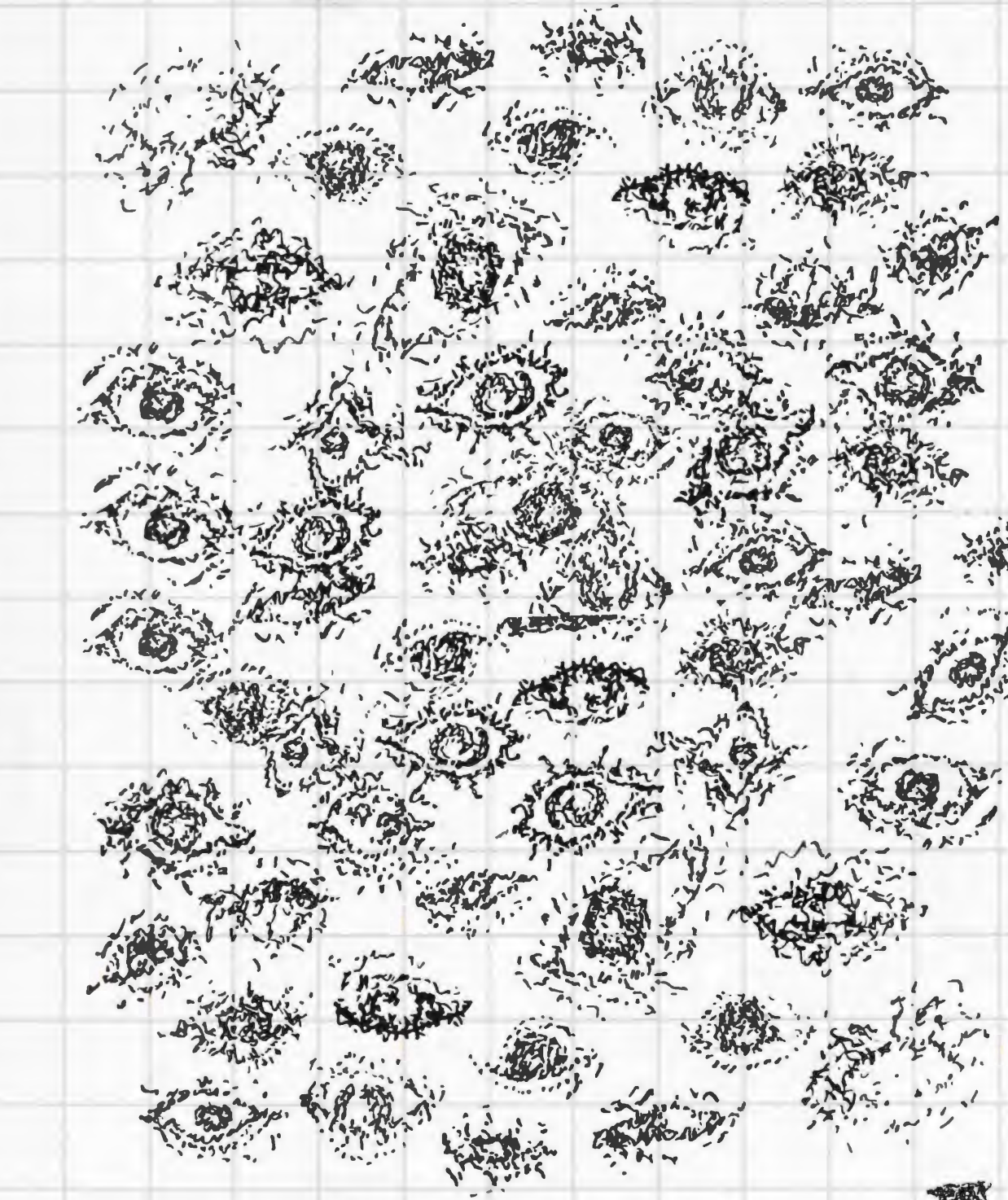
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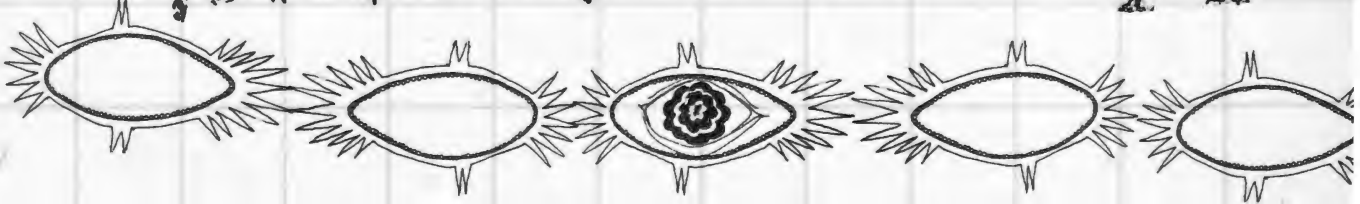
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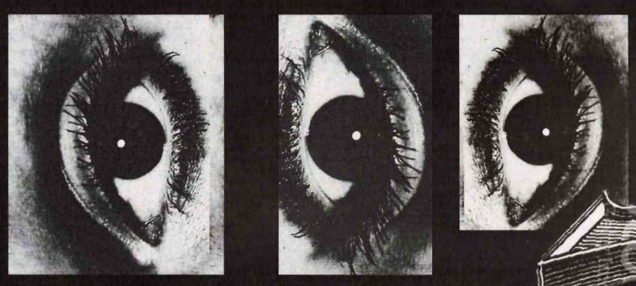
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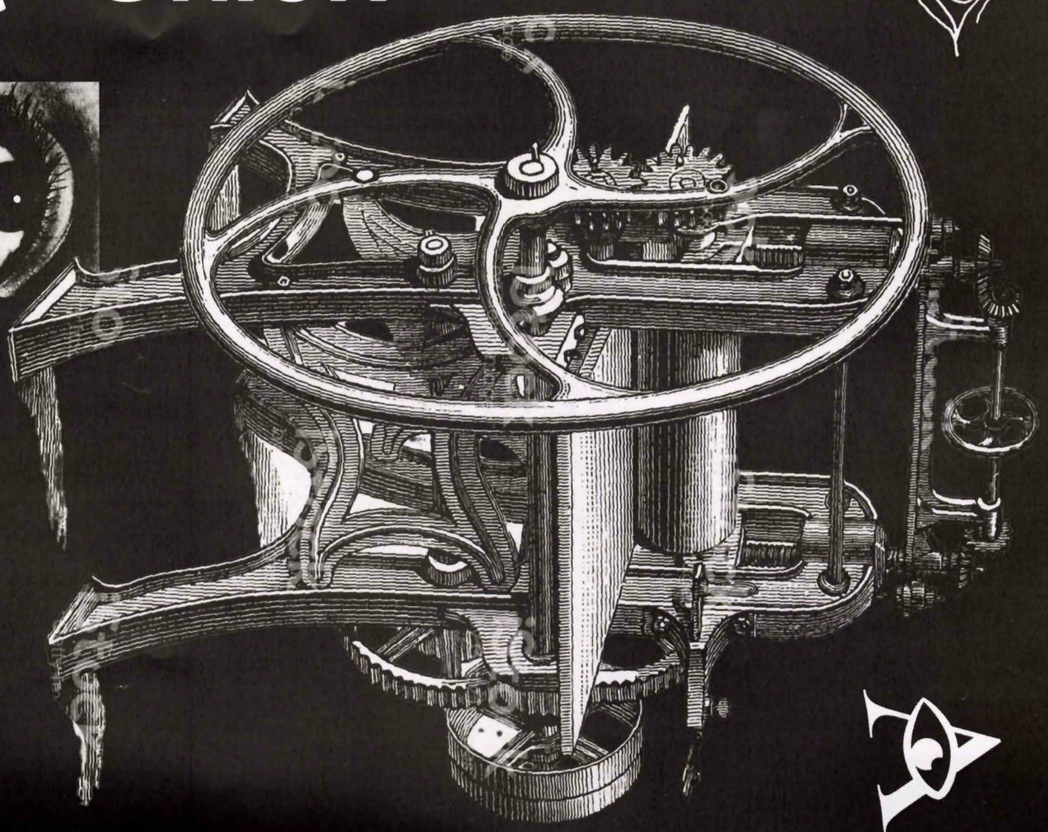


