

Trump defends killer cops and police attacks on protesters in Philadelphia

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29 October 2020

Late Tuesday night, the White House issued a statement unequivocally defending the Philadelphia police officers who on Monday murdered a 27-year-old worker, Walter Wallace Jr., and the subsequent police crackdown on demonstrators in the West Philadelphia neighborhood where the killing occurred. As of Wednesday night, police had arrested hundreds of demonstrators, charging dozens with felonious assault on police officers.

The White House statement reads:

The riots in Philadelphia are the most recent consequence of the Liberal Democrats' war against the police. Law enforcement is an incredibly dangerous occupation, and thousands of officers have given their lives in the line of duty. All lethal force incidents must be fully investigated. The facts must be followed wherever they lead to ensure fair and just results. In America, we resolve conflict through the courts and the justice system. We can never allow mob rule. The Trump Administration stands proudly with law enforcement, and stands ready, upon request, to deploy any and all Federal resources to end these riots.

At a campaign event in Bullhead City, Arizona on Wednesday afternoon, Trump doubled down on his attacks on the protests in Philadelphia, declaring, "The Democrats have spent the entire year inciting violence and hatred against our police. ... Last night, the city of Philadelphia was ransacked by violent mobs and Biden-supported people. These were all Biden-supported people, and he wouldn't even call them out. ... He doesn't want to get involved because he doesn't want to lose the radical left.

"Stores were looted. Police cars were burned, and dozens of officers, great officers, were injured. Biden and Harris stand with the rioters and the vandals. I stand with the heroes of law enforcement."

Less than a week before Election Day, President Donald Trump is seizing on the outpouring of anger against police brutality in Philadelphia to justify, in advance, a massive

mobilization of federal, state and local forces, as well as their fascist militia allies, in the event that mass demonstrations break out in opposition to his planned election coup.

These vicious and provocative statements follow a series of remarks by Trump indicating that he plans to declare victory on or soon after November 3, while millions of largely Democratic mail-in ballots remain to be counted. When protests erupt against his hijacking of the election, Trump will declare them "anarchist riots," "mob rule" and "domestic terrorism" to justify a police state crackdown.

Part of the plot to steal the election is the mobilization of fascist militia supporters, such as the Oath Keepers, III Percenters and Proud Boys, widely backed by the police, to intimidate voters and attack protesters. Trump will rely on the Supreme Court, with the addition of far-right Justice Amy Coney Barrett, to provide a pseudolegal rubber stamp for his overturn of the election results and *de facto* declaration of a presidential dictatorship.

On June 1, Trump attempted to carry out an anti-constitutional coup in response to nationwide, multiracial protests against the May 25 police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Trump deployed federal police to attack peaceful protesters outside the White House and threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act and use active-duty troops to put down the demonstrations across the country. He was thwarted at that time by opposition from the military brass, which deemed such an action unprepared, premature and reckless.

On Tuesday, Stewart Rhodes, the leader of the Oath Keepers, which claims a membership of over 10,000 current and former military and police officers, was interviewed on the program of the fascist Alex Jones. Rhodes urged Trump to invoke the Insurrection Act before the election, while "he was the clear, undisputed president of the United States."

Rhodes assured Jones that "Oath Keepers will be posted outside of DC ... we'll be within range." He added, "Our side will not just go and fight their street soldiers, we will go for their command and control also" because "that's a smart thing to do in warfare."

These developments come amidst the exposure of a plot by pro-Trump militia forces to kidnap and execute the Democratic governor of Michigan and take over the state government, as

well as far-right plots to kill the governors of Virginia and Ohio.

The response of Joe Biden and the Democrats is to say virtually nothing about Trump's plans to sabotage and steal the election, including conspiracies to murder leading figures in the Democratic Party that have thus far led to the arrest and indictment of 14 far-right Trump supporters. The Democrats' aim is to keep the working class in the dark and downplay the danger of dictatorship, for fear of an eruption of mass opposition that they will be unable to control and prevent from threatening the entire capitalist system.

