Warning Signs of Fascism

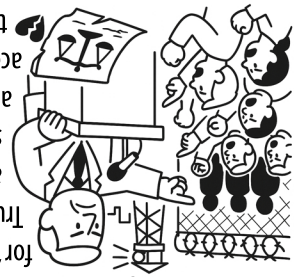
Authoritarianism rarely arrives all at once. It creeps in, one "exceptional" policy at a time, while people are told it's all normal, or necessary, or temporary. When we can see the pattern, we can organize sooner, protect each other, and push our country in a different direction.

Scapegoating as a unifying cause

Fascist movements rally people by naming enemies. Trump launched his campaign by demonizing immigrants. Now, he calls them "garbage" and "vermin," brands the press "enemy of the people," and frames opponents as traitors.

Disdain for human rights

Fascism treats rights as optional, especially for "outsiders." The Trump administration slashed asylum and refugee access, cozied up to abusive regimes, and worked to pull the U.S. away from international human-rights scrutiny.



Powerful nationalism

Fascism turns patriotism into a weapon: "real Americans" versus everyone else. Under Trump, "America First" is used to justify racist bans, attacks on immigrants, and abandonment of international agreements, treating cruelty and isolation as patriotic.

Rampant cronyism & corruption

Authoritarians blur the line between public office and private profit. Trump steers events to his own properties, installs family and loyalists in key roles, and uses the presidency to reward allies and promote his businesses.

Glorification of the military & obsession with national security

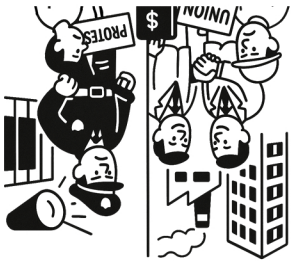
Authoritarians wrap themselves in uniforms while ignoring real needs. Trump has pushed for grand parades, pardoned war criminals, elevated TV pundits to key posts, and cut support for many military families.

Religion & government intertwined

Fascist movements use faith as a political weapon. Under Trump, Christian nationalism has gained power: "religious liberty" is invoked to justify anti-LGBTQ+ policies, and conservative religious leaders shape the courts and public policy.

Corporate power protected & labor power suppressed

When corporations always win, democracy weakens. Trump's tax law showers benefits on the wealthy, while his appointees make it harder to unionize and easier for employers to exploit and silence workers.



Obsession with crime & punishment

Fascist regimes demand harsher policing and prisons while ignoring root causes. Trump calls for "tougher" sentencing, defends police violence, and pushes to criminalize protesters.

Rampant sexism

Authoritarian politics rely on rigid gender roles and contempt for women's autonomy. Trump's record includes the "Access Hollywood" tape, many sexual assault allegations, and relentless attacks on reproductive rights and gender equality.

Disdain for intellectuals & the arts

Fascism feeds on anti-intellectualism. Trump mocks scientists and experts, sidelines public health guidance, threatens funding for critical art, and pushes propaganda over honest research and culture.

Controlled mass media

You don't always need formal censorship. Trump's constant cries of "fake news" and "enemy of the people," plus threats to licenses and mergers, work to bully journalists and trap supporters inside a closed media bubble.

Fraudulent elections

A classic fascist move is to attack trust in voting. After losing in 2020, Trump spread lies about "stolen" votes, pressured officials to "find" votes, filed baseless lawsuits, and incited Jan. 6 riots to try to overturn the result. Trump attacks the voter rolls, undermines voting by mail, and encourages destructive redistricting.

How We Fight Back

Fascism is not unstoppable. It depends on people like you looking away or giving up.

We push back when we tell the truth, join local groups, support journalism and public institutions, vote in every election, and organize so no one faces this alone. Authoritarians fear us standing together.

They want us isolated and afraid. Our power is in showing up together, again and again. We can do it.

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