

Considering it to be of international relevance and debate, we are transcribing the following article published on *Project Syndicate*.

NOTE: The yellow highlighting is ours, as are the comments at the end.

Resisting American Techno-Fascism



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[Courtney C. Radsch](#)

The world's most powerful tech firms have aligned themselves with US President Donald Trump, marking a dangerous new phase in the concentration of their power. But other countries can take steps – namely, regulating digital services and protecting intellectual property – to avert a global slide into techno-fascism.

WASHINGTON, DC – Big Tech's massive encroachment upon the levers of state authority under US President Donald Trump is creating a dangerous new power structure – one not confined to its homeland. Trump's threats against countries – US allies and adversaries alike – that dare to regulate their digital markets and communications systems are not merely a case of economic bullying. Rather, they are an attempt to export this power structure and **undermine the rule of law and democratic governance worldwide.**

For example, America's European allies **risk** tariffs and retaliation for enforcing much-needed digital regulations, as do countries, like the [United Kingdom](#) and [Brazil](#), that impose a digital-services tax. But these challenges also create strategic opportunities for democracies. If they collectively refuse to submit to US pressure, it is less likely that any one government will bear the brunt of retaliation. These countries must therefore unite **against the tech giants that mine their citizens' data, control key information and commercial infrastructure, and refuse to pay taxes or even acknowledge the jurisdiction of national governments.**

Of course, defending national interests while fostering genuine innovation is a difficult balancing act. But the unprecedented alliance forged between Big Tech and the Trump administration underscores the urgency of this task. As head of Trump's "Department of Government Efficiency," Elon Musk, the world's richest person, has **gained access** to government data systems, fired thousands of federal workers, and **taken aim** at regulatory agencies. Musk has also used the Federal Trade Commission **as a cudgel** against businesses that are reticent to advertise on his social-media **platform X, which he has turned into a megaphone for right-wing extremists and a tool for disinformation and political interference.**

Musk is not the only tech boss to have bent the knee. When Mark Zuckerberg announced in January that Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, would **end** its fact-checking program, he **repeated** Trump's talking points. More recently, Instagram **concealed** results when users searched for "Democrats," and Facebook **amplified** posts from Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance.

These are only the most prominent examples of how the world's most powerful tech CEOs have aligned themselves with an authoritarian leader, shaping public discourse to his (and their own) benefit. When tech interests capture the US government to this extent, other countries must stand up to Trump's threats to avert a global slide into techno-fascism.

Some will argue that by taking a strong regulatory stance, these countries risk losing access to technological innovation. But this fundamentally misreads the situation. Given the extraordinary protections and privileges they have secured at home, US tech giants don't need more favorable treatment from other countries. They need access to these countries' markets. Advanced economies with skilled workforces, including the UK, Japan, and those in Europe, are highly valuable, as are middle-income and emerging economies like Brazil, Indonesia, and India.

The revelation that China's DeepSeek developed a large language model comparable to those of dominant American AI firms at a fraction of the cost has underscored this point. It belies the narrative that only the biggest tech companies with the most advanced chips and the least restrictive regulatory environment can develop the best AI, and shows that alternatives to the Silicon Valley model exist.

So far, Brazil is the only country with the courage and conviction to challenge Musk (albeit before he joined the Trump administration). It is less clear whether Europe, which has recourse to its digital markets and AI directives, will defend its right to regulate and rein in the "broligarchs" power.

Because enforcing competition policy has implications beyond traditional market concerns, more countries should regulate digital services, focusing not just on market dominance, but also on a corporation's ability to shape public discourse, control information flows, and leverage data advantages in order to entrench its power. Allowing Big Tech to pursue unfettered AI development that is environmentally and culturally destructive – or, worse, subsidizing such innovation – could pave the way for techno-fascism on a global scale.

Clear rules for protecting competition and intellectual property are far more likely to foster innovation than would enabling dominant players to strengthen their monopoly power. For example, the EU's General Data Protection Regulation has, despite initial resistance, become a global standard, spurring privacy-enhancing innovation and acting as a safeguard against corporate overreach, especially with regard to data mining.

Similarly, requiring credit and compensation for the use of copyrighted materials for AI training is not just about protecting creative industries. It is about integrating the development of these transformative technologies into the fabric of our economies and societies, before a handful of US companies get a chance to "move fast and break things" – like democracy and the rule of law – that are not easily repaired.

Instead of accepting a false choice between innovation and regulation, the world's democracies have an opportunity to create the conditions for genuine innovation, not imitation, and show how democratic oversight can enable technological progress while preserving fundamental rights. But this requires recognizing that tech policy has become integral to resisting authoritarian tendencies.

Such a stance is not anti-American. In fact, it reflects concerns about the fusion of Big Tech and political power in the US that many Americans share. That makes it all the more important for other governments to ensure that digital technologies serve democracy and protect human dignity.



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<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/democracies-can-counter-trump-musk-technofascism-by-courtney-c-radsch-2025-04>

COMMENTS:

We begin with an excerpt from an article published by Peter Radford (PR) on February 3 of this year, in *Real-World Economics Review Blog*, and which we commented on in the *CSDI Institute* on February 5, 2025.

- **PR** said: "Random thoughts on the first day of America's war against the world. This is my way of summarizing; it's by no means definitive! I wrote in a hurry."

Here's a quote to start:

"What made fascism attractive in Europe and elsewhere was its combination of national autarkic goals, militarism, statism, and a glorification of technology, which suited the inclinations and interests of military governments and modernizing autocrats." [Osterhammel and Peterson; "Globalization, A Brief History"; p. 101]

Just a few minor changes, and that pretty much describes America. Perhaps not outright fascism. It is certainly becoming more autarkic, in thought, if not in action. Obviously militaristic. Not so much statist as nationalist. And a world leader in the glorification of technology: Musk and his gang are currently rampaging through US government archives. Unchecked. Unsafe..."

- **JL** commented: "The columnist (PR) laments that the US is now leading the destruction of its own world order, with "Trump destroying Reagan" in a populist, plutocratic, and authoritarian government, following a sharp class conflict. "Capital won." However, we believe that Trump2 returns more empowered (with a majority in Congress) and with more experience, but he still faces a challenge that he was unable to resolve in his favor in his first administration: disarming or controlling the "deep state," whose pillars are the intelligence agencies, the Pentagon, the Department of Justice, and government agencies and officials with ties to economic or political interest groups that could obstruct government policies and... the interference of Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Mark Zuckerberg."

- We now can observe that, in just over two months of government, Trump has already aligned Big Tech with his government, with Elon Musk as leader and with extensive interference in the main government offices, as highlighted by the author of this article, pointing out the "fusion of Big Tech and political power in the US that many Americans share"; configuring what he calls a path to *Techno-Fascism* and which, we believe, will be exported to the rest of the world through the significant influence of, among others, mainly Alphabet (Google), Amazon, Apple, Meta (Facebook) and Microsoft.

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