At the same time, Biden has seized on every opportunity to align himself with the Philadelphia police and distance himself from the protesters. On Wednesday, a reporter asked Biden, "What do you say to Philadelphia residents that are outraged by yet another unarmed Black man being shot by police?"

Biden replied, "What I say is that there is no excuse whatsoever for the looting and the violence. None whatsoever."

The corporate-controlled media have largely adopted the narrative of the Trump administration, focusing their reports on instances of looting and arson, while virtually ignoring rampant police abuse and violence.

Both the Pennsylvania state house and City Hall in Philadelphia are controlled by the Democrats, who have overseen the police crackdown against protesters. On Wednesday, Governor Tom Wolf signed a proclamation of disaster emergency that will last for 90 days. It authorizes millions of dollars for the Pennsylvania State Police and National Guard soldiers to deploy to the Philadelphia area and quell "civil disturbances." Hundreds of National Guard troops called up by Wolf are expected to arrive in the city on Friday.

The emergency proclamation was announced shortly after Democratic Mayor Jim Kenney declared an overnight curfew from Wednesday 9:00 p.m. to Thursday 6:00 a.m.

At a Wednesday press conference, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw announced that more than 250 people had been arrested over the previous 48 hours. She said that 81 people were arrested Tuesday night into Wednesday morning, and she doubled the previously announced arrest total for Monday night from 91 to 172.

Self-styled "progressive" District Attorney Larry Krasner announced that his office had filed "dozens of serious charges" against an individual allegedly responsible for hitting a police officer with a truck on Monday night. Krasner had bail set at \$999,999.

Meanwhile, the two police who fired a combined 14 rounds at Wallace, a father of four, while the young man was suffering a mental health emergency related to his bipolar condition, have merely been relegated to desk duty.

Police Commissioner Outlaw, in defiance of a 2017 policy mandating that Philadelphia police release body camera footage and the names of police involved in a shooting within 72 hours, announced that she was delaying the release of body cam

footage and withholding the names of the officers.

The demonstrations in Philadelphia coincide with protests that erupted Tuesday night in Washington D.C. following the death of 20-year-old Karon Hylton-Brown, a recent father, on Monday. According to a police statement released last Friday, Hylton-Brown was driving his Revel scooter on the sidewalk without a helmet. A Metropolitan D.C. police officer, believed to be Terrance Sutton, gave chase in his vehicle. The brief statement then says that Hylton-Brown crashed into another vehicle, resulting in his eventual death.

Family members and eyewitnesses are contradicting the police version of events. Debbie Thurman, a neighbor who lives near the alley where the incident occurred, told CBS News, "I heard a car coming really fast down the alley, and by the time I opened the gate, I heard it hit."

Hylton-Brown's mother, Karen, who was pepper sprayed by police on Tuesday while demanding to speak to the officer who ran down her son, stated that Sutton had a history with her son, routinely harassing him and other working class youth in the neighborhood.

The Metro Police Department and Sutton are currently being sued by the D.C. American Civil Liberties Union for a sexually abusive and unconstitutional search of D.C. resident Mbalaminwe Mwimanzi which occurred in January of 2019.

In addition to the protests in Washington D.C. and Philadelphia, protests in solidarity with Walter Wallace were held in New York City and Portland on Tuesday night. The *New York Post* reported that "dozens" of protesters were arrested in the city on Tuesday night.

The spread of the coronavirus pandemic, coupled with widening inequality and joblessness, is a social catastrophe for which the entire political system is responsible. Neither party is offering any policy to contain the pandemic or provide social relief for the tens of millions of people who are faced with destitution. Instead, the ruling class and its political parties are gearing up the forces of state repression to impose these criminal policies on the working class.

While Democratic mayors and governors trip over themselves to denounce "looters" and "violence," they remain quiet as church mice when it comes to the imminent threat of dictatorship. This is because their primary concern is to suppress popular opposition to Trump and contain the political crisis within the state.

There can be no defense of democratic rights apart from a break with the Democratic Party and the building of a mass socialist movement of the working class against capitalism.



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