

21st Century Fascism, Part 4: How To Repeal and Replace Trumpite 21st Century Fascism by Steve Jonas

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This column is the fourth and final one in this series. Last week's dealt with some of the overarching problems that need to be worked through as the Resistance develops and gathers force. This one presents some specifics on some of the large set of tasks that need to be undertaken, if this "Repeal and Replace" movement is to be successful.

1. The enemy, in the current struggle against Trumpite functional fascism, must be clearly identified. It is the Trumpite/Repub. party. Indeed, especially as some of the old-line Repubs. leave the Party, it must be very firmly tied to Trump. "Trump's base" that is always being talked about in terms of "Trump must listen to his base" is the Republican Party base. They are not separate. They are not different. Any so-called "centrist" or "center-rightist" Republicans who remain where they are, are Trumpite Enablers, as were the Center and traditional Right-wing Parties in Nazi Germany.

2. Addressing Trump himself: the focus must be on his policies and their outcomes, not his personality, his ignorance, his stupidity (as so-labeled by senior cabinet members), his sexually-predatorial nature, his personal racism, his eating habits, his TV-watching habits, and so on and so forth. Those are all part of the "Aura of Trump" which proves so useful to him and his facilitators, as distractions from what he is really doing in terms of policy and programs. As to why the economically dominant sector of the ruling class and their lackeys in the Congress are so satisfied with him, even though he might not have been their first choice to be President --- in terms of the primary goals of those in power who did get him elected, tax cuts for the rich and massive de-regulation in the arenas of the environment (including global warming), labor, industry, food, agriculture, health, and etc., (or as Steve Bannon calls it, the "deconstruction of the administrative state"), he has had an outstanding first year.

3. The adaptation of the Trump/Repubs. to Religious Authoritarianism, for political purposes, must be recognized and dealt with. Pence, specifically, is a Dominionist. That must be brought out into the open. The negative consequences for both the conventionally religious and the non-religious alike must be revealed (if I may use that term) and dealt with. In dealing with matters like abortion- and LGBTQ- rights the battle must move beyond "fairness," "privacy," and "non-discrimination in the public square" (all valid arguments to be sure) to the matters of religious dogmatism, religious authoritarianism, and state-sponsored/protected religion.

4. It must be understood, and explained, over and over again, that race and racism are invented concepts (invented during the early period of European/African Slavery in order to justify its existence). They were invented as tools of exploitation of the non-slave working class, and still are: very much so in the United States. This must be explained to the working class, over-and-over again. Oddly enough, it was Bill Clinton, at the beginning of his first Presidential campaign, who put very well :

For 12 years, the Republicans have tried to divide us, race against race' Mr. Clinton said. 'Here in the shadow of this great building, all of us, we know all about race- baiting. They've used that old tool on us for decades now. And I want to tell you one thing: I understand that tactic, and I will not let them get away with it in 1992.'

Of course, we have heard virtually nothing of that message from that man (or the other Clinton) over the years since, but that doesn't mean that it is not totally valid and very useful. But, "identity politics" should not be abandoned. Rather it should be used to show just how it is used by the Trumpite-Repubs. to get into and stay in power. (See also below.)

5. Nobody is perfect. The Perfect is the enemy of the Possible. Is co-optation possible? For sure. It has happened many times, e.g. currently, Syriza in Greece. Nevertheless, in the kind of struggle in which we are presently engaged, seeking perfection on our side is exactly what our enemies would like us to do.

6. And thus we come to "Dealing with the Dems." They are a ruling class party, of course. But certainly they support certain positive goals. Attacking them, as an enemy, only strengthens the attacks from the Repub./Trumpites. At the same time, when they take actions that weaken the attack on the Trumpites and Functional Fascism, that must be strongly criticized. I do not have a magic answer to this one. But I will say that for the Progressive elements of the Resistance to constantly attack them when the focus should be Trump and the Repubs., and refusing to enter into alliances with them on a case-by-case, issue-by-issue basis, will only weaken the Resistance overall.

7. "Trump/Russia" is a superb distraction for the Trumpites. It is their (and Trump's) WMD: Weapon of Mass Distraction. If it did not exist, they would have to invent it. It is still too early to tell if there is "something there" (although the Trumpites' behavior does indicate that there is). Some on the Left believe that it is real. Others do not (and man, I can hear their attacks on me for saying this rumbling down the pike ---- exactly what the Trumpites want.). BUT, the more in-fighting there is over this question, the more the Trumpites benefit. The important thing is what they have been able to accomplish in their first year, while the public's attention is largely distracted by "Trump/Russia" and all the too-ing and fro-ing around it.

