

Prospect of right-wing violence and police repression hangs over US election

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With one week remaining until the US election on November 3, additional details are emerging of right-wing plans for election day violence and police preparations for repressing protests on election night.

In a motion filed yesterday in the federal case against six of the 14 fascists who plotted to kidnap and kill Michigan's Democratic governor, Gretchen Whitmer, prosecutors highlighted the timing of the plot: "On multiple occasions," the plotters stated to one another "that the group's deadline for executing the plot was the November 3, 2020 national election."

The motion asks for a delay in the case so that prosecution can "determine whether additional federal charges are appropriate" because investigators found "explosive device components" which indicate a wider plot. "Because of the imminent nature of the threat, law enforcement was obliged to arrest the subjects before this evidence could be processed," the motion reads.

Over the weekend, Jackson County Judge Michael Klaeren reduced bail for conspirator Peter Musico from \$10 million to \$100,000, equivalent to a relatively minor felony. Klaeren, who was appointed to his position by then-Governor Jennifer Granholm, a Democrat, called the original bond "grossly excessive" and rejected a request by the prosecution to confine Musico to his home, saying this would make it difficult for Musico to go to work. Musico, a founding member of the Wolverine Watchmen, gave a thumbs up and thanked the judge.

Last Friday, reports surfaced that a similar plot, led by an individual active within the Ohio Republican Party, was underway against that state's Republican governor, Mike DeWine. But despite credible reports that Renea Turner planned to kidnap DeWine from his Cedarville home and place him on trial to kill or "exile" him, police have not filed charges. A report

from WHIO notes, "[S]tate troopers told News Center 7 they opened an investigation, but declined to comment further."

On Monday afternoon, Turner was allowed to hold a press conference at the state capitol building where she denied plans to kill DeWine but claimed that 85 percent of Ohioans "want him [DeWine] removed," adding, "let's say 5 percent of that 85 percent are skilled marksmen."

Across the country, police departments are also preparing for election day.

In Michigan, statewide organizations representing police and sheriffs continue to refuse to abide by state elected officials' order barring weapons at polling places—a clear nod to militia groups in the state.

In New Hampshire, officials announced they would not attempt to keep voters from bringing weapons to the polls. Further anecdotes indicate the police are becoming more brazen about their support for Trump in the days before the election, encouraged by the president's own statements.

A police officer in New York City used his patrol car's megaphone to broadcast pro-Trump messages to Flatbush residents this weekend. In Florida, a uniformed officer arrived at a polling station last week with a mask that said "Trump." Eleven people were arrested in New York City Sunday when Trump supporters and protestors began fighting. Police guarded the pro-Trump demonstration and manhandled several anti-Trump protestors.

Beginning Monday, the New York Police Department deployed thousands of cops to patrol over 1,200 polling locations, with the chief explaining that the force is "at the ready" for the prospect of protests. In Washington D.C., police have purchased over \$100,000 in additional tear gas canisters. *Buzzfeed News* reported

that Police Chief Peter Newsham “told local lawmakers that in law enforcement circles, ‘it is widely believed there will be civil unrest after the November election regardless of who wins.’”

King County, Washington will also deploy guards at ballot boxes. The chief of police in Chicago referenced election demonstrations in the context of anti-police protests in the city earlier this summer. He said: “We have operations in place to ensure that they don’t destroy property, that they don’t cause further violence and that they are held accountable.”

In New Jersey, 250 members of the state National Guard will process ballots at the county level, though they will do so in civilian clothes. Several dozen guard soldiers will help with “cybersecurity” in North Carolina, while the *Washington Post* reported that states like Kentucky, Nebraska and Wisconsin are also considering deploying the Guard on election day.

These deployments show that a substantial police and National Guard presence will be on the ground on election night, when the likelihood of large anti-Trump demonstrations is high.

In four battleground states, mail-in ballots cannot be counted before election day. These states are also the linchpin of Trump’s strategy to proclaim “fraud” and challenge results: Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Iowa. In these states, large majorities of mail-in ballots come from Democrats, meaning Trump is likely to jump to an early lead on election night as ballots from election-day voters, who are expected to be mostly Republicans, are counted first. On Monday, the US Supreme Court rejected an effort by Democrats to begin counting mail-in ballots in advance of election day.

This lead will erode in the days following the election, giving Trump the opportunity to baselessly claim the election is being stolen from him. Trump may claim victory if early counts show him leading in these states, provoking mass demonstrations and counter-mobilizations by fascist groups that support the president.

Police and national security officials are “gaming” plans to crush demonstrations against Trump. In a report published by the right-wing Claremont Institute and Texas Public Policy Foundation, a network of high-level former national security officials and police leaders write, “There is an increased chance of urban

unrest, especially in jurisdictions where local and state officials are reluctant to maintain order.”

The report “games” the prospect of large-scale social mobilizations and predicts a massive police crackdown.

The report says that in the early morning hours of November 4, the day after the election, police will conduct widespread raids on the homes of left-wing opponents of Trump, suggesting there will be “over one thousand arrest warrants issued using federal and state statutes from RICO to disorderly conduct with coordinated pre-dawn warrant executions nationwide. The decision to obtain arrest warrants even for the barest minimum of probable cause on the lowest of charges is meant to remove the players from the picture, at least temporarily.”

The report predicts that police departments will rebel against Democratic elected officials in cities like Chicago, Portland, Los Angeles and New York as police suppress protests, and that officers assigned to guard Democratic mayors will call in sick, abandoning their posts.

The report also references the likelihood of police mobilizing fascist vigilantes: “Riot control efforts continue throughout the country. There are rumors that several sheriffs in conservative counties throughout the country are hinting that they may deputize regular citizens into posses should the lawlessness come to their counties. Social media is ablaze with volunteers from Proud Boys, Three Percenters, and Oath Keepers and other Posse Comitatus groups to form posses.”

This is the scenario for which the extreme right is preparing. As Trump moves forward with his right-wing strategy and threatens violence against sitting governors in his stump speeches, the Democratic Party responds with meaningless appeals for “calm.” Its greatest fear is that opposition to Trump and his attempt to steal the election will develop into a mass movement outside its control.



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