

The toxic politics of might and money

Published: January 17, 2026, 8:49 am

The Guardian [has noted this morning](#) that:

Donald Trump has appointed the US secretary of state, Marco Rubio, and former British prime minister Tony Blair to a newly created Gaza “board of peace”, a body he claims will steer the next phase of reconstruction and governance in the war-ravaged territory.

The White House said the seven-strong “founding executive board” will also include Trump’s special envoy, the property developer Steve Witkoff; the World Bank president, Ajay Banga; and the president’s son-in-law and long-time adviser Jared Kushner. Trump himself will serve as chair, with further appointments expected in the coming weeks.

It is very hard to know how to react to such an announcement. At one level, the temptation is to ask "Is he serious?" The disconnect between this suggestion and the reality, where Israel is continuing to attack Palestinians daily, assaulting the Gaza population in their homes, if they still have one, or their tents, more likely, is quite extraordinary. The level of fantasy implicit in what Trump has said seeks to defy any attempt to comprehend it.

Then there is the revulsion I feel. Not a single Palestinian has been appointed to this group. Not one. And every single one of those appointed must have known this. Despite that, they accepted this supposed office. The arrogance in their presumption of entitlement to exercise power over dispossessed people, whose plight they clearly intend to make worse, is on a scale that is very hard to contemplate, let alone understand. Perhaps I am naive, but I honestly thought that the colonial mindset was dying, albeit too slowly for my liking. This is a stark reminder of how wrong I can be, and am in this case.

The Zionism implicit in all the appointments is also telling. I am not and never will be anti-semitic. I can think of no reason or justification for ever being so. Noting that there is a form of toxic Zionist thought that is doing untold harm in the world, as is clear from this announcement, does not contradict that view. It confirms it. It is an opinion shared by many Jews, it would seem, who are repelled by the actions done by the current

Israeli government, which clearly does not represent all the residents of Israel, let alone the wider Jewish community, many of who are as appalled as I am by the genocide that has brought us to the point where this so-called "board of peace" can be appointed. Let's be clear what this form of toxic Zionism is: it is toxic, racist, and genocidal fascism that is seeking to "other" and destroy the Palestinian people and their right to live in what is their homeland. There is nothing more to it than that. It cannot be anti-semitic to point that out. It would be anti-semitic to suggest all Jews think this politics justifiable, or supportable, when clearly it is not, and many Jews share that view. My objection to what is happening is all about opposition to toxic Zionism, and has nothing to do with anyone being Jewish, but I know it will be claimed otherwise.

Then, there is the reaction to wait for. I dread Starmer welcoming this, but it can only be time before he does. After the vile treatment of the former Chief Constable of the West Midlands this week, who has been driven out for making a wholly justifiable operational decision in the interests of the wider community in Birmingham, albeit his presentation of the justification was imperfect, I am sure the announcement that the current government of this country supports this move cannot be long in coming. They will not be speaking for me. They will also, I suspect, not be speaking for many Labour supporters.

What to conclude? It seems that we now live in a world where fantasy has greater significance than reality, where real people are now reduced to being expendable objects in the power play of world leaders, and where respect for human rights has ceased, which fact is implicit in the creation of this entity, whose creation can only be justified in terms that deny those rights exist.

Perhaps, most tellingly, what this so-called board of peace represents is the acknowledgement that in the minds of those who think they govern, the right to speak in property and to accumulate profit from doing so is supreme. This board represents the clearest statement that, in the minds of neoliberal leaders, the right to profit from speculation now trumps (pun intended) everything else. To them, people simply do not matter. Their contempt for humanity knows no limits.

This is the politics of might and money gone mad.

No wonder I call for politics of care.

If you want evidence that we need it, this is it.