

Ocasio-Cortez, Sanders, Trump and the State of Imperial Decline



HELP ENLIGHTEN YOUR FELLOWS. BE SURE TO PASS THIS ON. SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON IT.

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[dropcap]B[/dropcap>ernie Sanders' anticipated second run

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For the entirety of the 21st century the Lords of Capital have offered nothing but deepening austerity and endless war to the “home” populace of the imperial countries. The Great Meltdown of 2008 brought the global capitalist system to the very brink of collapse, impoverishing tens of millions and imprinting a profound sense of dread and insecurity on a new generation. Were it not for the strength of China’s command economy and the \$19 trillion Federal Reserve bailout of U.S. and European banks, the global capitalist system might have come totally undone. Instead, the system’s concentration of wealth mechanisms were put on overdrive. No wonder, then, that [polls show](#) 18 to 29 year-old Americans favor socialism (51%) over capitalism (45%), and that Black Americans are even more socialist-minded than that. And no wonder a U.S. president felt compelled to exorcise the demons of socialism in his State of the Union Address:

“Here, in the United States, we are alarmed by new calls to adopt socialism in our country,” Donald Trump [told](#) the imperial Congress. “America was founded on liberty and independence --- not government coercion, domination, and control. We are born free, and we will stay free. Tonight, we renew our resolve that America will never be a socialist country.”

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In truth, there are no organizations of socialists even remotely positioned to threaten the rule of the Lords of Capital in the U.S. However, super-majorities of the U.S. public favor single payer health care, free college tuition, a living minimum wage, and other New Deal-type programs pushed by self-styled “democratic” socialists like Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. And the leftish Democrats’ “Green New Deal” proposals for a massive renewable energy makeover of infrastructure combined with jobs guarantees are “strongly” or “somewhat” supported by a whopping [81 percent of all registered voters](#) (including 40 percent of Republicans) and 92 percent of Democrats.

This is what passes for “socialism” in the U.S., and although such programs are not designed to overthrow the rule of capital, they are forbidden political territory for the leadership of both corporate parties in the age of endless austerity and war. Of the 535 House and Senate members gathered in the Capitol building for the annual presidential address, only 78 belong to the Medicare for All Caucus, all of them House Democrats. That means only one-third of the 235

Democratic House members have endorsed a measure that enjoys [85 percent support](#) among Democratic voters and 70 percent among Americans as a whole, including 52 percent of Republicans.

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The Lords of Capital, not the voters, control both political parties, and the Lords decree austerity. Donald Trump, the billionaire arch racist, nevertheless styles himself as a “populist,” and littered his remarks with vague references to repairing “crumbling infrastructure,” lowering the cost of prescription drugs, and a promise to sign a bill for nationwide paid parental leave after childbirth. But that’s just hot air for the occasion. Trump’s proposed [budget for 2019](#), like the previous year, slashes deeply at the threadbare safety net, gutting Medicare, Medicaid and food stamps – a vicious austerity.

Trump bragged about his gargantuan military budgets -- \$700 billion for 2018, \$716 for this year – that blew deficits through the roof, providing a rationale for more cuts to social programs the next go-round. “War as an enemy of the poor,” as Dr. Martin Luther King [described it](#). Under late stage capitalism, war and austerity are twin policies, and the only items on the menu of either corporate party.

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Democratic leadership is just as wedded to war and austerity as Trump and his Republicans. The Democrats recruited Georgia’s [Stacey Abrams](#), the Democrat who was defeated by blatant racial vote-stealing in her bid for governor, to show how important the Black vote is to the party. But House Speaker Nancy Pelosi didn’t authorize Abrams to offer any

programs of substance that would upset the austerity regime. Instead, Abrams spoke of her own history and the trials and tribulations of the civil rights and women's movements, demanded that everyone be held "accountable for racist words and deeds," called for defense of an LGBTQ community that "remains under attack," and insisted that Donald Trump "tell the truth, and to respect his duties and the extraordinary diversity that defines America."

The truth is, the Democrats are running on a "we are not Trump" platform, the same as Hillary Clinton did the last time around. Clinton and her corporate handlers believed that Trump set the bar so low and was so personally repulsive, that he would be easily beaten without the Democrats having to make any promises to relieve the suffering of their working class base. The austerity regime would be safe in such a contest. Black and brown voters would rally around the Democrats in panic at the prospect of a Trump presidency, as would "non-deplorable" whites. But it turned out that most whites are deplorables and stuck with the Republican Party, as they have ever since it became the party of white supremacy in 1968 -- many with renewed passion, in the belief that they finally had one of their own at the helm.

"The corporate Democrats have rolled out their candidates early."

Polls showed that Bernie Sanders, the "democratic socialist" insurgent, would likely have beaten Trump in 2016 – an outcome the Lords of Capital feared far more than Trump's ascent to the Oval Office, since his outstanding primary showing represented the strongest electoral challenge to austerity of the century. The "leftish" sentiments of voters and Democratic activists have hardened and intensified in the Trump years. Sanders' anticipated second run is the 6-ton elephant in the Democratic boardroom. The corporate overseers of the Party would rather lose to Trump again than win with Sanders, whose victory might spell the end of the austerity half of the late

stage capitalist regime (although U.S. endless war policy would likely remain in effect.)

