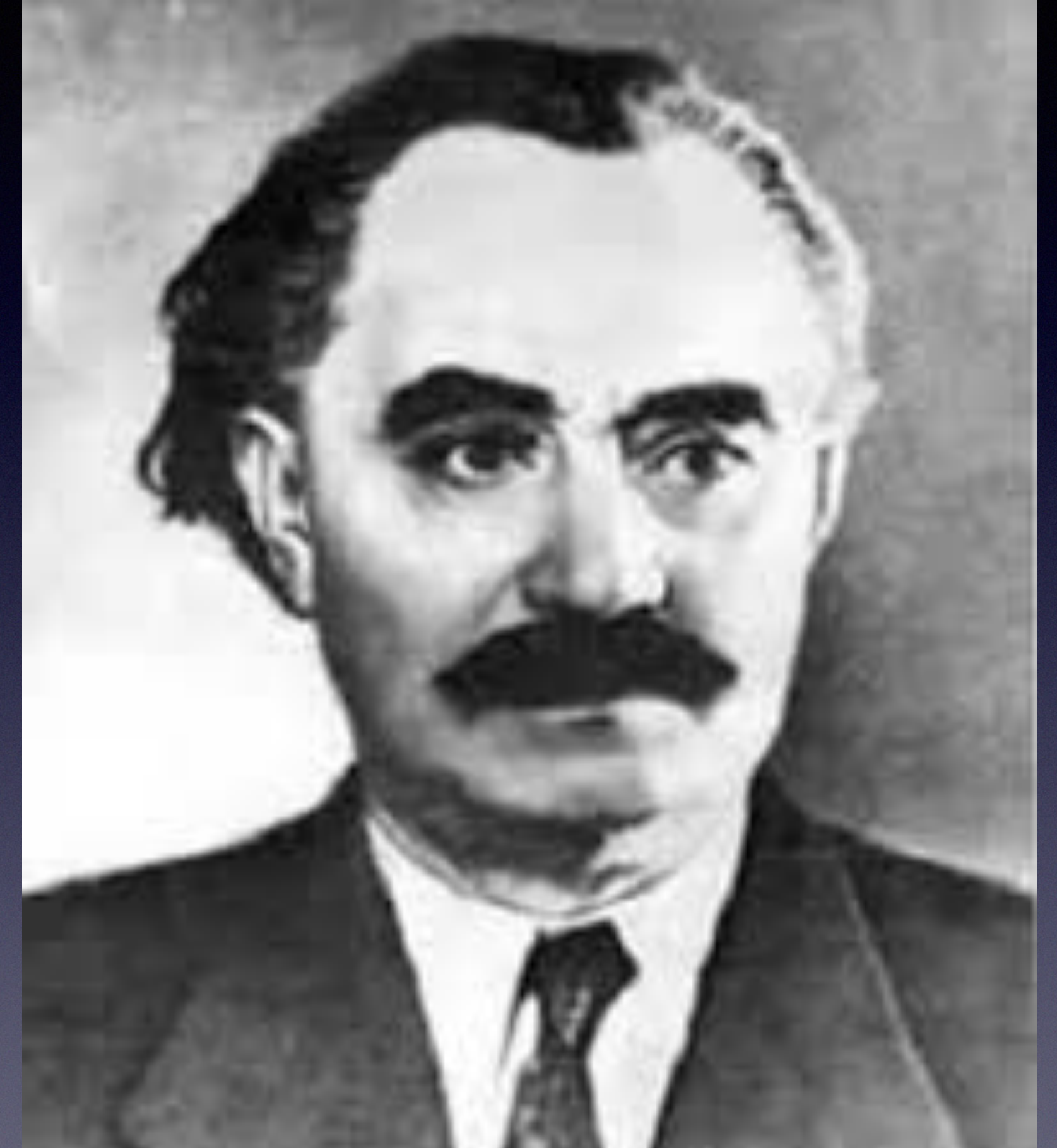
Every location, history, class position, level of struggle, local and general crisis of capitalism breeds its own kind of fascism

“Fascism has many forms and each one of them even shows contradictory trends”

Angelo Tasca, one of the founding members of the Communist Party of Italy



Georgi Dimitrov cited the definition of fascism formulated with the help of Clara Zetkin as **"the open, terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, and most imperialist elements of finance capital"**



# Historic circumstances for the success of fascism in Europe: **Bourgeois Revolutions**

- Fascism did not take power in countries like England or France where capitalism developed earlier.
- Fascism became successful in countries like Germany, Italy, and Japan, where the bourgeois revolutions were completed late.
- However, this was not due to their being “developed” or not. Rather, this was due to the unequal development of capitalism, its political development, and the transition to the imperialist stage.
- Bourgeois revolutions were rapid and developed from the bottom up in France and the US. However, bourgeois revolutions occurred in a backward way, top-to-bottom, and slowly in countries like Italy, Germany, Japan, and Russia. **Fascism was successful in countries where capitalism developed slowly and late.**



# Enters Imperialism

- In countries where the bourgeoisie had completed their revolution, the transition to imperialism was essential to grab colonies for the capitalist economic crises of overproduction.
- Lenin shows that Germany was even ahead of the US in industry, finance capital, production, and organization. However, Germany was left behind in acquiring colonies. A rising imperialist lacking colonies was a deep crisis within the National Bourgeoisie.
- The National Bourgeoisie became more greedy, vicious, reckless, and aggressive in Germany.



