

Its not about Trump – Its about The American D...elusion

People are saying a lot about Trump. He is the immediate problem but let's reject personality politics and not be mesmerised by him. Trump and other leaders, whether mainstream or other populists like Farage, Meloni or Milei, are only there because political movements put them there. Our job is to identify these movements and tackle them, not just talk about their front(w)men. They are conservative movements. They exist in most countries.

To identify the one that put Trump in, start with the people in his administration. Then the Republican members of Congress, the Republican activists who organise and fund their electoral campaigns, the Republican judges, the Republican National Committee, State Senators and State congress(w)men. The State Governors and Secretary's and Committees. The Republicans on electoral boards and school boards. The whole membership of the Republican party. Then there's the many ordinary people – like the seventy or more million Americans who voted for Trump and for those other office-holders.

To identify the whole conservative movement - Politically active members of the business class lead it and run the conservative media and think tanks. Then there's the corporations and other big business people using their wealth in politics. But importantly, the movement has a broad base of ideological support in many or most of the whole business class, people who run all sizes of business, all the way down to the small traders. And, with some of the best-qualified workers and some who aren't, from many ordinary citizens. In the UK, we call them 'working class Tories'.

To bind this support together as a body of conservative political opinion that they use to justify monstrous wealth inequality, the conservative movement in America uses 'the American Dream' – the claim that with free markets or 'capitalism', 'anyone can make it'. That everybody can operate independently and succeed by their own efforts. Most Americans believe in it. Conservative ideologues claim it is the essence of liberty. It can deliver at times, in enough work for most people and high enough wages. And that wins the support of many workers. It has people believing the conservative claim that the system is all about self-reliance', with a

whole cultural imagery of 'the rugged individual'.

But its not 'The American Dream', its 'The American Delusion'. (Though not really American - conservatives worldwide make the same claim. Its 'The Conservative Delusion'.')

Here is why it's a delusion - Conservatives talk a fantasy as if we can all be independent traders. But high-volume, industrial production of goods and services constantly drives out small. So 'the free market business system' develops, inevitably, to a small number of people, business people, running most production. Most economic activity isn't done by independent individuals but, with large workforces, highly collectively, with most people having to be workers (white collar included). People don't spot how it all being about the individual doesn't match how things actually work collectively. That's because there's an infinite gradation of business size from truly independent small traders up to the corporations and the multi-ownership billionaires and you can't easily see a crossover point. But it starts with even smaller businesses, when they employ people, however few.

With this small class, business people – the business class - running most of the

production of goods and services, most work is in working for them or for public bodies. In large workforces. And as just one worker in a large workforce, you have to trade your labour to them along with many others, each of whom they can easily do without, one at a time - 'There's the door if you don't like it.'

And so, while any one can achieve 'The American Dream' and 'make it' on their own, its just impossible for most to. Because the business class dominate everybody else in the key work process where they might do it, where most have to make their living.

And through the unequal job relationship, they get their wealth largely off everybody else's work.

They get political support from their whole class. Down to most small business people, or up from them, business rights are their core political belief. And support for conservative policies and parties. But they get wider acceptance beyond their class by presenting their wealth as fair reward for their own individual effort and skills. That gives vital moral and political cover to the business class's actually collective power. It masks how their power and wealth is actually gained through the collectivism of high-volume, industrial production of goods and services,

by the majority, as workers, in a very unequal power relationship with them.

This draws most people into passively endorsing the core conservative aim of economic freedom for business people. They just accept it as the system, without much thought. And the business class distract people's attention from their key role and power, and divide them, with various well-known alternative topics.

So most people's ability to achieve The American Dream depends on their weak power relationship with them, if not unionised. And they viciously oppose that.

Then, built into the idea of individual liberty, conservative movements say that everyone is only out for themselves, that self-interest is just how people naturally are. They justify brutality in the process of wealth creation and distribution with 'It's 'Sink or swim' and 'Survival of the fittest'. They use these anti-social ideas to justify harsh, unpatriotic behaviour towards fellow-citizens, the worker majority.

So, being treated brutally in making their living, workers need insurance against it from good government services. But conservatives claim caring about your fellow-country(w)men is socialism or communism.

Their political philosophy is not to care about them. And that small government means freedom.

But with small government we are left with this system of high-volume production, or 'industrialism', in unregulated 'free markets', run by these selfish uncaring people, with them in power instead of democratic institutions.

They are not all bad but the dominant, most politically active of them are. Over the last forty years, fronted by Reagan and Thatcher in the US and UK, they have consciously attacked the majority of people. The system, in their hands, won't deliver The American Dream.

So the majority suffer, but don't see all this. They are diverted onto minor issues, and divided amongst themselves. And so we get conservative governments, including populist pretend-alternatives led by frontmen like Trump, and the support for Farage. Even though their central, conservative policies, mainstream and populist, are against the interests of the great majority.

And, from not seeing that the business class dominate, whichever party is in government, some workers see progressive parties and politicians as no different to conservative

ones – ‘they’re all the same’. And, not having their needs met, just wanting blind ‘change’. Even though, as with the Republicans and Trump, and would be with Reform and Farage, it’s for the worse.

The Democrats in the USA, and Labour in the UK, go along with the conservative delusion that free markets, dominated by the business class, with the values just enumerated, can deliver for all. They try to not be as vicious as conservatives about how it works, and to try instead to insure citizens against its inadequacies.

To tackle the unfairness they offer ‘opportunity’. But that doesn’t improve things for the majority. It just means the outcome of who gets on in the system is fairer. We need to press the progressive parties to provide fairness for all, on the basic issue of economic power, by encouraging worker’s collective response to the business class’s collective power – widespread, universal unionisation.

In summary - our job as progressives is to show the worker majority how the Conservative Delusion is a delusion – to say, again and again, that conservatives and the business class get to dominate and abuse fellow-citizens not by individualism but from collectivising the non-business-class majority

***in mass production of goods and services.
And, as the solution, not to vote for their
parties and front(w)men like Trump but to
unionise and vote progressive to tackle them.***

***For more, read, from the website
www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org –***

***more memorably, simply www.uspol.org –
The Essential Us, Politics, The System, Class;
The Ten, Twenty and Thirty Minute Reads***

***(Ten and Twenty on the website, all three early
on in The Compact UsPol and the full UsPol);***

***The Compact Us, Politics, The System, Class;
The Right To Unionise;***

***and dip into the full Us, Politics, The System,
Class.***