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If AOC really thinks Trump is a ‘fascist,’ why does she want to make the government so much more powerful?

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Jobs are up, wages are rising, and President Trump gave a nonpartisan, patriotic speech at Washington, D.C.’s Fourth of July celebration.

Oh, and if you haven’t noticed, we’re also on the brink of fascism. Or something.

That’s the latest hysterical claim from Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. She said in an interview this week with Yahoo News that the U.S. is on the brink of collapse into the extinct authoritarian ideology of the late Benito Mussolini.

Are we headed to fascism? Yes. I don’t think there’s a question. If you actually take the time to study, and to look at the steps, and to see how government transforms under authoritarian regimes, and look at the political decisions and patterns of this president, the answer is yes.

Bizarrely, an opinion writer at the *New York Times* gave credence to this ludicrous claim, arguing that the Trump administration “draws on fascist ideology in its rhetoric” and that Trump “echoes the very aspects of American history that Hitler praised.” Meanwhile, liberal law professor Laurence Tribe received almost 10,000 likes for a tweet comparing Trump’s Fourth of July celebration to Chinese authoritarianism.

For those who don’t know, fascism has, in practice, involved state violence and authoritarianism, as well as rigid, undemocratic state control of an entire country’s economy and civil society. It has also often invoked nationalism, xenophobia, and jingoism.

Any reasonable person realizes this is a far cry from the present-day United States. Even Trump’s worst tendencies, which don’t amount to fascism, have routinely been thwarted by courts, advisers, and elections.

Yet, even assuming the contrary, it’s clear that the New York Democratic congresswoman’s cries of fascism are hysterical and unserious. If she were really worried the U.S. was sliding toward fascism, she wouldn’t be trying to make the executive branch so much more powerful than it already is.

After all, that’s exactly what Ocasio-Cortez’s agenda would do.

Her "Medicare for all" healthcare platform, for example, involves the federal government taking over the entire business of healthcare, dumping hundreds of millions of people off private insurance and onto government rolls. This essentially means giving the government discretionary power over who gets healthcare and of what sort — not the kind of authority you would give Trump if you really thought him a dictator.

More broadly, Ocasio-Cortez's Green New Deal would cost up to \$93 trillion in government spending over a decade. Funding this would require massive increases in taxation and increased government involvement in the economy. The current size of the economy is about \$20 trillion annually, and so under Ocasio-Cortez's proposal, the government would be controlling more than half the economy. Unsurprisingly, Cato Institute scholar Ryan Bourne called her platform a "green-painted Trojan horse" that is "filled with the biggest single government expansion the United States has seen since the 1930s." That gives a would-be fascist president a lot of power.

Fundamentally, this doesn't make sense. Surely Ocasio-Cortez knows that Democrats will not win every election, and as the old adage goes, a government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take from you everything you have.

So no, the facts on the ground don't support Ocasio-Cortez's claims that Trump is taking the U.S. toward fascism, and neither does her own rhetoric and advocacy. Anyone actually concerned about growing concentration of power would advocate for decentralization, localism, and constitutionally limited government. Thus, Ocasio-Cortez's cries of "fascism" are remarkably disingenuous.