

The Worst Thing About Elon Musk Is That He Got Away With All of It, His reign of terror didn't end after he bought the 2024 election.

The world's richest man is nowhere near the world's most generous, or sensible, or kind, or popular, or the most positive of anything.

Elon Musk was already a polarizing figure before he decided to endorse Donald Trump for president in July 2024, but that decision cemented his villain status and earned him the ire of most Americans. As of this writing, more than half of the country views Musk unfavorably.

Musk's wealth (and possibly his ketamine habit) has given him delusions of grandeur about his intelligence, believing he's capable of coming up with an infinite amount of good ideas. When Musk's plans inevitably fail, his money protects him from any consequences and allows him to avoid introspection. He'll blame one of his favorite scapegoats, usually meddling government bureaucrats or the "woke mind virus," and his power and control will remain intact.

Musk's estimated net worth of half a trillion dollars largely comes from government contracts, which also makes him the richest welfare king. That's probably why he chose to work in government: to make himself richer and eliminate any obstacles to his science fiction pipe dreams, among them implanting chips into people's brains and colonizing Mars.

His foray into government this year will have lasting damage so extensive that we are not yet even aware. Two events early in the year previewed how it would go.

"This is the chainsaw for bureaucracy! Chainsaw!" Musk, clad in black sunglasses, a black "Make American Great Again" hat, and a black coat, shouted from the stage at the Conservative Political Action Conference in February, pretending he was a rock star as he waved around a chainsaw he received as a gift from Argentinian President Javier Milei just seconds before. (Months later, Musk would regret this stunt, claiming it lacked empathy, as if he has any, and Milei would require a multi-billion dollar bailout from the U.S. government.)

As surreal as that moment was, it wasn't nearly as surreal as Musk thanking supporters of Donald Trump on Inauguration Day a month before with two unmistakable Roman salutes, a gesture best known for its association with the Nazis. Both incidents would foreshadow the disaster that would be the tech oligarch's time in government.

Elon Musk appears to make a Nazi salute as he speaks during Donald Trump's inaugural parade, January 20, 2025.

Musk would spearhead the Department of Government Efficiency, designed to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse. DOGE, named as such to copy an old internet meme, was Musk's reward for spending \$250 million to get Trump elected. He would get to run the powerful government agency while claiming to have no official position with the government, insulating him from any and all ethics requirements. For the next few months, the tech oligarch would oversee ransacking of the federal government and workforce, bringing on his preferred hires, a group of twenty-somethings with no government experience, but extensive ties to Musk's companies and fellow fascist tech CEO Peter Thiel. One called himself "Big Balls" online and was involved in a cybercrime ring prior to joining DOGE.

At the Office of Personnel Management, the main hiring agency for the federal government, Musk's henchmen took over systems containing the personal information of millions of federal workers, locking career civil servants out. He used his foothold at OPM to try and force federal workers back into their offices full time, or quit and receive six months of salary, sending a now-infamous "fork in the road" email mirroring what Musk told Twitter employees in 2022 when he took over that company. Ultimately, the plan would result in 6.7 percent of the federal workforce, or about 154,000 people, taking the legally questionable offer.

What happened at OPM would happen all over the government. For weeks and months, there would be news of Musk and his cronies making their way into different agencies and firing the people who made the government run, including sensitive offices vital to national security.

Musk's decimation of USAID will be felt for years to come. The end of its many life-saving programs around the world has already killed hundreds of thousands of people, and if those programs don't receive a new source of funding, millions of the world's destitute will suffer even further. Musk called it a "criminal organization" that "needs to die."

His destruction of the federal government mirrors his own chaotic personal life. His obsession with producing offspring (probably fed by his insecurities) has led to him fathering at least 14 children with at least four women. Musk has reportedly solicited women on his X social media platform to have his babies and paid out millions of dollars to keep the mothers of his children quiet. He's estranged from at least one of his children, Vivian, over her trans identity and his rejection of "woke" politics.

Perhaps the best description of Musk's insecurities and ego came from writer Joyce Carol Oates, who decimated the tech oligarch in one devastating shot:

Joyce Carol Oates
@JoyceCarolOates

So curious that such a wealthy man never posts anything that indicates that he enjoys or is even aware of what virtually everyone appreciates— scenes from nature, pet dog or cat, praise for a movie, music, a book (but doubt that he reads); pride in a friend's or relative's accomplishment; condolences for someone who has died; pleasure in sports, acclaim for a favorite team; references to history. In fact he seems totally uneducated, uncultured. The poorest persons on Twitter may have access to more beauty & meaning in life than the "most wealthy person in the world."

Eventually, all of Musk's work leveling the government sparked a backlash, with protests not only from federal workers, but people all over the country, who directed their anger at his once-popular car company Tesla. Sales of his vehicles, including the defect-plagued Cybertruck, plummeted, and peaceful (and sometimes not-so-peaceful) protests broke out at dealerships. With Tesla's stock price in freefall, Trump rushed in to save his wealthy benefactor, holding a bizarre PR event for Tesla on the White House lawn where he gushed over the company's cars (which he can't even drive).

In the end, DOGE wouldn't save the government much money, added to the federal deficit, and increased government fraud. DOGE would be pronounced disbanded by a federal court in November. While some of its damage was undone by the courts, we may not know for years how badly DOGE wrecked essential government functions.

Musk didn't handle the backlash to his image very well, complaining online. His paranoia resulted in him carrying his toddler son everywhere he went as an unwitting human shield, going against the

wishes of the child's mother. The unpopularity would hurt his net worth, have him swear off politics, and even regret the whole idea of DOGE in the first place.

Elon Musk's toddler son sits on his shoulders and leans forward on his Make America Great Again cap. Elon Musk and his son X in the Oval Office of the White House, February 11, 2025.

Trump and Musk would have a falling out over the summer over Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill"—Musk thought its harsh cuts to vital programs didn't go far enough. But still, he seems to be in Trump's good graces, having been spotted at a dinner to fete the Saudi crown prince months later.

Despite the damage he's caused, Musk is escaping any consequences. His gutting of the government is in line with conservative goals (just look at Project 2025), so Republicans aren't going to punish him. His government contracts are not only intact; they are growing thanks to Trump's unnecessary and bloated Golden Dome project. He continues to fund far-right, anti-immigration, anti-regulation political movements around the world, flirting with Neo-Nazi politics along the way.

And the tech oligarch still has his social media platform. Twitter used to be useful for the average person, but it's now Musk's fascist tool, boosting far-right messaging, racism, and his beloved and extremely flawed generative AI chatbot, Grok, which amplifies all of his worst qualities.

With his ego, insecurities, resources, and wealth, Musk refuses to stay away from power or the limelight. The tech baron apparently thinks that Republicans will have the White House for 12 years and is already spending money on the 2026 midterm elections. He's proven that he can have control and power while escaping responsibility and accountability.