

What Do You Fear the Far Right Will Do That You Have Not Already Done?: The Thirty-Fifth Newsletter (2025)



Samar Abu Elouf (Palestine), *Mahmoud Ajjour, Aged Nine*, 2025.

Dear friends,

Greetings from the desk of **Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research**.

On 12 August, Samar Abu Elouf, who won the 2025 World Press Photo of the Year for the picture above, posted on her Instagram account that her son's close friend Sami Shukour had been killed while he 'went to look for flour to feed himself and his family'. Samar had taken Sami's graduation photographs just before the genocide began in October 2023. Sami's family owns one of the most famous companies in Palestine, which made halawa with tahini. 'Among the best in Gaza', Samar wrote. Sami, she added, 'was killed under a hail of bullets; the sound was very terrifying... We are not just numbers; each one of us is a story'.

We have now entered the last quarter of 2025, the days galloping rapidly toward another year. The image of being chased by horses is not idle, for these are not the wild horses whose beauty stuns the landscape of the meadow – these are the horses of the apocalypse. Everywhere we turn, there is the sniff of the **far right** of a special type at the gates of power, its leaders riding their horses at full sprint. None of these leaders have a programme to solve our crises; rather, they throw an accelerant onto them, stoking the fires of hell to burn faster and hotter. They deny the existence of climate change and the importance of human dignity. They want to deepen austerity and encourage war. They promote irrationality and social suffocation.

Across the world, people of conscience are appalled by the rise of this far right and its appeal to large sections of our societies. At Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, we have studied the growth of this far right. We have examined how its political base is rooted in the atomisation of society, in the growth of institutions and other groups that favour their political orientation – such as new forms of religious fellowship and off-the-books economies – and in the collapse of class organisations in working-class and peasant communities. Part of our conclusion is that the political collapse of social democrats and liberals through their adoption of neoliberal austerity policies has created the conditions for the mass base of the far right. Without an acknowledgment of this fact, and without a renewal of their pre-neoliberal agenda, we cannot expect the social democrats and liberals to be significant allies in the fight against the far right of a special type.

Struck by the failure of the social democrats and liberals across the globe to conduct this kind of renewal, and by the failure of liberals in the Global North particularly to stop their support for the Israeli genocide against the Palestinians, I have written a 'letter', which I share below, to those who remain committed to these social forces. It is addressed to social democrats and liberals, to people who sit in parties named with words that they demean – Labour (in the United Kingdom), Green (in Germany), Democratic (in the United States), and Liberal (in Japan).



Lobsang Durney (Chile), *Brexit Consequences*, 2019.

You have surrendered whatever limited ‘neutral’ function the state had in the class struggle between capitalists and workers. The oligarchy now runs the state, with regulations set to a minimum and worker rights set to near zero.

You have watched as the oligarchy has set fire to society, breaking up the old factories, sending the machines to countries where labour is cheaper, and making money off the factory land through speculation. There are no jobs left in the wasteland, only servile jobs to tend to the whims of the oligarchy and uberised jobs to provide mediocre quality services to each other.

You have urged the compromised state to cut taxes and reduce its social services at the same time as unemployment and poverty have increased. Old liberal ideas of helping the less fortunate have dissolved in the acid of individualism and personal ambition, the money that used to be spent on social welfare now vaporised

into the financial markets for the oligarchs' race to become the first trillionaire. What would have been recycled through the tax system is now mired in the casino-like money markets, the whoops and razzle of the monied concealing the howls of the poor.



Anurendra Jegadeva (Malaysia), *On the Way to the Airport*, 2017.

You have encouraged the state to build up its diabolical attachment to arms merchants and their wares. Weapons eat the commitments to society, breaking whatever bonds had been promised by the modern state to its citizens. There are families on the streets begging for food, and then high above them in the boardrooms there are ugly deals being made with the people's money and the weapons companies. The values of a people are not in their constitutions – which have been hollowed out – but in their budgets, which are so heavily biased toward weapons that there is almost nothing left for social welfare.

You have allowed for the growth of a culture of cruelty, monstrous behaviour by the police against citizens, by angry men against women, by the hound of starvation against the cry of the hungry belly. All of this is now normal – the nature of modern civilisation. You have encouraged it. You have authorised it. You have hidden behind your social attitudes, your liberalism toward this or that social behaviour, your occasional appearance at a Pride Parade or at an International Women's Day stroll, but you care nothing for the gay man who is dying of HIV/AIDS and cannot access drugs, or the woman who has no shelter to go to with her children when her home has become unbearable.



Dana Al Rashid (Kuwait), *On the Demolition of al-Sawaber*, 2020.

Your liberalism has collapsed. There are no liberal philosophers who are not merely analytical, their moral

compass trapped in an academic argument that has little relevance to this world. Your thinkers are made for television, the foundation on their face designed to prevent the light from shining on them but also to prevent the light of reason from coming out of their mouths. Your liberalism is advertising, not philosophy.

Classical fascist culture was a dead culture. It was a culture of fake glory and genuine violence. It made a genuine break from the liberal culture that preceded it, and a break from the culture of the working class and the peasantry that had grown stronger through decades of struggle and institution building. The culture of the far right of a special type, on the other hand, is a refraction of neoliberal culture. It has no culture of its own but is a replica, a broken mirror of neoliberal fantasies and desires, an inflation of desire. Trump is not Hitler, but the host of *The Celebrity Apprentice*, the tag line being, 'You're fired!'

The Global North, the epicentre of the far right of a special type, is marinated in decadence and danger. There is no new philosophy emanating from it. It has no intellectuals who lead it, not even of the type of Nazi intellectuals such as Ernst Krieck, Martin Heidegger, or Carl Schmitt. It is dangerous because it commands a military that has the capacity to destroy the world: close to 80% of world **military spending** is done by the Global North and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, with the United States in possession of over 900 military bases, including many on European soil.



Francisco Vidal Jr. (Angola), *Untitled*, 1996.

Leadership from the Global North's liberals and social democrats is a false hope. We must seek leadership

from ourselves, from our own traditions and our movements. We fight to bring vitality back to our cultures, to deepen our own theories and philosophies, to seek references amongst our own thinkers. This is a deeper struggle than an electoral one alone. We must build our confidence to reject the vain national glory and the borrowed clothes that come to us from the tarnished liberalism of the Global North. The far right is terrifying, but it is only a twist in the dial more terrible than the technocratic liberals and warmongering Greens who would prefer to spend more money on militaries and debt payments than on the needs of humanity.

Warmly,

Vijay