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inside:

Trump
oil
Fascism
OSAP Milk
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Leadership
Propaganda

Letter from the Editor

In 2022, a rather clueless boy -- armed with little more than an earnest desire to write -- sent a somewhat desperate email to Nicole Pocion, then Editor-in-Chief of The Argus. That this tentative outreach would culminate, four years later, in him occupying this very position feels, even now, faintly improbable.

And yet, here we are.

Twenty days shy of leaving Lakehead University for good, I find myself writing this letter to our readers and to my staff. Perhaps this is a farewell. Perhaps a self-eulogy. Or perhaps it is simply an overdue acknowledgement of a chapter that has meant more than I ever anticipated.

The theme of this issue -- fascism on the rise -- first emerged, almost in passing, during one of our staff rendezvous in the modest confines of our office, tucked away in the bowels of the school. At the time, it carried a certain abstract weight. In retrospect, what felt like a timely theme has revealed itself to be something closer to a necessary one.

Some of the articles you will encounter in these pages are not new. They belong to moments that have, in the relentless churn of time, already receded into the background. Read them anyway. Read them again. They are stories you have already heard, no doubt. And yet, I would urge you to resist the instinct to dismiss them on that basis alone. For what they capture is not merely the event, but the outline of a worrying pattern.

What we are witnessing is no anomaly, but a rehearsed repetition of history. When such tumultuous tides of violence begin to crash closer to our own shores, it becomes our responsibility to pay attention and to stand up, in whatever way we can.

In this sense, The Argus is more than a simple collection of articles. At its best, it is an insistence on attention. It is imperfect, as all such institutions are, but it matters. It really does.

That is what makes it so difficult to leave. As my time here draws to a close, I find myself wishing for just a little more of it. Another year in that office. Another coffee run with my staff. Another chance to be part of something that, in its own small way, matters.

To my endlessly brilliant staff, thank you. For your work, your wit, and your boundless competence. A year with you has been nowhere near enough, but it has been, without question, the most rewarding part of this journey.
And finally, thank you, dear readers. The Argus has been watching, and it will continue to do so for years to come.
Happy reading, Lakehead.

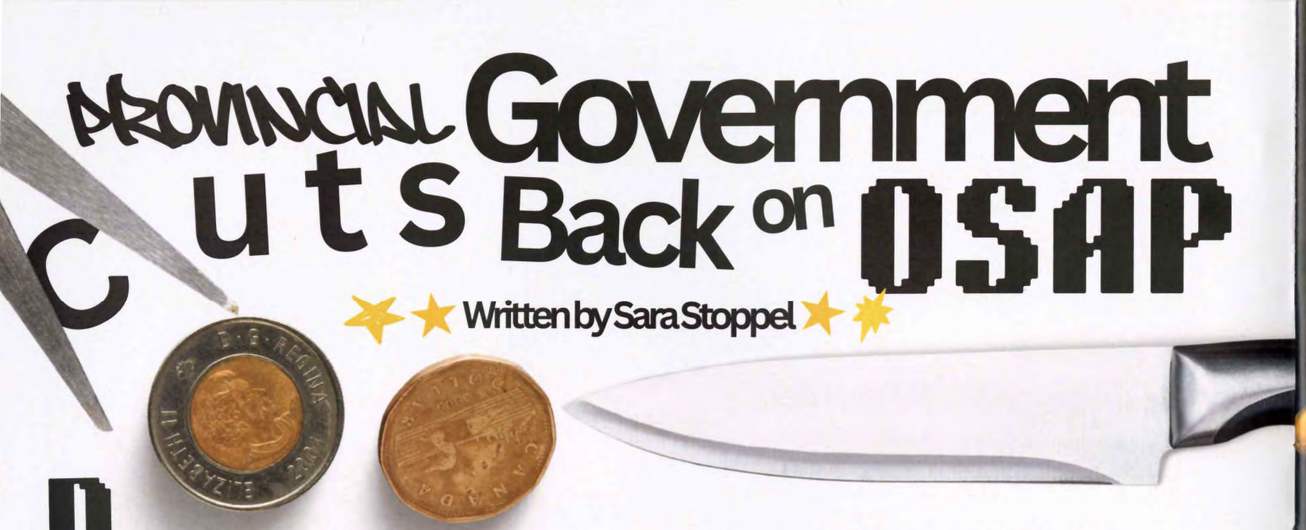
Armaan Basheer, Editor-in-Chief
THE ARGUS

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Provincial Government Cuts Back on OSAP

Written by Sara Stoppel



Doug Ford's conservative government announced changes to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) beginning this fall, altering the model from a maximum of 85 per cent grants and up to 25 per cent loans to a minimum of 75 per cent loans and 25 per cent grants. The new model has also rescinded the cap on tuition, now permitting universities and colleges to annually increase tuition by 2 per cent for the next three years.

