

Democracy is in deep peril

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I am struggling to come to terms with the reality of Trump. I have to admit that. I thought I was ready for this, but I was not quite as prepared as I should have been.

The measures to end action on climate change were inevitable, if deeply regrettable.

The abuse of migrants had been promised and is detestable.

The lies and totally nonsensical claims are par for the Trump course.

The immediate withdrawal from the World Health Organisation was something I should have expected, but I did not.

But, of all the things he has done, this still surprises me the most:

Trump Grants Sweeping Clemency to All Jan. 6 Rioters

The extraordinary pardons and commutations extended to those who committed both violent and nonviolent crimes on Jan. 6, including assaulting police officers and seditious conspiracy.

That is from the [New York Times](#). Trump has excused those who used violence to stage a coup to overthrow democracy in the USA, as a result of which people died. And Trump has pardoned those who did that.

Michelle Obama and the wife of former Vice President Mike Pence refused to attend yesterday's inauguration because they believe Trump has threatened the safety of their families. I think they were right to make that symbolic protest.

Trump has done more than that, though. He has made clear in this action that he does not believe in democracy.

He has also made clear that he does not believe there will be a fair succession to him. He is sending out the signal that the age of the US Constitution is over. The pretence of democracy that it has delivered of late is no more. He has shown that he does not care for it. The succession should be, he thinks, in his gift, as of right.

I can do nothing to save the US from its fate.

Here in the UK, we still have something that claims to be democracy, but as every reader of this blog knows, it is profoundly flawed. Labour could, in the next four years, buttress it, reform it, make it truly representative, and provide within it the protection we need so that it is not captured by the far-right, as US democracy has been. It could do that. So far, it shows no willingness to do so.

The message I have this morning is a simple one. If Labour wants to prevent the far-right from doing here what Trump is doing in the USA then it has to deliver electoral reform. It is that straightforward. Anything less, and it is selling out to the far-right.

Democracy is in deep peril. We have to try to save it.