

Trump's assumptions don't stack - unless democracy is t...

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The [FT has a headline](#) this morning that says:

Trump vows to cut billions of dollars from US defence spending

President says 'fraud and abuse' at the Pentagon will be the next target of cost-cutting by Elon Musk

In principle, I have no problem with the US cutting its defence spending: the military-industrial complex has been a curse of modern times, as the late President and General Dwight D Eisenhower said it would be. There will, no doubt, be corruption and waste to be found there.

That, though, is not my reason for noting this. Instead, I note that this supposed cull - if it happens - is part of a trend that suggests that the Trump agenda is profoundly incoherent unless democracy is not at its core.

This programme hits the armed forces and defence workers, who are natural Republicans, and so Trump supporters.

The cuts to Federal budgets have done the same thing. The largest number of Federal workers are engaged in programmes to do with defence and veterans. These are popular with Republican voters.

And the almost total annihilation of the USAid budget will cut spending with US farmers - many in the most marginal areas where Republican support has traditionally been very high - by \$2 billion a year since much of the food aid supplied by USAid has been grown in the US mid-west.

In other words, much as the Republican voter thinks that they hate the Federal government, many of them either identify with or are dependent upon a great deal of what they do and would not wish it to disappear.

If Trump had been planning a programme to alienate his core support, he could not have come up with something more likely to do so than what he is doing. The impact may not be seen as yet because most of these actions have yet to have an impact on the ground. However, when they inevitably do hit hard - as they will - the MAGA are not going to be amused by the fact that Trump's programmes hit them hard. They will not appreciate the reminder that this will provide that they are just part of the problem of government dependency that they supposedly despise.

A normal politician would realise this.

A normal politician would probably not plan to make their own core supporters victims of their programmes (although Labour is, in the UK).

A normal politician would worry about the impact of all this on their prospects for re-election.

But then, Trump is not a normal politician. And he is not worried about re-election. He is, after all, engaged in running a coup, not a government. He can alienate who he likes. His assumption is that they will never have the means to fight back. Being re-elected is not on his agenda because elections aren't either.

This is the USA in 2025.