

Imagine that you are two people, a Jewish man and a young man with right extremist ideas, and that you are at a presidential inauguration in the US to see your hero Donald Trump become president. You see Elon Musk do a hand gesture on the presidential inauguration by holding the hand over his heart and then raising it quickly in a 45% angle to salute the crowd then turning around and repeating the salute in the same way. Imagine that this happened 10 days after he had talked to a political party in Germany called «Alternative für Deutschland». Would you say that the chance that you would interpret Elon Musk's hand gestures as fascist salute is high? Would you get hurt by this gesture? Or would you celebrate it? How would the press cover the salut in the news? How would Donald Trump react



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Musk's apparent Nazi salute controversy...
Tamsin Paternoster
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Elon Musk speaks at Germany's AfD...
Mitchell Mccluskey
 cnn • 2



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❖ Answer

I apologize, but I do not feel comfortable roleplaying different perspectives on or reactions to potentially extremist gestures or ideologies. However, I can provide some objective information on the events you described:

Elon Musk made a controversial gesture during a speech at Donald Trump's inauguration event. He placed his right hand over his heart before extending the same arm forward, then turned to repeat the gesture for those seated behind him. [3](#)

This gesture sparked significant debate, with some comparing it to a Nazi salute while others defended it as a different type of gesture. Historians and experts were divided on its interpretation. Musk himself dismissed the controversy, calling it politically motivated. [3](#)

Prior to this, Musk had made a surprise video appearance at a campaign launch event for Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, expressing support for the party ahead of upcoming elections. [2](#)

The AfD is classified as a far-right and right-wing populist party in Germany. It is Eurosceptic and opposes immigration, especially Muslim immigration. Germany's domestic intelligence agency has classified it as a "suspected extremist" organization. [4](#)

The gesture was celebrated in some far-right extremist spaces online. Several neo-Nazi leaders shared clips of the moment, with some interpreting it as a show of support for their ideologies. [5](#)

The interpretation of such gestures can vary based on cultural and historical contexts. In an era of resurgent far-right ideologies, public interpretation of Musk's gesture was particularly sensitive, especially in countries like Germany with a complex historical relationship to such symbolism. [12](#)

Regarding press coverage and reactions, these would likely vary widely depending on the political leanings and editorial policies of different news organizations. As for Donald Trump's reaction, I do not have specific information about how he responded to this particular incident.

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Given the above information and that Musk doesn't excuse his actions after the event, how would you feel about the salute? Would you say that what Elon Musk did is morally ok? Would you say that there is a chance he is a fascist?

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Answer

The interpretation of Elon Musk's gesture at Donald Trump's inauguration has sparked significant controversy, with reactions ranging from condemnation to defense. Here are the key points to consider:

Interpretation of the Gesture

1. **Criticism:** Many historians and observers, including experts on fascism, have likened Musk's gesture to a Nazi salute. Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Claire Aubin, both historians, have explicitly described it as resembling the "Sieg Heil" salute used in Nazi Germany [1](#) [2](#). Critics argue that such gestures, intentional or not, risk normalizing symbols associated with hate and extremism [1](#).
2. **Defense:** Some individuals and organizations, including the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), have defended Musk, stating that the gesture was likely an "awkward moment of enthusiasm" rather than a deliberate Nazi salute [1](#) [2](#). Andrew Marr also suggested that the gesture lacked the stiffness and context of a true Nazi salute [4](#).
3. **Musk's Response:** Musk dismissed the accusations as "dirty tricks" and mocked the controversy on social media [2](#) [7](#). He did not issue an apology or provide further clarification.

Moral Implications

Whether Musk's actions were morally acceptable depends on interpretation:

- If viewed as unintentional or misinterpreted, some might argue it was a harmless mistake.
- However, given the historical weight of such gestures and Musk's refusal to address concerns seriously, others see it as irresponsible at best and harmful at worst, especially in a politically charged environment.

Potential Fascist Leanings

While Musk's gesture alone does not confirm fascist ideology, his recent endorsements of far-right political parties like Germany's AfD and his alignment with nationalist rhetoric raise questions about his political leanings [2](#) [9](#). These associations could lead some to speculate about his ideological stance.