"The federal government's decision to remove grant eligibility from students at private career colleges, coupled with increased program uptake in recent years, has put billions of dollars of pressure on the OSAP," says Kevin Holland, Thunder Bay Atikokan conservative MPP. "To restore sustainability to OSAP and ensure its availability for future generations, our government is aligning our student financial support framework with other jurisdictions across Canada," According to Holland, students will still be able to receive funding through an "enhanced" Student Access Guarantee and other financial assistance institutions. However, he did not specify what the changes to these structures would look like.

Holland offered no comment on the criticism directed at the decision.

Students are not convinced that these are positive changes. Those who rely on OSAP are concerned that this decision might discourage people from accessing higher education and significantly impact students in the long run.

"Education is meant to be the great equalizer where people, no matter what circumstances they come from, have a chance to learn and grow and work hard to be thoughtful, well-rounded citizens," says Lise Vaugeois, Thunder Bay-Superior North NDP MPP. Vaugeois is shocked at the government's decision to cut back on education spending. She says that Ontario has the lowest educational spending out of the provinces.

"We don't collect taxes to build luxury spas or to rip down the science center and build a smaller one so he can sell the land off to a developer," says Vaugeois. "We pay taxes to look after each other and to make sure the next generation is able to get on its feet."



They Don't Care About Your Rights, Your Transit, or Your Wallet

By Faisal Al-Saati

Orillia has become a city of asphalt, municipal spreadsheets, and car-centric indifference. Anything that exists outside the realm of the private vehicle has been publicly sidelined, ignored, or starved out of existence. This is the predictable result of a stagnation of urban imagination. We, as a municipality, have become thoroughly uncreative in the realms of transit, infrastructure, and community management. We are governed by those who view the movement of people as a line-item expense rather than a human right. To move forward, we must change this car-dependent framework and demand a city built for the common resident. This means a new system of mobility; this means sidewalks that are actually traversable; this means a city that respects the students who fuel its economy.

The recent "modifications" to Orillia's transit system, which saw 25 bus stops purged from the map on February 1st, are jagged thorns in the side of this community. We are starving the very people who make this city productive: the workers, the seniors, and the students. The municipal government hides behind the sterile language of "efficiency," but this brand of efficiency has proven only to work for those who can afford the rising costs of vehicle ownership. I ask, what resident, what worker, or what vision do these cuts represent? The platform of the city has been nothing but the allocation of service reductions and the creation of new barriers to movement.

It is because our leadership has committed to existing within a framework where the car is the only option, and therefore, they can only imagine solutions that fit within the narrow lanes of a parking lot. But this administrative violence does not stop at the city limits; it affects our new city and our new campus, Barrie.

Barrie's Bill 110, passed this past October, is the ultimate example of this neo-liberal agenda. By prohibiting the erection of temporary structures and criminalizing "fouling," the city has effectively outlawed the act of survival. To share food without a permit or to seek shelter in a tent is now a criminal offence carrying a $5,000 fine. Which isn't governance; rather, it is the weaponization of bylaws to ensure that the unhoused and the precarious are pushed out of sight to protect the "image" of the wealthy core. It is a disgusting categorization of our neighbours as "nuisances" rather than human beings. Barrie exists as a "dual city", meaning while Barrie has the third-highest household income in the nation, it masks a precarious underclass.



While the median homeowner brings in six figures, the median renter survives on half that. This gap is widened by the "commuter belt" dynamic, where wealth flows in from the GTA but the benefits are hoarded by property owners, leaving local workers and renters to drown in a sea of skyrocketing costs. For students, this reality is more daunting than ever. As Lakehead students navigate the corridor between the Orillia and Barrie campuses, they are met with a consistent message: Your presence is only tolerated if it is profitable. The "new campus" in Barrie was marketed as an opportunity, yet the legislative environment suggests a trap. Student renters, who commonly rely on informal economies or community support, are the primary targets of these "nuisance" laws.

When a student cannot afford the 30% or more of their income demanded by the rental market, and when the transit systems in Orillia fail them, they are left with nowhere to go. By criminalizing the very survival strategies that poverty necessitates, these cities are telling their student populations that their intelligence and labour are welcome, but their struggle is an eyesore.



This is a quiet war fought with fines and evictions. It is the result of a Protestant ethic that views property ownership as a moral virtue and poverty as a failing of character. But we must ask: Who is governing the institutions that fix the price of housing or the systems that starve our transit? The government will gladly control the student who shares a meal, but not the systems that cause the hunger.

As the administrative war expands from the snow-clogged sidewalks of Orillia to the "Dual City" of Barrie, the common Ontarian and the common student must realize that our only capital is one another. A new and dangerous reality is setting in. It is not just in Simcoe County that students must contend with, but a calculated, multi-pronged assault on their financial survival. While the headlines focus on the gutting of the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP), the truth is more sinister: the provincial government and a handful of corporate giants have formed a pincer movement designed to transform a generation into a permanent debtor class.

The recent overhaul of OSAP, effective for the Fall 2026 semester, is a masterpiece of bureaucratic cruelty. By flipping the grant-to-loan ratio, forcing students to take 75% of their aid as repayable debt, the province has effectively ended the era of accessible education for the working class. This is paired with the lifting of the seven-year tuition freeze and the introduction of Bill 33, which threatens to make ancillary fees optional. While "choice" sounds like a neoliberal virtue, in practice, it destabilizes the very student unions that provide food banks, mental health support, and legal advocacy, the last line of defence against institutional neglect.

We are being systematically stripped of our safety nets under the guise of "fiscal responsibility," while those at the top harvest the surplus of our desperation. The government's inaction is just as lethal as its policy. While students are being buried in future debt, they are being gouged in the present by a corporate oligopoly that views their basic needs as profit centers. The "Sunshine City" and Barrie have become playgrounds for corporate greed, where the price of existing as a student has been artificially inflated. As Canada's Food Price Report 2026 predicts another $1,000 annual increase in grocery costs, companies like Loblaws and Metro continue to report robust profits. For a student in a basement apartment in Barrie, the "choice" isn't between brands; it's between a textbook and a week of protein.



The Rental Goldmine: In Barrie's "dual city" economy, developers and corporate landlords have leveraged the housing crisis to extract maximum value from precarious renters. By focusing on high-end "luxury" units and ignoring the need for affordable student housing, they have created a market where 30% or more of a student's income vanishes before they even step onto campus.

