

Trump rants against socialism, but his administration's crisis deepens

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Emboldened by the collapse of the Democrats' Russia investigation, President Donald Trump used his first rally since the submission of the Mueller report last weekend to step up his fascist attack on socialism and his scapegoating of immigrants.

Trump began his 82-minute tirade Thursday night in Grand Rapids, Michigan by gloating over the Mueller report, declaring, "The Russia hoax is finally dead. The collusion delusion is over." He denounced the Democrats and intelligence officials who initiated the Russia probe and demanded, to chants of "Lock them up!", that they be held "accountable."

Using the language of neo-Nazi terrorist Brenton Tarrant, who killed 50 Muslims in New Zealand earlier this month, Trump called immigrants "invaders" and pledged to "throw them behind bars or the hell out of the country."

Trump's speech came just days after the US Congress failed to stop his dictatorial appropriation of funds from the Pentagon to build a wall on the US-Mexico border, and as photos emerged showing immigrant children packed behind barbed wire fences under an overpass in El Paso, Texas.

For all his bluster and his success in pushing his far-right policies through the courts and Congress, Trump, who has maintained the lowest net approval rating of any president since World War II, remains immensely hated. He presides over a crisis-ridden, corrupt and despised government.

Trump spoke in Grand Rapids, a bastion of rural conservatism and the headquarters of Amway, the pyramid scheme operation tied to billionaire Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, whose employees were likely bussed in by the thousands. But Trump could muster a crowd of only 15,000.

If a march were called in Washington seriously

opposing Trump, the turnout would be in the millions. More than three million people marched throughout the United States to protest his inauguration.

To the extent that Trump appears strong, it is due only to the spinelessness of his cynical and cowardly political opponents in the Democratic Party.

Trump is kept in office largely through the Democratic Party. From the start, the Democrats' efforts to foment a palace coup have been aimed at demobilizing and disarming the mass opposition that exists to the Trump administration. The Democrats have waged their campaign against Trump on an entirely right-wing basis, through accusations of "collusion" with Russia bound up with differences over US imperialist foreign policy.

The Democrats, who speak for a faction of the financial oligarchy and the military-intelligence apparatus, agree with much of Trump's domestic policy. Trump is sustained by Congress, which overwhelmingly voted on a bipartisan basis for his massive increases in military spending. Congress has refused to seriously oppose his attacks on immigrants and his upward redistribution of wealth through deregulation and corporate tax cuts. The courts have rubber-stamped the administration's violations of the Constitution, such as the Muslim travel ban, and have refused to block its blatantly unconstitutional appropriation of funds to build the border wall.

It is one thing, however, to run circles around the Democratic Party. It is quite another to face down real popular opposition. Among broad sections of workers and young people, Trump's name is a profanity. Almost 60 percent of Americans say they have "little or no confidence" in Trump's immigration policy.

The Trump administration is a government of deep and intensifying crisis. A recession is looming, and the

Federal Reserve has little ammunition to fight it. Trump's foreign policy, staggering from one crisis to another, has exposed the dramatic decline in the world position of American imperialism.

Trump's bluster is based not on strength, but on weakness. While the Democratic Party's palace coup is in shambles, social opposition is growing.

Since Trump has taken office, the number of workers engaged in strikes has increased 20-fold. Tens of thousands of teachers, locomotive workers, university employees and orchestra musicians have gone on strike since the beginning of this year. This is only the initial expression of a mounting wave of social opposition. Trump knows full well that efforts to gut social policies on which millions of people depend will trigger popular opposition.

To this opposition--from strikes over wages to disgust over the xenophobic crackdown on immigrants--Trump gives the name "socialism." Socialism has become a dominant theme in all of his speeches, including the speech in Grand Rapids. Expressing the predatory interests of the financial elite, Trump declared that socialism will mean the "deflation of your stocks and your bonds."

Trump's increasingly fascist appeals, which resonate with only a minority of the most backward sections of society, are aimed at developing a right-wing movement to counter the growth of left-wing, working-class opposition.

The same process is taking place in countries throughout the world. In France, the hated Emmanuel Macron invokes the legacy of Nazi collaborator Philippe Petain as he sends the army against anti-austerity "yellow vest" protestors. In Germany, the political establishment, including the press and sections of academia, is waging a campaign to promote and legitimize extreme right-wing movements to create a constituency for the rearmament of Germany. The traditional bourgeois parties have adopted the anti-immigrant program of the fascist Alternative for Germany and elevated the AfD to the official parliamentary opposition.

In the five years since *Der Spiegel* published an interview with right-wing extremist Professor Jörg Baberowski, who declared that "Hitler was not vicious," the *Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei* (Socialist Equality Party--SGP) has been at the forefront of the

struggle against fascism in Germany.

The Socialist Equality Party in the United States has invited Christoph Vandreier, a leading figure in the SGP's fight against the resurgence of fascism and author of *Why are They Back? Historical Falsification, Political Conspiracy and the Return of Fascism in Germany*, to give a series of meetings on "The Threat of Fascism and How to Fight It."

The growth of political reaction, centered in the state, constitutes a real and pressing danger to the working class. There is massive opposition to the Trump administration, but it has been stifled and suppressed by the Democratic Party, the trade unions and their pseudo-left allies. The real fight against the Trump administration can begin only when it is based on the working class and on a socialist program.

All workers and youth opposed to Trump and his policies of war, repression and social inequality should attend these critical political meetings.



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