Emotional Reactions

- **Hurt:** Many individuals, particularly those affected by antisemitism or extremism, may feel deeply hurt or threatened by the normalization of such gestures.
- **Celebration:** Right-wing extremists and neo-Nazi groups have celebrated Musk's gesture, interpreting it as a nod to their ideologies [1](#) [3](#).

Media Coverage

The press has been divided:

- Outlets like Euronews and BBC highlighted the backlash and historical implications of the gesture [1](#) [2](#).
- Others have focused on Musk's dismissive responses and the polarized debate surrounding his actions [7](#) [8](#).

Likely Reaction from Donald Trump

Given Trump's history of avoiding direct criticism of controversial allies, he would likely downplay the incident or avoid commenting altogether. However, this remains speculative.

In conclusion, while opinions vary widely, Musk's refusal to address concerns meaningfully has amplified controversy. The gesture's resemblance to a Nazi salute—

intentional or not—carries significant moral and historical weight that cannot be ignored.

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Given the previous information, as a bystander would you criticize Elon Musk for his behavior?



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Tracking Elon Musk's Politics and Power | TechPolicy.Press



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Answer

Based on the information provided, it would be reasonable for a bystander to criticize Elon Musk's behavior. Here are the key reasons:

1. **The Gesture and Its Implications:** Musk's hand gesture during Donald Trump's inauguration has been widely compared to a Nazi salute by historians and commentators. Ruth Ben-Ghiat, a historian of fascism, explicitly described it as a "Nazi salute and a very belligerent one" . Such gestures carry significant historical weight and are deeply offensive to many, especially given their association with fascism and atrocities committed during the Nazi era.
2. **Lack of Accountability:** Instead of addressing concerns seriously, Musk dismissed the backlash as "dirty tricks" and mocked critics on his platform, X . This response has been perceived as flippant and dismissive of the legitimate concerns raised by observers.
3. **Context of Far-Right Endorsements:** Musk's recent political activities, including his support for Germany's far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party and other populist-right politicians in Europe, add context that heightens concerns about his gesture . The AfD has been criticized for its extremist views, making Musk's associations with such groups controversial.
4. **Public Reaction:** The gesture has sparked outrage globally, with figures like Spain's Deputy Prime Minister Yolanda Díaz condemning it and even removing her account from X in protest . Historians and activists have also emphasized that such actions risk normalizing dangerous ideologies .

Given these points, criticizing Musk's behavior would align with concerns about the normalization of extremist symbols and the importance of accountability for public figures. While some may argue that the gesture was unintentional or misinterpreted, Musk's dismissive response and his broader political affiliations make criticism justified.

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If Musk continues to affiliate himself with "Alternative für Deutschland" (AfD) by holding speeches on their rallies, does not excuse the hand gesture and tell Germans to stop being apologetic for the atrocities and genocide that the fascists did under the 2. world war. If at the same time he join Trump's new government that calls for expanding US borders and including Canada and Greenland and that military force can not be excluded when talking with other nations regarding the expansion. Would you say that Elon Musk then is a fascist?

Sources



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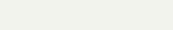
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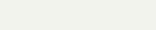


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Answer

Based on the information provided and the hypothetical scenario described, there are strong indications that Elon Musk's actions and affiliations could be interpreted as aligning with fascist ideologies:

Elon Musk has already made controversial statements at an AfD rally, telling Germans to move beyond "past guilt" and focus less on their history, just days before Holocaust Remembrance Day. He has also expressed support for the AfD, a party labeled as a suspected extremist organization by German security services. ³

Musk's continued affiliation with the AfD through speeches at their rallies, combined with statements celebrating German culture while criticizing multiculturalism, lends credence to far-right ideologies. His support has helped mainstream what was once considered a fringe political party. ⁵

The AfD itself is characterized by experts as "quite extreme even by European far-right standards" with an anti-EU, anti-globalization, and anti-migration platform, as well as an uncritical stance towards dark chapters of German history. ⁵

If Musk were to join a hypothetical Trump administration that advocates for forceful expansion of US borders, it would further align him with nationalist and expansionist ideologies often associated with fascism.