Even as tuition was "frozen," institutions found ways to gouge through mandatory non-tuition fees. Now, with the government's blessing, these costs are set to rise, ensuring that every service, from the gym to the library, is a potential site for extra extraction. This is not a series of unfortunate economic accidents; it is a system functioning exactly as intended. The province provides the legislative cover by cutting aid and allowing fee hikes, while corporations move in to harvest what little capital students have left. We are being governed by a class that values the "image" of a prosperous, car-dependent city over the survival of the people who live within it.

The message to the common student is clear: your potential is a commodity, and your debt is their dividend. Until we unite to uproot this neoliberal framework and refuse to be socialized into the norms that seek to destroy us, the "Sunshine City" and the current academic industrial complex are not working for you.

A CLEAN Future For Canada

By Eriel Struach

February 26 2026

Canada has invested in over 500 major natural resources industry projects that are presently under construction, or planned to commence between 2024 and 2034. These projects are classified as belonging to the energy, mining, or forest sector. In Ontario, the three largest (i.e., most expensive) planned projects surround nuclear energy development. The Nuclear Waste Management Organization's Deep Geological Repository sits at the top (~$26B), and is intended for the long-term management of nuclear fuel. Two nuclear refurbishment projects at the Bruce and Darlington plants are runners-up at an expected ~13B and ~12.8B, respectively. Nuclear refurbishment refers to replacing core reactor components to extend plant longevity by 30 years. While Bruce's major component replacement is expected to continue until 2033, Darlington's was completed earlier this month, "ahead of schedule and under budget".

It is clear, looking at Canada's current major industry projects, that the government is placing an emphasis on its investment in "clean technology". As of 2024, 215 projects valued at a total of $194.2B were active. While, in theory, this sounds high, it's worth noting that from 2023-24, more clean technology projects were cancelled or removed (30) than completed (28), and nearly as many were suspended or placed on hold (27). That is... not a promising ratio.



The easiest way to discuss clean technology in Canada is to define it. Not so surprisingly, the world at large does not have a single, all-encompassing definition for what constitutes clean technology. Cambridge Dictionary defines it as "technology that makes it possible to reduce or avoid harm to the environment".

Circling back to Ontario's major investments, some consider nuclear energy to be clean and sustainable. Specifically, nuclear energy is said to protect air quality, not require a lot of land, and produce "minimal waste". Contestors of this view argue that, as it is not renewable or pollution-free, it should not be considered clean. Alongside this, there is controversy surrounding the safety and efficiency of nuclear energy, with the major Fukushima power plant disaster often cited as a recent example of what can go wrong. Whether nuclear energy is safer and more efficient than other alternative (i.e., not fossil fuel-based) energy sources is a contentious debate, with a variety of researchers advocating for opposing sides.



One thing that was not immediately clear to me is what the Canadian government actually defines clean technology to be. After what seemed like a bit more deep diving than should have been required to answer to my seemingly simple question, I found that at a federal level, clean technologies are defined as:

1. Any good or service designed with the primary purpose of contributing to remediating or preventing any type of environmental damage
2. Any good or service that is less polluting or more resource-efficient than equivalent normal products which furnish a similar utility. Their primary use, however, is not one of environmental protection.

It can be argued that this rather ambiguous definition provides innovators with the freedom to explore unique ideas while still meeting the eligibility criteria for a variety of funding opportunities. However, it could also be said that it encourages federal investment into a multitude of projects labelled as clean technology, which may not meet stricter definitions. The term "less polluting" alone implies that the bar to receive funding for your "clean project" is quite low. Unfortunately, industrial initiatives are not exempt from greenwashing.

The major projects inventory refers to clean technology projects as "largely renewable electricity" or "non-emitting energy projects", citing "hydro, wind, solar, biomass, tidal, and geothermal" as examples of the former, and "nuclear, biofuels, and carbon capture and storage" for the latter.

One specific example of a large (~$16B) project listed as clean technology is the Site C hydroelectric dam in northeastern British Columbia. Site C began generating power in 2024, after several years of setbacks and controversy, largely related to its impacts on the surrounding environment and geotechnical issues.

It seems as though perhaps "contributing to remediating or preventing any type of environmental damage" may be interpreted as picking any odd type of environmental damage you'd like to remediate or prevent from a long list of options, rather than striving to prevent any and all environmental damage from occurring. The joys of vague wording.

Other highlighted large clean technology projects on that list include Alberta's (~16.5B) Pathways Alliance Carbon Capture Storage Network (which has generated concerns around potential impacts on the province's farmland and water), the above-discussed nuclear refurbishment projects, and another Alberta project; Dow Chemical's (~11.5B) Net-Zero Polyethylene Facility. The latter was delayed as of last spring due to economic instability, largely attributed to our southern neighbour's current approach to trade.

From 2021-2024, the second most funded category of clean energy projects (after hydro and before solar) is bioenergy. What does this refer to? What specific projects has the government invested in, and how do these compare to other "clean" initiatives? In what ways will Canada support a shifting workforce to become skilled for employment in this new area of development? Read the developing story on our website.



Facism on the RISE

[the Agora]

Why is the Right Obsessed With MILK

Written by Faisal Al-Saati

In recent years, you may have seen a seemingly unusual symbol that has emerged within far-right digital spaces and at political rallies. The glass of milk, which appears to be just a dietary staple in much of the world, has become a potent "dog whistle," a coded message that signals racial identity and masculine grievance to those in the know, while appearing harmless to the general public. This phenomenon is a case study in how extremist movements use "metapolitics" to turn ordinary objects into badges of exclusion.

The foundation of the symbolism is rooted in a misapplication of genetics. In 2017, users on platforms like 4chan began circulating global maps of "lactase persistence," the genetic mutation that allows for adults to digest milk without illness. Far right groups branded high-tolerance regions [primarily Northern Europe] as "The Milk Zone," framing the ability to drink dairy as a marker for European evolutionary superiority. This narrative, however, relies on a selective reading of biology. While many Europeans are lactase persistent, the trait evolved independently in various populations across West Africa, East Africa, and the Middle East. By stripping away this global context, extremists use simplified biology to construct a pseudo-scientific basis for white supremacy.

This is not a modern invention but a revival of dietary racism from the colonial era. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, proponents of social Darwinism often categorized global populations by their primary food sources.

Meat and dairy were framed as the energetic diet of the colonizer, supposedly providing the physical vigour necessary for imperial dominance.

Conversely, the plant-based diets in colonized regions of Asia and Africa were dismissed as weakening or effeminate. This historical baggage allows modern movements to tap into an established, albeit discredited, hierarchy of civilization though something as simple as a grocery purchase.

