

NEED FOR SPEED

Political Disruptors and Disrupted Politics

In recent years, the term “disruption” has become ubiquitous in the political lexicon. Originally popularized in the business world by Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen’s [theory of disruptive innovation](#), it has now penetrated the realm of modern politics. Every significant industrial revolution has been a form of disruption, and political systems have inevitably felt the impact. As new economic and social realities emerge, so do new political classes and movements eager to address the challenges and opportunities presented by these upheavals. If we truly live in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we should not be surprised that disruption has eventually reached politics as well.

Originally associated with innovative startups revolutionizing industries, disruption has come to symbolize a broader societal transformation impacting various domains, including the economy, art, technology, and now politics. In this context, disruption refers to the willingness and ability to challenge established norms, break away from tra-

ditional practices, and create significant change. This concept has gained traction as political landscapes around the globe undergo transformative shifts, often driven by leaders who position themselves as outsiders determined to upend the status quo.

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Disruptor-in-Chief

The administration of Donald Trump is one of the most prominent examples of political disruption in



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recent history. Trump, a businessman with no prior political experience, campaigned on a platform of dismantling the existing political order and implementing radical change. His slogan, “Make America Great Again,” resonated with many voters who felt disillusioned by traditional political processes and were eager for a departure from conventional leadership.

Based on previous White House and business experience, Trump seems to strongly believe that governing institutions in their current forms are not only ineffective but dangerous for the successful implementation of his agenda due to their high penetration by cadres with woke, DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion), and progressive mindsets. Therefore, in his conviction, executive agencies need a fundamental overhaul, not only structurally but also in terms of personnel.

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At first glance, it is evident that Trump’s nominations for senior roles consist of individuals with a clear agenda and the capability to act as disruptors. Simultaneously, economic disruptors who have transitioned into political influencers, like Elon Musk and others, are being granted access to government institutions through the creation of an ad hoc agency called the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Essentially, many of Trump’s key appointments resemble “wrecking balls,” individuals with the mission to disrupt existing institutions. This phase of [disruption is intended](#) to be followed by a second phase focused on rebuilding.

Is There an Agenda Behind Disruption?

Disruption, while often unsettling, can also be a catalyst for positive change. The key lies in whether or not the disruptors have a coherent vision and strategy that extends beyond the initial shockwaves. Sustainable transformation requires a clear understanding of end goals and the pathways to achieve them. In politics, this means crafting policies that not only challenge outdated systems but also build resilient structures capable of addressing the complexities of the modern world.

So far, external observers—domestic or international, comprising politicians, experts, or media—are greatly confused and disturbed, unable to discern a comprehensive agenda in the actions of the new administration. Everyone is either trying to guess or play a catch-up game.

In the pre-election period, much of the media and political punditry were fixated on the Heritage Foundation, likely due to its significant influence during Trump’s first presidency and its notorious [“Project 2025”](#). This project aimed to shape the future of American governance with a bold conservative agenda. However, while the spotlight shone brightly on the Heritage Foundation, another influential player was quietly working behind the scenes. The America First Policy Institute, operating with little fanfare, [meticulously studied](#), examined, and mapped the lessons of previous administrations. They scrutinized publicly available budgets, policies, and the leadership of various federal agencies, crafting a concrete plan of action for the incoming administration. This comprehensive approach was designed to ensure that disruption would not just be a fleeting phenomenon but would lead to sustainable and effective governance.

However, the question remains: Can these ambitious plans withstand Trump's impulsive nature and translate into coherent, effective, and productive policies? Trump's leadership style's inherent unpredictability poses a significant challenge to any structured and strategic approach.

New World Disorder?

Disrupting the Globe: Turbulence is felt not only inside the US but around the world as well. Friends and foes alike are on high alert. It appears we are witnessing, if not the emergence of a new world order, at least the destruction of the previous one.

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The instruments of US foreign policy—whether the Department of State, Department of Defense, or USAID—are undergoing profound changes. The activities of USAID, in particular, are not only paralyzed, but the whole institution may disappear altogether by merging with the Department of State. Even just halting USAID programs for 90 days will surely entail disruption, not only to the somewhat stable lives of its employees and contractors but also to millions of people on the recipient side.

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New Tariff Wars, which might (or not) start with Mexico, Canada, and the EU, have prompted discussions about whether the three should convene

a Summit to counter US steps. Negative EU outcry over the Greenland-related rhetoric and suspicions over whether the US is planning to mistreat its closest allies also contribute to the disruption of the existing world order, in which the West stuck together.

The United States' international reputation is facing serious challenges. Its rivals now see a shift from weakness to excessive force, yet, ironically, this has unsettled allies more than enemies. However, a quick glance at already taken actions reveals signs about Trump's foreign policy priorities and tactics.

China Challenge: Harassing allies seems to have a not-so-hidden agenda or primary target—China. It was clear from the beginning that the reason for pressuring Canada and Mexico on tariffs was China's undeclared “fentanyl war” (named after the Opium War) and the illegal immigration problem. The [avoidance](#) of declared 25% tariffs in both cases was possible due to preliminary agreements on boosting border security by various means to prevent the smuggling of fentanyl and illegal immigrants—not goods or services.