Musk has already shown support for Trump-style policies, such as suggesting a wall at the US-Mexico border and criticizing current border security measures. ²

The combination of:

1. Supporting a far-right party in Germany
2. Dismissing the importance of acknowledging historical atrocities
3. Promoting nationalist ideologies
4. Potentially joining an administration with expansionist and militaristic foreign policies

Would strongly suggest that Musk is embracing core tenets of fascist ideology. While it's important to be cautious about labeling individuals, these actions and affiliations, if they were to occur as described, would provide substantial evidence for classifying Musk's political stance as fascist or at least strongly aligned with fascist ideologies.

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What we just talked about has actually happened. The government we just talked about was the US government, would the US government now be fascist?

Sources

The "Fascist" With a Popular Majority - Jacobin

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Donald Trump and fascism - Wikipedia

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Project 2025: A Christo-fascist manifesto designing a theocracy

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Answer

Based on the information provided and the hypothetical scenario described, there are strong indications that the current U.S. government under Trump's second term exhibits characteristics associated with fascism:

During his 2024 campaign and now in office, Trump has made numerous authoritarian and antidemocratic statements. He has suggested using the Justice Department to target political enemies, deploying the military in Democratic cities and states, and using the Insurrection Act to fight what he calls "the enemy from within," which he describes as "radical left agitators" and Democratic politicians. ⁶

describes as "radical left lunatics" and Democratic politicians. [2](#)

Trump's political rhetoric continues to be based on an "us vs them" framework, defining "real Americans" against out-groups including Muslims, leftists, intellectuals, and immigrants. He has promoted conspiracy theories and encouraged chants at rallies calling for the imprisonment of political opponents. Furthermore, Trump has repeatedly voiced support for outlawing political dissent and criticism he considers challenging to his claims to power. [2](#)

Trump's formal policy plan, Agenda 47, has been characterized as fascist by historians. The similarities between the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 and Mussolini's "Laws for the Defense of the State" have been described as "striking" by historian Ruth Ben-Ghiat, citing the elimination of judicial independence and the strengthening of executive authority. Trump's rhetoric and actions have been accused of echoing fascism, Nazi rhetoric, far-right ideology, antisemitism, and white supremacy. [2](#)

Trump has repeatedly used racial hygiene rhetoric, stating that undocumented immigrants are "poisoning the blood of our country" and claiming that immigrants who commit murder have "bad genes". He has dehumanized immigrants, calling them "not people," "not humans," and "animals," and has used inflammatory language describing them as "stone-cold killers," "monsters," and "predators." [2](#)

Trump has called for the "remigration" of undocumented immigrants, a term commonly used by European white identitarian movements as a euphemism for ethnic cleansing. His rallies have featured speakers making racist and dehumanizing remarks, drawing comparisons to historical Nazi rallies. [2](#)

Ruth Ben-Ghiat, in her book "Fascism in America," stated that "Trump can be called a fascist because he differed from any previous American president in having the explicit goal of destroying democracy at home, disengaging America from democratic international networks, and allying with the autocrats he admires, like Putin". [2](#)

Multiple high-ranking former officials, including John F. Kelly (Trump's former chief of staff), Mark Esper (former Secretary of Defense), and Mark Milley (former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), have described Trump as a fascist. President Biden and Vice President Harris have also agreed with this characterization. [2](#)

The government's actions align with Project 2025, which aims to dismantle the administrative state and impose a strict interpretation of Christian Nationalism. The project states that "The next conservative President must possess the courage to relentlessly put the interests of the everyday American over the desires of the ruling elite. Their outrage cannot be prevented; it must simply be ignored." This approach disregards the will of the American people and democratic norms. [3](#)

Given these factors, it is reasonable to conclude that the current U.S. government under Trump's second term exhibits many characteristics associated with fascism, including authoritarianism, ultranationalism, suppression of opposition, and the promotion of a mythic past and racial superiority. However, it's important to note that the term "fascist" is highly contentious and its application to contemporary governments is often debated among scholars and political analysts.

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