Furthermore, the obsession with milk is the inverse of the far right's contempt for soy. The "Soy Boy" slur is frequently used to mock men perceived as low testosterone or politically progressive, based on the debunked claim that phytoestrogens in soy feminize the male body. In this ecosystem, performatively chugging milk becomes an act of traditional masculinity.

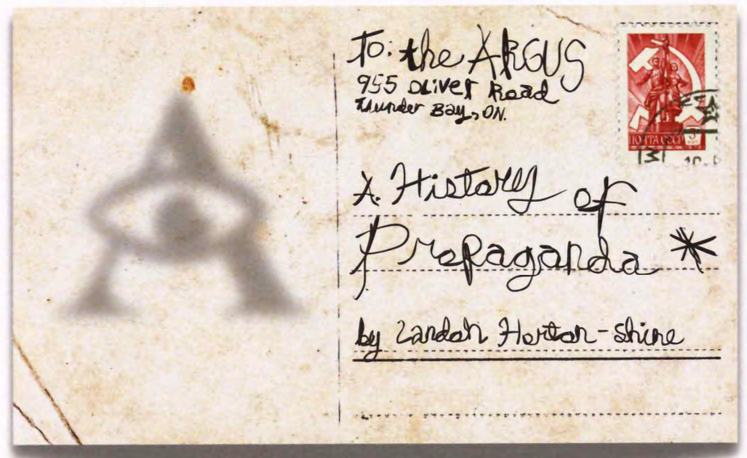


Whether it is extremist figures adding milk emojis to their social media profiles or protesters drinking gallons of milk at public events, the act is meant to signify purity and a rejection of modern, liberal dietary trends. Recently, this trend has bled into the "raw milk" movement. While many people seek unpasteurized dairy for perceived health benefits, a segment of the far right views raw milk as a form of anti-establishment rebellion. To them, government pasteurisation requirements represent a "nanny state" overstepping its bounds. Rejecting processed foods becomes a way to signal a desire to return to an idealized, "purer" past. For those studying political structures, the "milk meme" demonstrates how identity politics are being mapped onto consumption. By colonizing the grocery aisle with political meaning, these movements create low-stakes ways to signal extremist views in public without immediate recognition. This is a reminder that in the modern political landscape, even a glass of milk can be weaponized to draw lines between them and us.

The most recent evolution of this branding occurred in early 2026 with Donald Trump's viral "The Milk Mustache is back" campaign. Following the signing of the "Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, the administration released a series of AI-generated and staged photos of Trump, RFK Jr., and other cabinet members sporting the iconic white mustache of the 1990s "got milk?" ads.

On the surface, this was a policy push to return full-fat dairy to school lunches. However, the rhetoric surrounding it, using slogans like "Make Whole Milk Great Again", taps into the same traditionalist energy described above. By framing whole milk as "real" and "pure" in opposition to liberal or elite low-fat guidelines, the campaign turned a health debate into a cultural debate. It positions the consumption of full-fat dairy as an act of patriotic defiance against government overreach and "feminized" modern nutrition.







What makes something true? A philosopher would tell you that truth is only true to the self; an engineer would point to his rendering analysis in AutoCAD; and a statistician would perform a factor analysis to assess validity. But to a politician, truth is what can be said the loudest, again and again. Propaganda has been used since medieval times to influence the population en masse. The earliest known example of propaganda is the *Behistun Inscription* in Iran, which describes Darius I rising to the Persian throne as a just and rightful ruler of the Persian Empire. There are three written languages upon the rockface, which wrap around the image of Darius with his predecessor under his boot, about 15 meters high and 25 meters across. Three languages to spread his message of domination to the swath of culture under the wide breadth of the Persian Empire. Using the rock face sought permanence, in line with the goal of all good propaganda: to convince the current population and influence future culture. His line would reign for the next hundred years until the fall of the Achaemenid Empire.

As the Cold War was peaking, following the formation of NATO and the creation of the Soviet atomic bomb, propaganda was streaming at an all-time high. A culture-charged battle of ideals was being waged covertly and officially, the CIA quietly having instituted a dedicated bureau called the Congress of Cultural Freedom (CCF) in 1950. This was a direct response to Russia's own information bureau, called the Cominform.

The CCF pushed American culture out and up, funding art exhibits, international conferences, and jazz ambassadors such as Louis Armstrong. These were created with the intention of influencing international cultural change to instil a sense of superiority in the capitalist view. Cominform pushed their side but had a different approach. Russia tended to condemn and censor rather than convince outsiders of their virtues. Imported propaganda during the Cold War was highly focused on criticizing the racial prejudice shown in the US. This proved effective, as the general attitude in a letter from Mohandas Gandhi to President Roosevelt carried this same criticism. Criticism propaganda wasn't a single concerted effort, but rather a deluge of disinformation, sometimes leaning towards the absurd.

This type of propaganda is referred to as a "firehose of falsehood." Creating large amounts of misinformation forces a binary opinion: belief or disbelief, and a binary always creates division. Overwhelming claims force people to disprove and deny each one, which doesn't affect the claimer since they never intended to back them up.



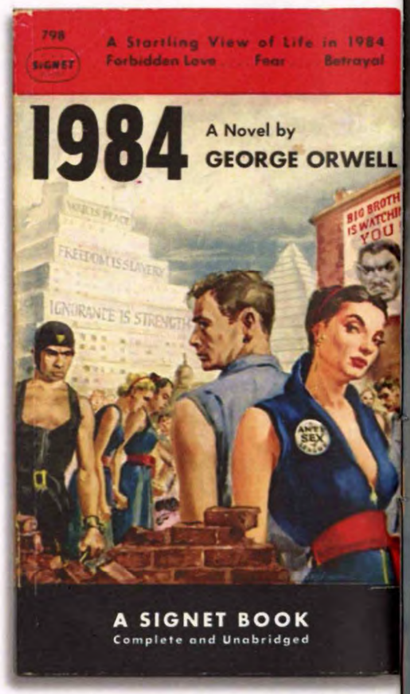


Putting the opposition in a position where they need to prove you wrong again and again actually provides a lot of power, despite how outlandish or nonsensical the claims are. It's also the same kind found in Hitler's Nazi Germany.

A major factor leading to the effectiveness of Nazi propaganda was the ability to mould the perspective of the country's youth. This was done through creating programs such as the Hitler Youth, renaming and creating a lore of exceptionalism special to Germany, and keeping a grasp over art and creative culture. By remaining at the centre of the narrative, you control it; people don't have a choice but to hear what you have to say. If this is ringing any bells, it should, as it's the same as what has been happening to America since Trump's first election.