**“Those who don’t talk about  
capitalism have no right to  
talk about fascism”**

Max Horkheimer

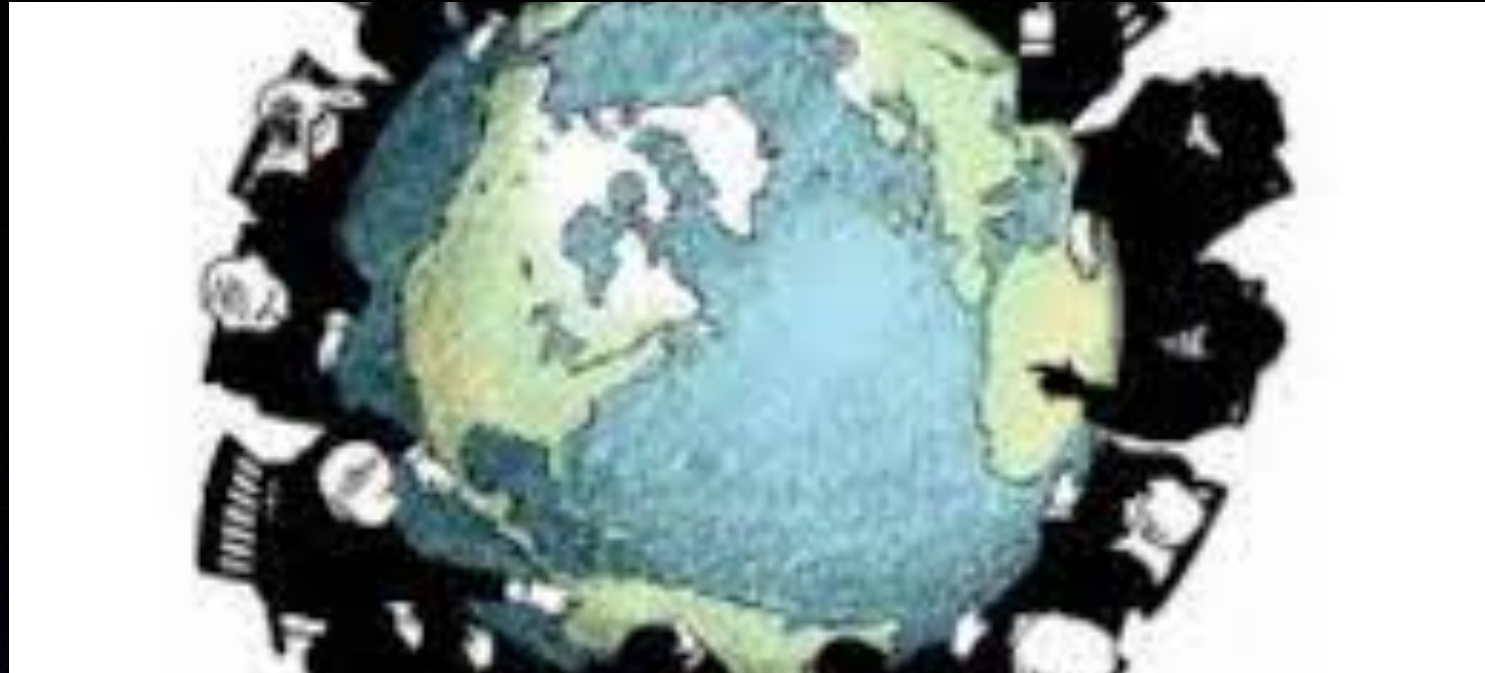
**“No, those who don’t talk  
about IMPERIALISM have no  
right to talk about fascism”**

Poulantzas



# Reactions of National Bourgeoisie of late developing metropolitan, imperialist countries

- The top-down bourgeois revolutions in Germany, Italy, and Japan had their toll on the National Bourgeoisie and other classes of these countries.
- The petty-bourgeois of these countries went through a hard, shocking and traumatic period facing the realities of top-down, forced monopolization, loss of markets, and dispossession.
- The middle classes were in fear and panic in an environment where they could not understand the changes or didn't know how to deal with them.
- Capitalist development kept impoverishing the working class.
- The environment for fascism to flourish had developed. Not only the upper classes but also the middle classes were also in a panic, fearing the wrath of a revolution.
- Elimination of the previously ruling classes from power (feudal lords, creation of a new association of "nation" etc.) had to be done rapidly now to catch up with those who had achieved this in a relatively more stable way. To do this, collaborating with the landed aristocracy in a bourgeoisie-conservative coalition in a contradictory "old-new" way created the force from above to change the society.
- This coalition, by its very nature, preserved the conservative forces to defeat the reaction from below, the working classes. The democratic requests from the working classes were stifled and contained.
- This condition brought a more severe reaction from the working classes, a condition the new bourgeoisie could not manage before it grew stronger and developed its liberal ideology to handle the situation.



