

Trump video outlines trade war and anti-immigrant measures

Barry Grey**22 November 2016**

On Monday, President-elect Donald Trump took time out from interviewing a stream of political reactionaries and military war hawks at his Trump Tower penthouse to post a two-and-a-half-minute video outlining executive actions he plans to take during his first 100 days in the White House.

The video underscored the ferocious nationalism and militarism, combined with anti-immigrant racism and pro-corporate deregulation, that will define his administration as a government of extreme reaction.

In keeping with his election campaign, Trump demagogically cast his actions as a boon to US workers. He began by declaring that his administration would be based on the principle of “putting America first” and “creating wealth and jobs for American workers.”

His first action, he said, would be to issue a notification of intent to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the US-sponsored trade pact aimed at ensuring American dominance of East Asia and further isolating China, which is not a party to the agreement. Trump’s opposition in no way reflects a softer line toward China, which he has repeatedly denounced and threatened with trade war measures, but rather a policy of economic nationalism and protectionism, which he falsely claims will benefit US workers.

Next, he would cancel all “job-killing” regulations restricting the production of shale oil and coal, a boon to the energy industry presented as a job-creation measure. He added that he would institute a rule requiring the elimination of two regulations for every new one imposed.

Indicative of his plans to expand the military and extend its influence over civilian life, Trump declared that he would ask the Department of Defense and the

chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop a “comprehensive plan” to protect the country’s infrastructure from cyber attacks and “all other forms of attacks.”

On immigration, Trump said he would direct the Department of Labor to “investigate all abuses of visa programs that undercut the American worker.” This would be the first step in an escalated attack on immigrants, including the two-to-three million whom Trump said, in his post-election “60 Minutes” interview, would be slated for deportation in the short term.

As part of his plan to “drain the swamp” in Washington, Trump announced a five-year ban on executive officials becoming lobbyists after they leave office and a lifetime ban on executive officials lobbying on behalf of a foreign government. This supposed commitment to government ethics is particularly farcical given Trump’s refusal to place his vast business empire in a blind trust and his failure even to release his tax returns.

The video highlighted the “America first” nationalism and economic protectionism that go hand in hand with Trump’s promotion of the military and his authoritarian contempt for democratic rights. This is already clearly established by his appointment of Stephen Bannon, the former head of Breitbart News, the favored media platform of the white supremacist alt-right movement, as his chief political strategist.

Of a similar character are the other national security appointments he has announced to date—former military intelligence officer and anti-Muslim fanatic Michael Flynn as national security adviser; anti-immigrant Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions, denounced by civil liberties and civil rights groups for his ties to white supremacist outfits, as attorney general; and pro-torture

Congressman Mike Pompeo to head the CIA.

Besides touting retired Marine Gen. James Mattis, notorious for overseeing the mass killing of civilians and physical destruction of Fallujah, as well as other war crimes, as the leading contender for the post of defense secretary, Trump has interviewed retired Marine Gen. John Kelly, who has defended the abuse of military detainees, for the post of Homeland Security Department secretary. Another prospective Homeland Security chief to meet with Trump is Kris Kobach, the Kansas secretary of state who has drawn up plans for a registry of all Muslim visitors to the US and all Muslim immigrants already residing in the country.

On the weekend, alt-right supporters held a rally in Washington DC to celebrate Trump's victory. The main speaker, Richard Spencer, attacked Jews, cited Nazi propaganda and declared that America belonged to white people, who were "awakening to their own identity." The meeting ended with someone on the platform shouting "Heil Victory" and the audience shouting it back.

In the face of this, the leadership of the Democratic Party is working to cover up the unprecedented and ominous character of the incoming government, while seeking to collaborate with it on the basis of agreement with its economic nationalist and trade war policies.

At a press conference in Peru, at the conclusion of last weekend's Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, President Barack Obama repeated the line he has preached to foreign leaders and the American public since the November 8 election: That there is nothing to fear from a Trump administration.

"I can't guarantee that the president-elect won't pursue some of the positions that he's taken," Obama said. "But what I can guarantee is that reality will force him to adjust how he approaches many of these issues. That's just the way this office works."

New York Senator Charles Schumer, elevated last week to the post of Democratic Senate minority leader in the incoming Congress, is spearheading a policy of collaboration with Trump on his economic nationalist program, in the name of addressing the needs of US workers. Schumer, known as the "senator from Wall Street" because of his close ties to the banks and hedge funds, has long been a promoter of trade war policies, particularly against China.

He has brought Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders,

nominally an "independent," into the Senate Democratic leadership and further elevated Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren. These supposed "lefts" have aligned themselves with Schumer's efforts to work with Trump on the bogus grounds that Trump's schemes for infrastructure development and his trade war policies will promote the interests of American workers.



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