Trump adviser calls for people to “rise up” against coronavirus restrictions

Patrick Martin
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Less than two months after a fascist plot to kidnap and murder Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer was broken up by state police and the FBI, a top White House aide has called on the people of Michigan to “rise up” against the Democratic governor.

Dr. Scott Atlas, a leader of Trump’s White House Coronavirus Task Force, made the comments Sunday night on Twitter after Whitmer unveiled new public health measures against an upsurge of the pandemic. These included a three-week closure of bars, restaurants and other indoor gathering places, an end to in-person classes in high schools, and other restrictions.

“The only way this stops is if people rise up,” Atlas tweeted. “You get what you accept.”

Atlas was elevated by Trump as his top public health adviser, despite having no expertise in this area. He is a radiologist turned health policy commentator for the right-wing Hoover Institution. In calling for people to “rise up” against Whitmer, Atlas is well aware that he is echoing the language of the fascist militia gunmen who were arrested in September after they had staked out Whitmer’s vacation home, planning to kidnap the governor, put her on trial for supposed tyranny because of a previous coronavirus lockdown, and then execute her.

He was also mimicking the tweets of Trump himself, who called on supporters to “liberate Michigan” after the earlier Whitmer executive orders closed schools, bars and restaurants during the first phase of the pandemic, which hit Michigan particularly hard.

After his tweet was publicly condemned by Whitmer as an incitement to violence, Atlas followed up with a denial of the obvious, tweeting, “I NEVER was talking at all about violence. People vote, people peacefully protest. NEVER would I endorse or incite violence. NEVER!!”

Trump himself was openly inciting violence after clashes between his fascist supporters and anti-racism protesters on Saturday night in Washington DC and many state capitals, including Sacramento, California and Carson City, Nevada. He hailed the actions of the neo-Nazi Proud Boys on the streets of the US capital, backed by sections of the police. Punch-ups and stabbings followed demonstrations by several thousand Trump supporters who were addressed by fascist leaders such as anti-Semite Nick Fuentes, as well as Congresswoman-elect Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, an advocate of the fascist QAnon grouping.

Repeatedly tweeting about the protests and their violent aftermath, Trump denounced his political opponents in fascistic terms, calling them “Human Radical Left garbage” and “Radical Left ANTIFA SCUM,” while urging Washington DC police to treat all anti-Trump protesters with as much force and violence as possible.

Perhaps the most chilling of all the pronouncements embraced by Trump was a Twitter video from actor Jon Voight, a Christian fundamentalist and an apparently demented supporter of the president, which Trump retweeted late last week.

Denouncing those who supported Democratic candidate Joe Biden and predicting their destruction, Voight declared, “The ones who are jumping for joy now are jumping toward the horror they will be in for …” He continued, “This is now our greatest fight since the Civil War: the battle of righteousness versus Satan. Yes, Satan. Because these leftists are evil, corrupt, and they want to tear down this nation.”

While Trump incites violence and retweets threats of civil war, his enablers throughout the Republican Party treat his refusal to concede defeat in an election that was not close—he lost by nearly six million votes in the

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popular vote and by 306-232 in the Electoral College—as though it was a legitimate exercise of his rights as a candidate.

Some, like Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, pretend there is nothing out of the ordinary in Trump's refusal to acknowledge what everyone knows to be true: that Biden is the president-elect. Others, like House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and a bevy of Trump cabinet aides, continue to declare that Trump "won" the election and that they look forward to the inauguration of a "second Trump administration," which could be installed only through mass violence and the establishment of a presidential dictatorship.

The Democratic Party is responding to Trump's fascistic rants with bromides and soporifics. None of the Democrats say openly what they all know to be true: That Donald Trump and the Republicans are trampling on century-old democratic traditions, refusing to concede an election that has been lost by a sizeable margin, and refusing to engage in the "peaceful transfer of power" that is supposedly the basis of democratic politics.

It should be recalled that for the past four years the Democratic Party has been monomaniacally focused on the claim that American democracy is being fatally undermined by the operations of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Not only has the claim of "foreign meddling" proven to be a complete fabrication, when confronted with a real conspiracy to destroy democratic rights, the Democrats act as if it were only a matter of bad manners.

At his press briefing Monday, Biden was asked what would be the consequences of Trump's refusal to engage in a normal transition. "More people may die if we don't coordinate," Biden replied. In fact, the number of people who will die in the coming months is in the tens and hundreds of thousands.

Biden did not elaborate on the fact that the policy of the Trump administration is criminal, which raises the necessity for the prosecution of those responsible for mass homicide. Nor did he offer any significant proposal to stop the developing catastrophe, aside from urging that people wear masks. In particular, the Biden campaign has opposed any nationwide lockdown of non-essential production.

In the end, the Democrats' programmatic differences with Trump are of a tactical character. The Democrats are far more concerned that anything they say might undermine the markets and spark mass opposition than they are of the fascistic conspiracies of Trump.

If Trump continues his efforts to overthrow the results of the election and remain in office, the Democratic Party will not appeal to the American people to drive the usurper from power and put him and his collaborators in jail. On the contrary, they will do everything possible to suppress any popular revolt against Trump and rely on the military-intelligence apparatus to ensure a transition that safeguards both capitalist domination at home and the position of American imperialism worldwide.

Even when its own governors are threatened with murder, as in the case of Whitmer in Michigan, the Democratic Party barely moves a muscle.

As in all its affairs, there are real social restraints on what the Democrats can say. These are the product of the duplicitous role of the Democratic Party in the American two-party structure. It is a bourgeois imperialist party, no less devoted to Wall Street and the CIA than the Republicans. But for the purpose of maintaining the political monopoly of big business, it must pretend to be the advocate of the interests of working people and mouth certain populist and democratic rhetoric, without ever taking action on it.

The 2020 elections, and even more the post-election crisis, have given an unanswerable demonstration of the class character of the Democratic Party and its complete inability and unwillingness to conduct any serious struggle against the threat of authoritarian rule and outright fascism. Whether Biden is sworn in as president next January or not, the struggle against the fascist danger can go forward only through the independent political mobilization of the working class and the building of its own revolutionary socialist party.

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