

What is Trump's grand plan?

Published: January 12, 2026, 9:53 pm

Trump appears random, haphazard and out of control. But that's not true. The Tech Bros who stand behind him have a plan – and that is to preserve their wealth by destroying the power of the governments that might oppose them.

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This is the transcript:

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I've been trying to work this out ever since Trump got into office in January because there must be a reason for the mayhem that he is creating. I simply do not believe that he arrived in the Oval Office without some sort of meta-narrative or explanation of what it is that he's trying to achieve. But, he certainly didn't lay that out in advance of becoming President, and he hasn't even now made it very clear since being in the White House.

So, I've had to stand back and have a think about this, and I've come up with one

explanation, which to me seems to tie together all the disparate themes that we are seeing with regard to his administration.

It's my opinion that Donald Trump is the willing agent for or representative of the 'Tech Bros', as we will call them.

That's Musk with X, or Twitter. That's Zuckerberg with Facebook.

And that's Jeff Bezos with Amazon – and, of course, he's also now a media mogul as well.

These people are terrified of one thing. That is having their power clipped.

Their power comes from their control of data - the data that they can collect from you and from me as a result of us using their services.

They know more about us in some ways than we know about ourselves.

They can predict our preferences.

They can direct advertising at us.

They can decide what our political preferences probably are.

They can decide when and where we might wish to go on holiday based on what we've looked at in terms of advertising.

And on and on, and on.

As a result, they believe they can help others to maximize their profit by exploiting us. And, let's be blunt, that's what I think they do, because I think that advertising is manipulative, and as a result, they want to maximize their power over that data because it is the source of their wealth.

This is why we saw those people lined up at the inauguration in the White House in a way that was unprecedented. Business had not previously been seen at such an event in that way before, and that was the signal that this is the administration of Big Tech. And Big Tech is really frightened of two things, both of which were represented by Joe Biden and both of which are represented by the European Union.

Those two things are the power to bust monopolies and the power to control data. The state has both those powers, and remember that if we go back into US history at around the turn of the 19th century into the 20th century, we had a not dissimilar situation of there being some oligarchs who basically controlled a great deal of the US economy.

They were, at the time, the railroad chiefs, and they were the chiefs of the iron and steel industries, plus some bankers, and between them, they pretty much had America sewn up and in their pockets until they came across President Teddy Roosevelt, who was in office in the first decade of the 20th century - in other words, just after 1900. And he used something called antitrust legislation to smash their power.

He brought 43 legal actions against these banks and railroads and iron and steel companies to require that they split up their operations so that the power of competition was restored, because these people had removed that power of competition by creating monopolies, which were extracting supernormal profits from the people of the USA in a way that was deeply manipulative and was going to continue to let them exploit those people forever unless action was taken.

And Teddy Roosevelt was the man who said, this is not the American way, and he succeeded using the antitrust legislation that he created then, plus legislation that was created in the 1930s after the Wall Street Crash, which provided a framework which ensured that America was at least an approximately competitive economy for nearly another century.

But now it isn't.

Nobody anticipated the power of the internet.

Nobody anticipated the ability of the tech world to collect data from us in the way that it has.

Nobody realised that when we went shopping, we might pass over our Club Card, or whatever it might be called in your supermarket, that will let that store know precisely what your shopping preferences are and so on.

And this is what the basis of valuation of the companies that the Tech Bros own really is, but which Biden was threatening using antitrust legislation. And, he was trying to control the power of data. They didn't want that. They saw that their immense wealth running to trillions could be challenged by this.

And there is one thing that the wealthy want above all else, and that is to remain wealthy. Nothing frightens them more than moving from being a trillionaire to only being a billionaire again. This is the sort of thing that gives them sleepless nights because status is everything to them. When you have enough money to do anything you want, and these people very clearly have that way beyond any requirement that they will ever have, then status is king and they want the status of being the rulers of the world, and Donald Trump has provided them with that opportunity.

So, what has happened is this. Musk as agent for Trump, or Trump as agent for Musk - with Musk also acting on behalf of the other Tech Bros, in effect - is trying to do a power

grab. Everything that he's doing is trying to claim for the DOGE, as he calls it - the Department of Government Efficiency - the control of the data of the US government.

He is trying to get his hands on social security data, IRS data, the data that is available with regard to veterans and armed services, and, of course, medicine, which is an immensely powerful source of information to the big pharma companies. And he and his colleagues no doubt want to claim this data, whether legally or illegally - and I don't think that really matters to them any more because as we can see, Trump is basically suspending the rule of law in the USA. He is trying to claim that data in a way that either he or he and the other big tech companies can licence in the future to those who want to use it, whether they be big pharma or even government itself.

And let's be clear what they think about government. They do not want to see the perpetuation of the federal government. To them, the federal government is the enemy because it was the federal government that brought the antitrust legislation. It was the federal government that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris wanted to use to stop their power. They want to devolve power from the federal government to the states of the USA, and we're seeing this with regard to education, where the Department of Education is being abolished.

We're seeing it with regard to the undermining of those things that are clearly federal responsibilities, like USAID, and even to some degree in foreign policy.

We are seeing it with regard to the devolution of Social Security powers to the states.

So we are seeing a destruction of the federal government because it is the power that could challenge their prosperity, and this also drives the foreign policy that Trump is doing.

Why is Trump pulling out of Ukraine? Because if he does, the EU is in a mess, in the opinion of those people who are heading the administration. We've seen this. We've seen JD Vance saying he hates the 'pathetic' Europeans and others, including the Secretary of State, appear to agree with him.

They are actually opposed to Europe, viscerally. They hate it. And what they're trying to do is create an imbalance inside Europe so that Europe has to turn to an internal focus so that it does not look at how it will control the operation of US tech companies in Europe, which is the goal that the Tech Bros have, and therefore they're willing to sacrifice Ukraine to Putin if necessary to achieve this goal of destabilising the power that is in Europe, which is the European Commission, which is the one agency that can threaten them outside the USA. This, I believe, is what explains what is going on.

There is a grand plan to Trump, after all, in my opinion. It's taken me weeks and a couple of months even to try to work out what it might be. But as a political economist, what I look at is how relationships of power are used to reallocate resources within

society.

What these tech people know is that data gives them power.

Their challenge is to preserve that power against the authorities that might have had the ability to challenge it - the federal government and the EU, and to claim more of the data that they can in the process so that they will actually reinforce their ability to earn in the future because they will licence information previously held by the federal government back to the states and to big pharma and to medicine and everyone else.

This, I think, is what they're about.

Always follow the money is the golden rule in political economy. These people believe they can make money by destroying the US federal government, and that's why they're trying to do it.