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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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07.02.2025

Why the New Boss Could be Worse Than the Old Boss...by Being the Same Boss



Photograph Source: Mike Johnson – Public Domain

Last November, when DOGE remained a gleam in president-elect Donald Trump’s eye, its leader apparent promised, via a post to his favorite (because he owns it) social media platform, that “[a]ll actions of the Department of Government Efficiency will be posted online for maximum transparency.”

On February 3 that same man — Elon Musk, owner of X, formerly Twitter — revealed (in the same format and on the same platform) the emptiness of the promise: “With regard to leakers: if in doubt, they are out.”

Meanwhile, over on Capitol Hill, Senators grilled Tulsi Gabbard, Trump’s nominee for Director of National Intelligence, bulldozing her into a 180-degree turn from her former opposition to Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Act, which allows the US regime to nose around in American’s communications without warrants in the name of surveilling foreigners.

They also tried to get Gabbard to renounce her prior support for a presidential pardon of American hero Edward Snowden, driven into exile for blowing the whistle on the US regime's illegal surveillance schemes in 2013. Gabbard gave up less ground there, only going so far as to oppose FUTURE exposure of the regime's crimes while she might be involved in the commission of those crimes.

Kash Patel, Trump's nominee to direct the Federal Bureau of Investigation, also came out hard against a warrant requirement for Section 702 searches. Previously promoted as the solution to past administrations' use of the FBI as a cudgel against their political opponents, he made it clear he plans to pick up that cudgel and wield it at least as vigorously, if not more so.

As on many other issues, The Trump regime is already exposing itself as "new boss, same as (or maybe worse than) the old boss" on issues like government transparency, government surveillance, and government lawfare.

I find neither that, nor the excuses Trump's supporters trot out for it — he's "playing 6D chess" or "fighting fire with fire" or whatever — surprising.

While there are good reasons for actors both good and bad to consider Trump an especially dangerous politician, he is and always has been just a politician.

He spent 16 years running for president (starting with his failed bid for the Reform Party's 2000 nomination) before winning the first time.

Over that period, he transformed himself from a life-long, standard-issue progressive Democrat into a more theatric version of right-wing faux-populist Pat Buchanan.

Not because his core philosophical beliefs changed — there's really no evidence he ever had any core philosophical beliefs in the first place — but because he craved power.

When he gained power the first time, he used it for his own benefit and the benefit of his cronies, not for your benefit.

Now that he's gained power again, he's doing the same thing.

Just like every other president.

The unique danger of Trump is that million of Americans continue to believe, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that he's somehow different. That gives him a freer hand to act exactly like his predecessors ... only more so.

FEBRUARY 6, 2025

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