

On the brink of disaster

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It could be argued that I have said all that is necessary about my fear concerning the attack that Trump is threatening on Iran, but I am not sure that is the case because it is continuing to haunt me.

We now know that by the time we wake on Wednesday morning, this attack might have happened. Rarely have I felt so worried about anything. But what worries me most of all is the complete uncertainty of this situation. The likelihood is that Trump himself has, as yet, no idea what he will do on Tuesday night.

We can be fairly sure that those remaining in the US armed forces who are possessed of a conscience will be arguing against the use of nuclear weapons in Iran. They might also be arguing that an assault on civilian positions is not only completely illegal, but also poor military tactics, likely to give rise to a response that will escalate the war in unforeseeable fashion.

We can also be fairly sure that those receiving these messages, from Pete Hesgeth onwards, will be treating them with contempt, precisely because they are the voice of reason.

But in all this, the great unknown is what will Trump do? On that, we are clueless, and that is precisely why I am so worried. The literal fate of millions of people hangs in the balance, to be determined by a man seemingly without a moral compass and not possessed of rational decision-making power.

The question that arises in that case is, how did we reach this position? How was the body politic of the USA so degraded that this man could be chosen not once, but twice as US president, leaving him in the position to wreak havoc, seemingly with the goal of saving himself from the consequences of his prior actions, whether with regard to promoting insurrection in 2021, or whatever else might be exposed in the Epstein files, while simultaneously enriching himself, his family and his cronies?

Some of us could see what was happening in the run-up to the 2024 election. We

warned of fascism. We knew the calamity that would follow if Trump were elected. We said so. Some listened. Too many did not. Now we are facing disaster, including for those who voted for Trump, but at the same time for untold millions, and maybe billions, of others around the world who are the innocent victims of this collective failure by the people of the USA.

The fact is that what we are seeing is the consequence of a failed idea. That idea, of course, is the neoliberal agenda, which puts at its centre, [contrary to the teaching of Adam Smith](#), the belief that the individual pursuit of personal well-being will always deliver the greatest well-being for humankind as a whole. And now we know that is not true.

In that case, the question now is: can we move on from this failure, and are we capable of creating a politics of care as an alternative to neoliberalism, which has brought us to the brink of disaster?