8. The role of the media. Of course, the mass media are part of the Corporate State. But once again, we have to be reminded that the ruling class is not at this time united. The same goes for their media. Thus, to the extent that CNN, MSNBC, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and even USA-Today and (on occasion) The Wall Street Journal can be helpful in the struggle, that help should be welcomed. There can be criticism of "not going far enough," but the baby should not be thrown out with the bathwater. On a mass basis they are all we have in the struggle against (to repeat) Trumpite/Republican/Functional Fascism, other than the courts, which are very rapidly being taken over by the fascists. That the media are the subject of the incessant attacks by the Trumpites, and especially Trump himself, tells one all one needs to know about their effectiveness. Our side should demand that they do more, not condemn them for what they are doing.

9. There is no contradiction between "identity" politics and "class" politics. They must be melded. As noted above, racism is used to divide and conquer. Are there pure haters in the alt-right? Sure. But many are tricked into it. Messages must be developed to bring home the point that the interests of the white working class, the non-white working class, and the whites and non-whites in any but the owning classes are the same.

10. It must be clearly shown why and how Trumpite/Repub./functional fascism is bad for almost everyone, including large swaths of "Trump voters," as in:

11. Data and information on exactly what is happening to this country as a result of the Trumpite/Repub./fascist policies are essential to the struggle. What I have for years called a "Local Problems Bank," that is a vast set of linkages between local problems in the environment, pollution, water supply, transportation, schools, health services, and etc., and national policies must be developed. For example, collecting chapter and verse on what each Department of the Administration is doing, under Trumpite leadership (or non-leadership, as the case may be), and how virtually everyone is being hurt, must be assembled.

12. It will be necessary to identify the arenas where the Left can split from the Democrats and still maintain the Resistance, e.g.: foreign policy; the power of the Military-Industrial Complex, and the role it plays in the nation both economically and politically; fiscal and monetary policy; and strategy and tactics as well.

13. It is essential to end the in-fighting on the Left (and I am talking about the non-Democratic Party Left, and there is one, here). Learn the lessons of the SPD/KPD battles in Germany before Hitler. The focus must be on the common enemy. It has to be realized that at this point in time there are equally valid/useful approaches to the struggle. Resisters can have different foci of their resistance. As for the "Lesser-of-the Evils" arguments, they will always exist. Both groups

can be progressive. But time spent by one side attacking the other is time taken away from attacking the true enemy. Which leads to ---

14. A major problem for many elements of the Resistance is the importance, now, of electoral politics. Can work for this, without becoming a Democrat Large D., by supporting particular candidates on particular issues, and using their candidacies to address the larger issues. Of course, the Democrats, historically, are part of the political duopoly that runs this nation. But that does not mean that they cannot be allies at certain points in time and on certain issues in the struggle to prevent the full implementation of Trumpite/Repub./Functional Fascism. Or at least for as long as the U.S. is a constitutional democracy, they can be seen as not targets of co-equal importance.

15. Will the US have a "color revolution?" Why are not mass, street protests getting bigger? The short answer is that, at present, the U.S. is a constitutional democracy, with no revolutionary reality. Further, right now, there is no leading Revolutionary Party, which is essential, especially if a revolution of the socialist type is to take place. But that does not mean that revolutionaries (or all the various stripes of the genus that there are) cannot join on a case-by-case basis with non-revolutionary forces in fighting Trumpite/Repub./Functional Fascism. Not only can issues be promoted, but education on the eventual need for socialist revolution can be undertaken. And so ---

16. Can the fight for socialism be carried on now? Yes, as a future goal, but it should not get in the way of working with left-capitalist forces to overthrow the Trumpite/Republicans.

17. Obviously , an even more massive Trumpite-Republican voter suppression strategy than the nation has experienced in every election since that of 2000 (see, back then, Florida and Ohio) is underway.

18. Finally, I think that it is clear that I believe in the Popular Front strategy for dealing with the current reality in the United States. I recognize that that ain't easy folks. But enough for now. It is a topic to which I shall be returning down the road.