

## Facing fascism

Published: January 12, 2026, 8:41 pm

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We are just one working week into 2026, but it feels very much longer.

The US has invaded a country illegally and seized its president.

The rule of international law would, for all practical purposes, appear to have come to an end and, for all the faults in that system, that matters.

NATO looks to be life-expired, and whilst that might pave the way for something better, it is still significant.

The fates of Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba, Greenland and, maybe, Canada are all hanging in the balance of a madman who claims that the only constraint on him is his morality when most of us are struggling to think he has any.

A clearly innocent woman in Minneapolis has been shot dead in the street and, rather than condemn this, the US administration, and most especially the vice-president, have claimed that she was part of a national left-wing conspiracy to oppose the government, offering that as justification for her murder when no such justification is ever possible, legally or morally, in a country and a world where the right to hold contrary political opinion is supposedly upheld by the law.

In amongst all this, the UK provided facilities for the US to seize a Russian flagship in international waters off Scotland, and provided naval support to an act which looked very much like piracy. In political terms, this very clearly implies that our government supports the USA in the actions it is taking, making this an issue of domestic concern in the UK and of particular political concern in Scotland, from where the planes flew.

The list could go on, and on. My point, however, does not require me to continue it. Instead, the reason for noting all these things is to highlight that we are living in a world that is now very dangerous, out of control, and, frankly, frightening.

There is every reason to feel at risk as a consequence of what is happening. The history of fascism shows that those who support that ideology, which is best described as rule

by a few for their benefit at cost to the people they govern, have little or no regard for those who oppose their opinion, as they very clearly evidenced by killing Renee Good this week. There is no reason to presume that things will get better, or to think that what the US does now might not happen here in the not-too-distant future, given the normal patterns of transferred behaviour from that country to us that we have observed over many decades.

All this requires that I take time to think about what to do next, taking into account the risks that exist. That is what I propose to do today.

It will, quite soon, look like I am bird watching, and I will undoubtedly be out in the open, with a pair of binoculars around my neck, except when I might be having a coffee, but will I necessarily be able to avoid thoughts of a world that is very, very mad as a consequence of the actions of Donald Trump, which are now getting worse than anything I anticipated, this quickly, even though I entirely accurately described him as a fascist seeking to destroy democracy from time long before it became popular to do so?

I am not sure I will be able to avoid those thoughts, because we now have the reality of that prediction coming true to face.

How, then, do we live with a nagging fear of fascism, and the fact that our government, and so many other governments, and so few commentators, appear willing to call this fascism when its very obvious impact already exists all around us? That is the question I need to consider.

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