Sanders has for the past two years gone on Facebook Live and other social media to respond to Trump's State of the Union addresses. However, the corporate Democrats have rolled out their candidates early, with Black Senators Kamala Harris and Cory Booker out front in the race to protect the interests of the Lords of Capital. As BAR columnist [Danny Haiphong has said](#), Democratic leadership wants to bury the dreaded Sanders candidacy in a sea of safe, pseudo-progressive faces, many of them Black and brown. Democratic operatives attacked Sanders for trying to "step on" the performance of official Democratic designated responder, Stacey Abrams.

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Shamefully, Temple University professor Mark Lamont Hill, who was fired by CNN for defending Palestinian human rights, showed his [true colors](#) as kiss-ass to Democratic corporate leadership. A Sanders response to Trump's State of the Union "is a bad move," said Hill, "especially assuming he's going to run. It only reinforces the idea that Bernie is not serious about representing the interests of the Democratic Party. It also reads as racially tone deaf, as Stacey Abrams becomes the first Black woman to deliver the response."

Similar orchestrated noises, even more idiotic, emanated from the [The Root](#), the Black-oriented soft politics site.

Sanders dutifully waited for Abrams' soulful yet substance-starved presentation to end, then slammed into Trump's fantasy world like a [growling gray bulldozer](#). The economy is "not booming" for the roughly 80% of Americans living "paycheck to paycheck," said Sanders. Americans need Medicare for All because they "can't afford to go to the doctor when they're sick" and "cannot afford to buy the prescription drugs." The

U.S. has the “highest rate of childhood poverty in the developed world”; Americans are “working longer and longer hours for lower wages;” and “cannot afford a decent place in which to live” or “feed their families” – conditions that can be alleviated by living wage laws and a restructured economy. Sanders quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, the self-described “democratic socialist.": "This country has socialism for the rich and rugged individualism for the poor."

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After the Address, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez told MSNBC that Trump is "losing on the issues" and that is why he made an "ad hominem" attack on socialism. She pointed out that her proposal to tax the super-rich at 70 percent is supported by 60 percent of the public. However, Ocasio-Cortez, a “socialist” of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) variety, cannot escape the stupefying grip of imperial ideology. Her “socialism” goes no farther than New Deal programs to save capitalism, and is absent any solidarity with those resisting imperialism’s efforts to destroy the very idea of “socialism” and national sovereignty everywhere in the formerly Third World. Solidarity is not part of Sanders and “AOC’s” political makeup, except with those purported “socialists” that have made peace with capitalism in western Europe and now struggle to preserve their welfare state structures under the NATO imperial umbrella – a battle they are so far losing -- while their governments act as junior partners in Washington’s endless wars.

Ocasio-Cortez was [questioned on MSNBC](#) about Trump’s attack on socialism in general, and on the socialist government in Venezuela that the U.S. has been attempting to overthrow for the past 20 years. “We stand with the Venezuelan people in their noble quest for freedom,” said the Orange Aggressor, who last week recognized a U.S.-groomed pretender to the

Venezuelan presidency and gave him the keys to billions in assets stolen by Washington. "And we condemn the brutality of the Maduro regime, whose socialist policies have turned that nation from being the wealthiest in South America into a state of abject poverty and despair."

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AOC said Trump was trying to "confuse the public. I think he sees himself losing on the issues, he sees himself losing on the wall in the southern border, and he needs to grasp at an ad hominem attack and this is his way of doing it." But she did not object to Trump and two previous U.S. presidents' attempted coups, devastating sanctions and constant subversion of a government whose electoral process were described by former president Jimmy Carter as the "best in the world." Instead, she spoke as a loyal American imperialist, for whom the sovereignty of other nations and peoples is dependent on the whims of the global hegemon, the government of which she is now a part. According to Ocasio-Cortez, the issue in Venezuela is not socialism, even if the president that ordered it says so, and neither is there a problem of violations of international law by the U.S. Rather, "What we need to realize is happening is this is an issue of authoritarian regime versus democracy. In order for [Trump] to try to dissuade or throw people off the scent of the trail, he has to really confuse the public. And I think that that's exactly what he's trying to do."

If AOC meant that the U.S. is an authoritarian regime that systematically violates international law, she would be correct. But instead, she was speaking of the government in Venezuela, and blaming the victim of the aggression. Ocasio-Cortez is thus complicit in the crime. As is Sanders, whose statement on the unfolding U.S coup in Venezuela provided a

political rationale for overthrowing Nicolas Maduro's government, followed by a weak objection to Trump's actually doing it. The terms "wishy-washy" and worthless were coined for just such imperial leftists (properly called "social imperialists," not socialists.)

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Only three Democratic members of the House, California Rep. Ro Khanna, Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar and Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, have condemned the U.S. actions against Venezuela, and much of the phony left has found common cause with Trump in the crime.

It is possible that AOC will grow an internationalist consciousness, without which one is no socialist. But it's way too late for 77 year-old Bernie Sanders. His historical mission is to run for president once again, on a platform opposed to endless austerity, and hopefully generate such momentum that Democratic leaders will be forced by their corporate masters to sabotage Sander's campaign in the full light of day, provoking a significant exodus of lefties from the Party.

The corporate duopoly cannot buck the Lords of Capital, whose only vision for the planet is endless austerity and war, with themselves forever on top. The real resistance can only be nurtured outside the Party. Bernie Sanders' job, although certainly not his intention, is to explode the Democrats by running on a platform that supermajorities of people support – and to be publicly crucified for it.

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