The same is true of Panama, where the main target was also China's increasing economic influence. Even in the case of Greenland, China's shadow is highly visible—Greenland represents an alternative source of rare metals (China is currently the largest supplier of these) and is crucial in the emerging competition for Arctic navigation. From this perspective, it should not be surprising that Trump recently linked the rare earth issue with ending the war in Ukraine.

Non-State Solution: The contours of a possible Middle East policy have started to emerge. It is interesting that the “global aid blackout” [excluded](#) Israel and Egypt while the US withdrew from financing the UNRWA (UN's Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East). During a press conference following his meeting

with Netanyahu, Trump's vision for resolving the Palestinian issue took a surprising turn—[resettling](#) the Gaza population in other (presumably Muslim) countries and taking the troubled enclave under some form of US protectorate. The issue of Palestinian refugees has long been exploited by various actors as a gateway into the region for their own not-so-benign interests, leading only to further radicalization and misery among Palestinian Arabs. If this issue finds a permanent resolution, the Middle East could undergo drastic changes. Several statements from Trump himself already indicate that Iran is next in line, although this issue will require further consultations with Arab countries—not a good news for Iran's current government.

“War and Peace”: The self-imposed short deadline to stop war in Ukraine remains one of the most closely watched aspects of Trump's foreign policy promises. So far, there has been more speculation and theorizing—ranging from “gloomy and doomy” to “impossible and prolonged”—than concentrated efforts in this direction. Meanwhile, various statements, interviews, and “leaked” information from the Russian side increasingly resemble ritual dances before an uncertain and unpredictable confrontation with Trump. At the same time, China and India have [drastically reduced](#) their procurement of Russian oil and grain—both significant sources of income for the heavily sanctioned and isolated country which is desperate for cash and technology to continue its war of attrition. Trump, for his part, is dangling the possibility of dialogue in front of Putin—something Russia greatly desires—but without setting a concrete date or engaging in serious preparatory discussions. Contrary to the fears of Ukraine's supporters and the dashed hopes of Russia, military equipment and ammunition [continue to flow](#) from the US to Kyiv. So far, Ukraine's position is neither “under the bus” nor “under the rug” and actually exhibits signs of preparing Russia for a bitter pill to swallow.

If there is a coherent policy behind these actions, even if the methodology is controversial, then in

the best-case scenario (which might actually be a realistic one), shaking allies while targeting enemies could be part of a greater plan—one in which the primary adversary is clearly China and its “minions,” including Russia, North Korea, Iran, and others.

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So far, too little time has passed to determine whether or not we are witnessing a new world order and what shape it might take. What is clear, however, is that the previous “order” was unsustainable, and a US-led global disruption is in full swing. Yes, these actions have already yielded quick results, but their mid- and long-term consequences remain unpredictable. Key questions include how sustainable these results will be and what unintended consequences may arise. It is evident that Trump is not shying away from irritating allies while keeping enemies in target—thereby weeding out the tools that adversaries might use to undermine his forthcoming actions against them.

From Trump to Georgia: a Generation of Disruptors

Just as globalization touched most of the world's population and countries (with very few exceptions, like North Korea), political disruption is likely to have the same effect. Like technological innovations that disrupt the status quo, while outdated and doomed industries desperately try to cling to old ways, today's Georgia is undergoing a similar transformation.

The incumbent (and highly illegitimate) Georgian Dream regime is essentially trying to swim against the current, dragging the country and its population back to a feudal era while the younger gen-

eration aspires to embrace the fruits of the 21st century. A colleague and friend, a seasoned Georgian politician from the early days of Georgia's independence, shared an interesting observation from the ongoing massive and continuous rallies in Georgia. He recalled the faces, outfits, behavior, and vocabulary of protesters from our time and found a staggering difference between them and today's protesters.

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While Trump builds a team of individual disruptors around himself, in Georgia, we are witnessing a whole generation of disruptors taking to the streets, united by the idea of transformative change, demanding justice, democracy, and Georgia's Western path. This new generation is delightful, colorful, articulate, and cheerful, unburdened by years of Soviet subjugation. They do not understand nor tolerate an imposed oppressive oligarchic regime. They cherish their freedom of choice and consider themselves part of the West, showing fundamental incompatibility with a totalitarian style of governance.

The current Georgian political regime, ostracized by the West, is blatantly lying to its remaining supporters and the general population by trying to portray itself as an ideological ally of Trump. In reality, they naturally gravitate toward and embrace Chinese, Iranian, and Russian regimes, essentially dragging Georgia into the influence sphere of Trump's declared foes. If some countries, like Belarus or Azerbaijan, can sustain their development models for a while, Georgia cannot.

Unlike Belarus, Georgians have already tasted many of the fruits of democracy and do not want to live under an authoritarian and oppressive regime. Unlike Azerbaijan, Georgia has no oil or gas to achieve economic stability without external investment. Neither does Georgia have enough military might to restore territorial integrity through force. More oppression is not going to make Georgia stable or Georgians obedient.

Political disruption, including in Georgia, is an irreversible trajectory, and attempts by outdated political regimes to remain in power through oppression will eventually lead to a popular revolution. If the Trump administration pays closer and timely attention to places like Georgia, regime change will happen sooner and bloodlessly. Otherwise, the Georgian regime is doomed to face a horrible end for creating endless horror ■