Trump incites fascist violence in Georgia

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In his first rally speech since his defeat in the November 2020 presidential election, outgoing President Donald Trump called for overturning the election result, demanded “revenge” against his political opponents and spoke about sending “the military in” to “radical left” cities.

The speech was delivered at a campaign rally to promote the Republican candidates for two US Senate seats at stake in a runoff election set for January 5, 2021. But the real purpose of Trump’s appearance was to advance his own plans for a political coup against the November 3 election won by Democrat Joe Biden, the former vice president and now president-elect.

“If you want to do something to them, I don’t want to use the word revenge, but it is revenge, to the Democrats, you show up and vote in record numbers,” Trump said. In speaking about “revenge,” Trump was sending a signal. In recent weeks, Trump supporters have threatened and terrorized Georgia election officials of both parties, leading Georgia’s top election official, a Republican, to warn, “Someone is going to get killed.”

Trump then declared, “All the radical left Democrat-run cities. If I had to do it again, I would have sent the military in.” This was a reference to Trump’s speech on June 1, when he threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act of 1807 and deploy troops against the mass protests against police violence. Trump pulled back only because of the reluctance of the Pentagon brass, who felt that the plans for martial law were insufficiently prepared and threatened to ignite a civil war.

In recent weeks, Trump has taken a number of measures aimed at establishing his personal control over the military. Last month Trump fired Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, one of those who had resisted the domestic use of the military, replacing him with retired Special Forces officer Christopher Miller, and sent a half dozen loyalists into key positions in the Pentagon.

Many of these harbor openly fascist views, including Scott O’Grady, a former fighter pilot, now acting assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, who had retweeted support for declaring martial law to suppress a supposed Democratic Party “coup” and denounced Trump critics in the Democratic Party and the miltiary as “socialists” and “traitors.”

Last week, retired Army Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, Trump’s first national security adviser, who was pardoned by Trump on November 25, tweeted his support for the fascistic group We the People, which has called on Trump to declare martial law “and temporarily suspend the Constitution and civilian control of these federal elections, for the sole purpose of having the military oversee a re-vote."

Trump, who despite losing by seven million votes and a decisive margin in the Electoral College, has refused to concede, instead using his electoral defeat to mobilize his fascistic supporters against those whom he calls “socialists” and “communists.”

“Hopefully our legislators and United States Supreme Court will step forward and save our country,” Trump concluded in his Georgia speech.

Up to now, neither Republican state legislative leaders nor Republican-appointed judges have intervened to try to reverse states won by Biden, and Biden has already received certification of more than the 270 electoral votes required for a majority in the Electoral College.

However, a poll published by the *Washington Post* Sunday showed that of 249 Republican senators and representatives, only 27 were willing to acknowledge that Biden had won the election. The top Republicans in the US capital are clearly willing to go along with Trump’s continued refusal to concede the election and his unconstitutional efforts to overthrow the results of the popular vote in each state.

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The response of the Democrats to Trump's efforts to incite fascistic violence and overturn the Constitution is characterized by utter passivity. Biden has said nothing about the incessant Trump challenges to his status as president-elect. Congressional Democratic leaders are spreading complacency, assuring the public that Trump's efforts to overturn the result of the November 3 election are a mere temper tantrum.

Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin was the top Democrat appearing on the Sunday television interview programs, and he flatly disavowed any interest in responding to Trump's efforts to overturn the election result. "Joe Biden is going to be sworn in as the next president of the United States on January 20," he said. "In the remaining days, we're going to be in session in Washington; I hope we don't get embroiled in that debate further."

When his interviewer, George Stephanopoulos, asked him an obvious question—how Durbin could engage in negotiations with Senate Republicans over a stimulus bill when they wouldn't even acknowledge the result of the election—Durbin simply reiterated his support for "a bipartisan effort." Stephanopoulos was left to remark, referring to Trump's refusal to concede, "It's really hard to overstate how extraordinary what we're seeing now is."

The *New York Times* responded to Trump's Georgia tirade by publishing an editorial titled "The Decency Agenda," calling on Biden to disregard the danger posed by the fascist right. Biden should "turn down the heat of the culture wars," the *Times* wrote, and find "shared ground on policy" with the Republican Party.

The main concern of the Democratic Party is not the threat of a fascistic dictatorship, but the growth of popular opposition. Since his election, Biden has staffed his cabinet with right-wing corporate shills and warmongers and is making it clear that he will continue Trump's drive to keep schools and businesses open amid a raging pandemic.

All of those who argued that a Biden administration would reject Trump's policies and provide "space" for left-wing politics have been, predictably, proven totally wrong.

Both Trump and the Democrats represent the social interests of the financial oligarchs who profited enormously from his tax cuts and deregulation, and who increasingly regard democracy as a mortal threat to their accumulated wealth.

It is the corporate elite that has backed the "herd immunity" policy of forcing millions of workers to go back to work and resume the production of profits for the capitalists, regardless of the danger to their health and lives, enforced not only by the Trump administration but by state and local governments, both Republican and Democratic.

Biden has similarly pledged to Wall Street that there will be no lockdown, no retreat on the "back-to-work" and "back-to-school" drive. In the event that Biden were to waver in this assurance, under the pressure of the exponential increase in the coronavirus death toll, the corporate media could easily shift its tone and find Trump's claims of "vote fraud" more credible, while leading spokesmen for the ruling elite could begin to put a question mark over the transition to a Biden administration.

It is entirely possible that the Democratic leadership would respond to an outright refusal by Trump to leave office with nothing more than hand-wringing appeals for intervention by Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell or the hard-right Republican majority on the Supreme Court.

Whatever happens in the six weeks between now and Inauguration Day, what is absolutely clear is that nothing will be resolved on January 20.

The fight against the threat of fascist dictatorship must be waged completely independently of the Democratic Party, through a struggle against the entire financial-corporate oligarchy and the capitalist system. It requires that the working class take power into its own hands and restructure economic life on the basis of equality and socialism.

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