Shortly after his reelection, Trump blitzed several reforms faster than any president before him. He would go on to sue various "fake news" outlets and rename the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America. George Orwell's 1984 doesn't seem so far-fetched, with "newspeak" and the subjugation of the media happening in real time. It's no coincidence that Trump-positive press (Washington Post, X, Facebook) would receive front row seats at his inauguration, either. His authoritarian streak doesn't seem to be abating. Georgian representative Buddy Carter introduced a bill recently to rename Greenland to "Red, White, and Blueland" indicating serious intentions to take hold of the island. Over the top, ridiculous, a firehose of falsehood.



























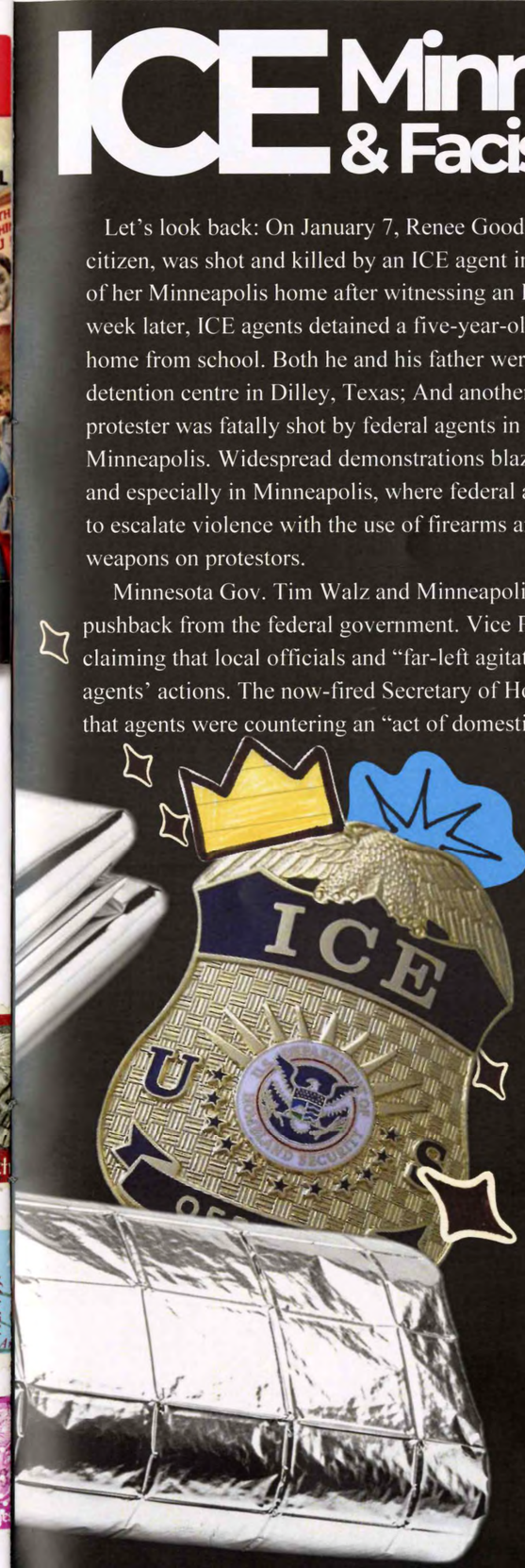


ICE Minneapolis, & Facism

By Sara Stoppel

Let's look back: On January 7, Renee Good, an American citizen, was shot and killed by an ICE agent in her car outside of her Minneapolis home after witnessing an ICE detainment; A week later, ICE agents detained a five-year-old boy on his way home from school. Both he and his father were held at an ICE detention centre in Dilley, Texas; And another week later, a protester was fatally shot by federal agents in the streets of Minneapolis. Widespread demonstrations blazed across the US and especially in Minneapolis, where federal agents continued to escalate violence with the use of firearms and chemical weapons on protestors.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey called for the removal of ICE, despite extreme pushback from the federal government. Vice President JD Vance has defended ICE actions in Minneapolis, claiming that local officials and "far-left agitators" are inciting "chaos" by refusing to cooperate with the federal agents' actions. The now-fired Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem also continued to back ICE, affirming that agents were countering an "act of domestic terrorism" in the killing of Good.



When Trump officially took office last January, he scheduled large-scale ICE raids to take place immediately, in an effort to crack down on "the worst of the worst criminals" and "illegal immigration". So began the influx of deportations and detainments, where legal immigrants were imprisoned and others sent to El Salvador's mega-prisons. Conditions in these detention centres have been chronically dire, with photos and stories of overcrowding and abuses landing on the front page of Human Rights Watch and CNN for years. Not only are the conditions in detention centres prison-like, but ICE agents' tactics have also been compared to those of the "Gestapo".

The Supreme Court, which holds a 6-3 conservative majority, ruled in September of 2025 that ICE agents could racially profile individuals on the street. A new ICE mandate from earlier this week also permits ICE agents to enter homes without a warrant signed by a judge, a phenomenon that was not previously permitted. These decisions have come under fire, as this could lead to deadly consequences for people of colour who could be legally targeted on the streets or in their homes. As tensions continue to rise, people across the country are on edge. The federal government is allowing rampant violence, federal agents imposing racial hierarchies; this is the new face of fascism.

January 25th, 2026

"is Trumpism 21st Century Facism?"

By Faisal Al-Saati

At the heart of fascist ideology is what scholar Roger Griffin calls "palingenetic ultranationalism," the myth of the nation's rebirth following a period of perceived decadence and decline. Mussolini promised to resurrect the glory of the Roman Empire, while Hitler pledged to reverse the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles.

In a modern context, the slogan "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) serves as a textbook articulation of this myth. It frames the present as a fallen state, one corrupted by globalists and liberal elites, asserting that the nation's former greatness can only be recovered through a radical break with the status quo. The power of the slogan lies in its vagueness, allowing followers to project their own specific grievances onto a shared narrative of loss and restoration, a tactic that was central to the Nazi party's cross-class appeal in the 1930s.

Historically, fascist mobilization relies on language that dehumanizes opponents to prepare the public for authoritarian rule. Perhaps the most alarming parallel is Trump's repeated assertion that undocumented immigrants are "poisoning the blood of our country". Which is not standard policy critique; rather, It's biological determinism.