So, what happens in the Neo-colonial countries that came to life at the age of imperialism?

**We saw that the nature of bourgeois revolutions was a huge factor in the success or failure of fascism**

- Most Neo-colonials were colonies when bourgeois revolutions were taking place in Europe. **Neither their capitalism nor their bourgeoisie even had the chance to develop.**
- When these countries were allowed to become so-called “sovereign,” the competitive age of capitalism had finished, completed, and closed. The imperialist stage under the dictatorship of the monopoly-finance capital had been established. By the very nature of their “sovereignty,” they were made and born DEPENDENT on the world markets, capitalism, technology, finance, and politics all controlled by imperialists. **Imperialism is a dictatorship, not a democracy.**
- Their bourgeois never even entertained the ideals, frustrations, ambitions, greed, and stamina of the **NATIONAL BOURGEOISIES** of the imperialist countries. Their place was to be a dependent middleman.
- Their livelihood, life, gainings, positions, thrones, ambitions, and markets all depended on the word of THEIR BOSSES, the imperialist corporations, and countries. They knew their place and acted accordingly. **They became the local internal guards of a prison system run by imperialism.**

# Imperialist method of wealth extraction : Neo-colonialism

## Running local prisons with local guards



- Imperialism does not install democracy in its Neo-colonies. Colonization is not a democratic process
- If we believe prisons are democratic environments, then we can believe a Neo-colonial, dependent, client country too can be democratic. No such fantasy exists. Theft, looting, extraction, and constant impoverishing of people do not happen democratically.
- Run under imperialist monopoly-finance capital dictatorships, facing omnipresent capitalist crises, constantly facing imminent revolutions, living unresolvable double-triple exploitation, lacking a strong bourgeoisie, missing a completed bourgeois-democratic revolution, Neo-liberal countries face the bloodiest, most backward, most aggressive form of imperialist dictatorship.
- This is the **TEXTBOOK DEFINITION OF FASCISM**. To coin the differences between the classical fascism and this instance, they are called the “neo-colonial type” or “third world” fascism.

# Prisons of Imperialist Neo-colonialism are run by perpetual fascism, administered by local guards, the local bourgeoisie

- Neo-colonials do not have a “National Bourgeoisie” in the original sense.
- National bourgeoisie DEFENDS its turf, resources, labor, markets, against other bourgeoisies’ encroachments. (See Germany, slide 16). Comprador bourgeoisie, on the other hand, are ready to surrender the wealth of their own country to their imperialist bosses at a fire-sale price, making exploitation multiply in their country.
- This super-exploitation prepares the ground for insurrections, revolutions, instability, coups, juntas, permanent state of crises.
- The ONLY way to manage such a situation is the brute force, racism, nationalism, religious fundamentalism, xenophobia, lies, propaganda, and the central force of the state: police, the army, courts, illegal street gangs, thugs, mafia.
- Although a show parliament, staged elections, or a theater of “democracy” may be kept for appearance, the system as a whole is a perpetual fascism.





The Neo-colonials don't transition from bourgeois democracy to fascism and back. They are under constant, perpetual, permanent fascism. This is due to being under the imperialist rule. Their system is designed for fascism. They are still colonies. The transfer of wealth to imperialists stays the same. The only thing that has changed is that the rulers (prison guards) are now local, the occupation army is now local, and occupation forces have the local skin color. But these forces are working for the imperialists as the middleman. This makes the extraction and transfer of wealth to imperialists much smoother and uneventful. Since fascism is constant and omnipresent, these countries pass to different shades of fascism. In really hard times, “open fascism” is experienced, while in milder times, fascism tones down but does not reverse back to “Bourgeois Democracy” as we see in classical or metropolitan countries. In metropolitan countries, this transition happens since they have had their bourgeois revolutions completed. **IMPERIALISM HAS BECOME AN INTERNAL ISSUE!**

# Type of States

**Socialist State**

**Capitalist States**

**Neo-Colonial Type  
Fascist States**

**Bourgeois Democratic  
States**

**Governance Type:  
Concealed Fascism**

**Governance Type:  
Open Fascism**

**Governance Type:  
Bourgeois  
Democracy**

**Governance Type:  
Fascism**

# Meanwhile Back home...

Why the topic?

An academic, historical curiosity, or a tool for struggle?

Fascism was successful in Europe utmostly because the left and the working class were divided, lacked proper leadership, and did not have a class perspective that blinded the movements

Not understanding the danger of fascism, the left made fatal mistakes while fascism was escalating. Let's not make the same mistakes and join forces to prevent a complete transfer to fascist dictatorship.

**A UNITED FRONT AGAINST FASCISM!**

