

Trump revokes security clearance for former CIA chief Brennan: Ruling class warfare intensifies

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17 August 2018

As the conflict within the US state apparatus intensifies, the character of the divisions—pitting against each other two deeply reactionary factions of the capitalist ruling elite and its state—becomes all the clearer.

The warfare reached a new stage Wednesday with the move by US President Donald Trump to revoke the security clearance of former CIA Director John Brennan, citing his “erratic conduct and behavior,” “frenzied commentary” in the media and on Twitter, and “wild outbursts on the internet and television.”

The action against Brennan provoked widespread opposition within the military-intelligence apparatus and from the Democratic Party and the corporate media. Most congressional Democrats and some Republicans criticized Trump’s action, while former intelligence and security officials issued public protests.

The *New York Times*, the main media mouthpiece of the Democratic Party, immediately opened its editorial pages to Brennan to respond to Trump’s action. In a comment published Thursday, Brennan focused entirely on promoting the myth of Russian intervention in the US elections, denouncing Russian denials as “hogwash,” and portraying Trump as a conscious and witting collaborator with “our primary global adversary”—in other words, a traitor.

The White House first hinted at revoking Brennan’s security clearance last month, and the statement announcing the action initially carried the date July 26, indicating that the move had been decided on three weeks ago, but was not made public until Trump felt it would help distract public attention from the mounting crisis within his administration.

It appears that the announcement was made because

Trump felt under increasing pressure from the campaign generated by his former aide, Omarosa Manigault-Newman, who has released a series of tape recordings of conversations—with Trump, White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, campaign aide Katrina Pierson and daughter-in-law Lara Trump.

Manigault-Newman also declared that she had heard a tape recording, in someone else’s possession, of Trump voicing the worst racial slur against African-Americans during his days as host of the reality show “The Apprentice.” This charge was effectively confirmed by Trump’s series of increasingly offensive tweets, culminating in his reference to the former aide as “that dog.” One of the tapes involved a discussion among Trump aides over what to do if a recording of Trump using the racial slur was released to the public.

Such is the character of American politics, which has descended, on all sides, into filth and criminality.

On the one hand is Trump, the personification of the cultural and moral degradation of the ruling class. That his vocabulary would include the language of the KKK is entirely in line not only with the man, but the social forces for which he speaks—a faction of the financial aristocracy that is seeking to cultivate a fascistic movement to direct at social and political opposition from the working class.

Amidst the warfare in Washington, the Trump administration is intensifying its persecution of immigrant workers—now almost entirely dropped by the media—which has included the erection of modern-day concentration camps for detainees.

On the other hand, Brennan has emerged naturally as the chief spokesman of Trump’s ruling class critics. He is the former head of drone warfare for the Obama

administration and the former chief executive of the organization of official assassins, thugs and professional liars known as the Central Intelligence Agency. As CIA director, he sought to block the Senate Intelligence Committee report released in 2014 documenting CIA torture during the Bush administration.

Brennan has a three-decade career with the CIA, where he served, among other places, as station chief in Saudi Arabia, before spending most of the past 20 years at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia or in the Obama White House.

Since leaving the CIA in January 2017, Brennan has cashed in on his intelligence career with a lucrative post as an “analyst” and commentator for NBC News. He has played a leading role in the campaign by sections of the military-intelligence apparatus, backed by the media and the Democratic Party, to attack Trump as “soft” on Russia. The aim is not only to impose a shift in the foreign policy of the Trump administration, but to create the framework for criminalizing domestic opposition and censoring the Internet.

As the Socialist Equality Party declared in the main resolution adopted by its Fifth National Congress, last month, both sides in the conflict, Trump and his opponents, are enemies of the working class:

The break with democratic forms of rule is accompanied by ferocious conflicts within the state apparatus. Each day the president spews his verbal tirades, while the Democrats expound their neo-McCarthyite fantasies of Russians “sowing discord” in America. There is nothing remotely progressive, let alone dignified, in the opposition to Trump mounted by the Democratic Party and sections of the media. They represent another reactionary faction of the ruling class. They oppose Trump mainly on the grounds that his foreign policy—particularly in relation to Russia—is undermining longstanding strategic interests of American imperialism.

It is notable that Brennan’s column in the *New York Times*, written in McCarthyite language, presents

democratic forms themselves as the main weakness in a global struggle with Russia. Brennan writes: “Electoral politics in Western democracies presents an especially inviting target, as a variety of politicians, political parties, media outlets, think tanks and influencers are readily manipulated, wittingly and unwittingly, or even bought outright by Russian intelligence operatives. The very freedoms and liberties that liberal Western democracies cherish and that autocracies fear have been exploited by Russian intelligence services ...”

Alongside of and separate from the palace coup intrigues and political warfare within the state, an altogether different social force is emerging, in the form of a series of strikes that have begun to break free of the pro-corporate trade unions and growing opposition and unrest among all sections of workers. Recent polls have confirmed a collapse of support for capitalism among young people and widespread support for socialism.

While entirely ignored by the capitalist media, there is frenzied activity behind the scenes involving package delivery company UPS and the Teamsters union, along with the state, to find a way to suppress mass opposition to a sellout contract to be voted on within the next few weeks. The ruling class is terrified that any eruption of class struggle can trigger a social explosion.

This opposition must find a conscious political expression. Whatever faction of the ruling class is in power, the trajectory is towards increasingly authoritarian and dictatorial forms of rule. The urgent task is to build a socialist leadership in the working class, the Socialist Equality Party, to unite the different forms of class struggle and social protest into a revolutionary movement to overturn the entire state apparatus and the capitalist profit system that it upholds.



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