In Mein Kampf, Hitler used nearly identical language, claiming that great cultures perished because their "creative race died out from blood poisoning," By framing migration as a biological threat to the health of the nation. The rhetoric permits extreme measures like mass internment. Furthermore, the use of the term "vermin" to describe political opponents, specifically "communists, Marxists, and the radical left, mirrors that of the Nazi use of the German term Ungeziefer. This language suggests the target is a tumour that needs to be carved out, when in reality, it is a constituency that needs to be addressed like any other. When opponents are stripped of their humanity, constitutional protections start looking like category errors rather than fundamental rights.

Fascist movements often centre on an idea of betrayal, the idea that the nation was sabotaged from within by internal enemies. In Nazi Germany, this was the Dolchstoßlegende [translates to: stab in the back] myth. Which claimed that the German army was undefeated in the First World War, instead, it was betrayed by the Jewish population, and the Socialists from within Germany. America has the same; the "stolen election " posits a similar narrative. One where Trump claims that the Republicans had a landslide victory that was taken by the "deep state." Like its Nazi predecessor, it serves to delegitimize the current government [in this case, the Biden administration] and calls it an occupation of the real government. It also justifies the suspension of democratic activity and suggests that power must be restored to its "rightful leader." Fascism pioneered the aestheticization of politics, using spectacle and symbolism to create an emotional rather than rational bond with the masses. The Trump rally functions as a modern equivalent to the Nuremberg rallies, a ritual of collective affirmation where individualism dissolves into the movement. Even the MAGA hat serves as a "uniform of the mind." While not a military tunic like the Italian Blackshirts, it signals tribal identity and defiance against "liberal cultural norms. This is visual culture, supported by "strongmen" iconography, such as digital art depicting Trump as a superhero or soldier, reflecting an obsession with physical strength and a disdain for the "weakness" of the law.



Beyond rhetoric, the structural goals of Trumpism align with the fascist principle of Gleichschaltung [meaning coordination], the total subordination of the state bureaucracy to the leader's will. Trump's "Schedule F" proposal seeks to reclassify tens of thousands of civil service positions as "political appointees." With a goal to dismantle the non-partisan expertise of the "deep state" and replace it with personnel loyal solely to the leader, who happens to be Trump. This mirrors the fascist demand that the state apparatus be an extension of the party.



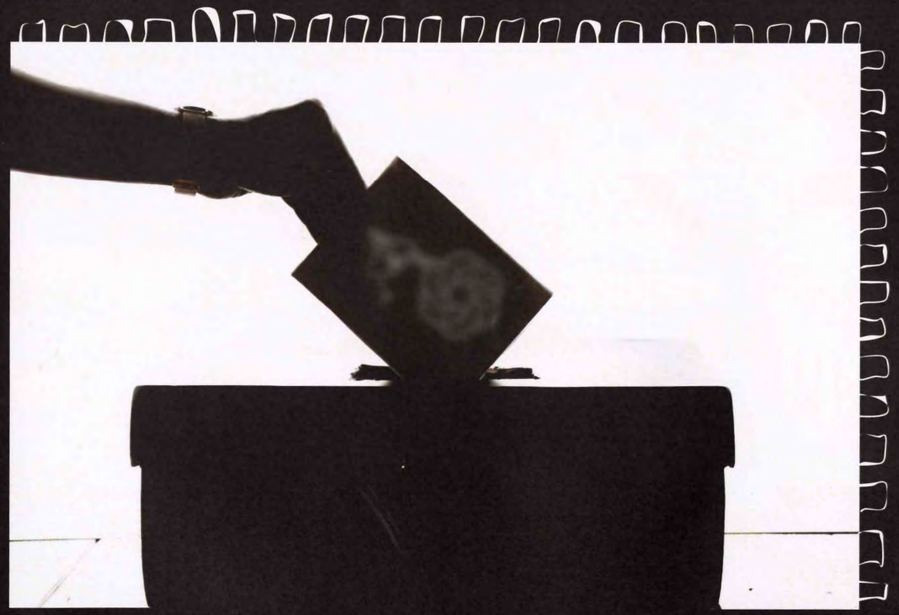
Similarly, he has formed an assault on the judiciary, characterizing judges who rule against him as corrupt. Trump, in this move, seeks to delegitimize any authority that exists independently of the leader's will. While the psychological and rhetorical convergences are profound, there are notable differences in economic policy. Classical fascism utilized "Corporatism," where the state was the undisputed master of capital and production. In contrast, Trumpism relies on neoliberal deregulation and tax cuts, policies more aligned with the traditional laissez-faire conservatism and fascist statism. Additionally, Trump did not build a disciplined, hierarchical party from the ground up like the NSDAP; he executed a hostile takeover of the existing Republican Party. The MAGA movement remains more of a decentralized cult of personality than a rigidly regimented party.





For years, historian Robert Paxton, the author of The Anatomy of Fascism, resisted the Fascist label for Trump, viewing him instead as a right-wing populist. However, the events of January 6, 2021, changed the scholarly consensus. Paxton argued that the incitement of violence to overturn a democratic election moved Trump to the operational sphere of Fascism. The Trump movement also aligns with at least 12 of Umberto Eco's 14 criteria for "Ur-Fascism," including the "obsession with a plot," "disagreement is treason," and "contempt for the weak." As history suggests, the danger of such movements is not that they perfectly replicate the past, but that they adapt the authoritarian impulse to the tools of the present. Modern fascism uses the mechanisms of democracy to dismantle it from within.









