



# Speak Out Now

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## They Can't Erase Reality

In a matter of weeks Trump, Musk and his DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) force, and the new heads of government agencies have been tearing things up in Washington. Who could believe that this band of billionaires is rooting out wasteful spending for our benefit? It's clear that their goal is to enrich themselves from our tax dollars. Musk said that his goal is to have no regulations at all. Why? Because regulations often hurt the profitability of their corporations.

They are in the process of gutting government agencies and departments that have been responsible for supporting and delivering essential services to people. Along with cuts to these agencies are vast cuts to scientific research conducted by government agencies and research institutes. As a consequence, the websites of a number of government agencies were taken down for a while and "cleaned up."

The administration deleted all mentions of "climate change" from the prominent parts of the websites of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Agriculture, and the Forest Service. Thousands of datasets stored by government agencies are no longer accessible. They are attempting to erase the tools and resources that we need to understand the broader impacts of environmental disruption around us, impacts which the government and corporations have been unwilling to act on in any substantial way, despite them being a direct threat.

The EPA was not formed spontaneously. Nixon established the EPA in 1970 in response to a growing collective concern about the effects of corporations on the natural world. That concern has since deepened with the growth of the oil, chemical, and plastics industries. The resulting floods, fires, and droughts have driven hundreds of millions of people into forced migration, billions have become aware of the ongoing climate catastrophe, and millions have protested, demanding protection for the living ecosystems that we are a part of.

The attacks on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility programs also attempt to erase historical and ongoing oppression of many people. Although these programs have not been sufficient to address the systemic inequalities created and maintained by this capitalist society, they were created in response to massive social movements that fought for a different future, including: the Civil Rights

and Black Power movements, women's movements, the Chicano/Latino movement, the American Indian movement, the Disability Rights movement, workers movements, LGBTQ movements, and many more!

In a blatant slap to the face, Google embraced Trump's attacks, removing holidays such as Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Indigenous Peoples Month, and Pride Month from its calendar, which has over 1.2 billion monthly visitors. Trump's attempt to erase our history is absolutely clear with his goal of shutting down the Department of Education. This would end support to needed programs in many public schools. One aim is to eliminate curriculums which present an accurate perspective on U.S. and world history. Programs that make education accessible and accurately present history and science are being cut across the country.

The Trump administration is also toying with international aid, as if the lives of people in other countries are meaningless. The name on the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) building was removed and all workers for the agency were put on leave.

USAID was an extension of U.S. foreign policy, using aid to exert control over other countries. But it also reflected the desire of many people in the U.S. who wanted to help those in need globally. Trump's destruction of USAID has now deprived millions of people around the world who depend on the essential food, medical supplies and treatment, schools, and clean water it provided. It is a massive death sentence for many.

Many of these agencies were built in response to movements demanding change. They weren't adequate, and they were never designed to be. But to eliminate them, says it all.

In less than a month, Trump and his band have shown what they intend for our future. Even more of our tax dollars will go into their pockets. This has been a confusing time for people who want to do something. Some have responded to attacks on recent immigrants. Federal workers are beginning to demonstrate. Our future cannot remain in the hands of those who would erase us – our history, our science, and our future. If a handful of people can tear this up, just imagine what the tens of millions of us who have watched this in disbelief can do. The numbers and our power are on our side.