The World as His Oilfield

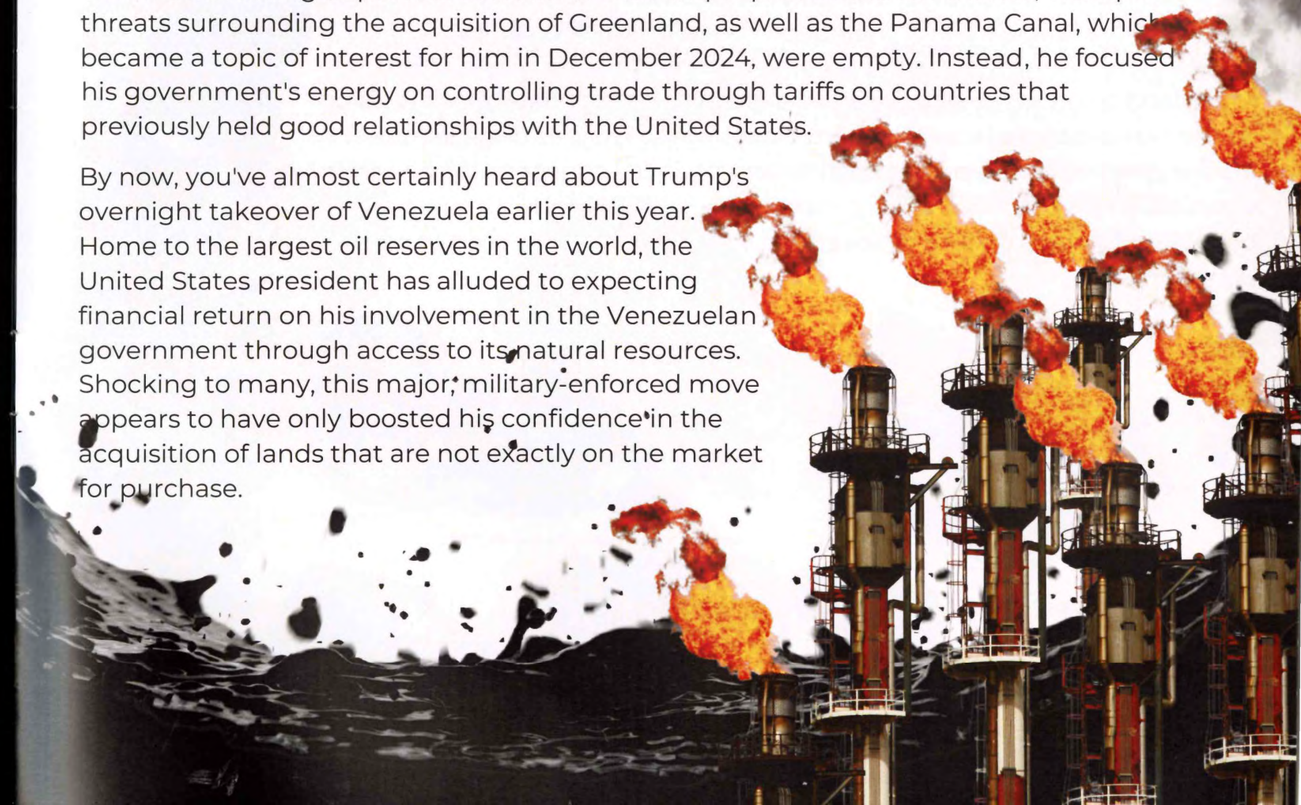
By Eriel Strauch

January 21st 2026

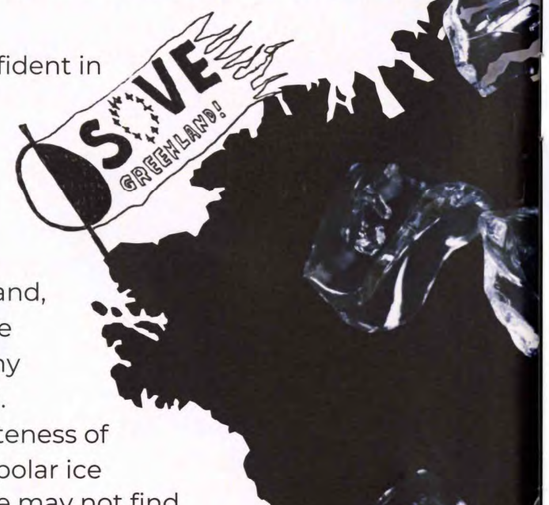
Back in October, I wrote about how, under the Trump administration, the United States government opened the coastal plain of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to plans for prospective oil and gas drilling. While some locals support this decision under the pretense of sustaining northern economic livelihoods, contention surrounds the significant effects it might come to have on subsistence hunting, sacred cultural associations with the land, and rare bird migration sites. Three months later, those changes to his own country's legislature seem small compared to his current ventures. Over the years, Trump has not tried to hide his intentions to dominate resource-rich territories. In his first term as president, he spoke of wanting to purchase mineral-rich Greenland, an idea that, shockingly, most Greenlanders found disrespectful at best. Sound familiar? Our own country, rife with natural resources including oil, critical minerals, timber, and fish, did not respond all that differently to his fantasy of Canada becoming the 51st state.

Trump's obsession with Greenland became a topic of interest again in January of 2025, when United States Vice President JD Vance visited the territory and accused Denmark of failing to provide Greenland with ample protection. For a while, Trump's threats surrounding the acquisition of Greenland, as well as the Panama Canal, which became a topic of interest for him in December 2024, were empty. Instead, he focused his government's energy on controlling trade through tariffs on countries that previously held good relationships with the United States.

By now, you've almost certainly heard about Trump's overnight takeover of Venezuela earlier this year. Home to the largest oil reserves in the world, the United States president has alluded to expecting financial return on his involvement in the Venezuelan government through access to its natural resources. Shocking to many, this major, military-enforced move appears to have only boosted his confidence in the acquisition of lands that are not exactly on the market for purchase.



Greenland has yet again returned to the forefront of Trump's list as a strategic way to control access to valuable minerals and other resources. Earlier this month, at a press conference with oil executives, he threatened to obtain Greenland "the hard way", were he not to reach a congenial agreement with Denmark. Hours before I wrote this, the BBC reported a slight change of tactics, in which Trump stated he is going to refrain from using violence to overtake Greenland, though he made sure to emphasize that if he wanted to use force, he could. He also acknowledged that he doesn't expect to "get anything unless I decide to use excessive force". Currently, Trump seems to hope that world leaders will allow him to take full control of Greenland without interference. As an incentive, he threatened more tariffs on European countries, which would only be lifted once a deal for the United States to purchase Greenland is reached.



To what end does Trump endeavour? Clearly, he is confident in his ability to create what, up to this point, have been fictional business opportunities through his political, economic, and militaristic tools. But, if he actually acquires these resources he so unrelentingly bargains for, what then? What happens next?

Despite climate-change associated warming of Greenland, potentially freeing up access to previously impenetrable mineral deposits, researchers consider there to be many logistical issues in the prospective mining of Greenland. Between the territory's extensive polar night, the remoteness of many mineral deposits, and their depth beneath thick polar ice sheets, were Trump's annexing dreams to come true, he may not find Greenland to be as fun of a toy as he expected. Unfortunately for his vision of the world, other plans for resource acquisition may, as they get closer to fruition, start to pose similar logistical and financial concerns. While reality slows down his operations, the consequences of his condescending behaviour towards dozens of sovereign countries will likely start to catch up to him.



Meet the Argus



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Armaan Basheer is the Editor-in-Chief of The Argus. An Honours English student in his final year at Lakehead, he's committed to boosting The Argus to new heights and making his last year a meaningful one by sharing stories that matter to students. In his free time, you can find him watching soccer or playing video games.



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