

Mobilize the working class against Trump's conspiracy! Prepare for a political general strike!

Statement of the Socialist Equality Party
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Almost a week after the fascistic insurrection in Washington DC on January 6, there are ongoing threats of far-right violence throughout the United States, focused on Inauguration Day, January 20.

In an indication of how seriously the threat is being taken within the state, the head of the National Guard Bureau announced on Monday that between 10,000 and 15,000 troops will be deployed in Washington DC by this coming weekend, in advance of the inauguration.

An internal FBI memo released by ABC News yesterday warns that armed protests are being planned in all 50 state capitals, in addition to Washington DC, organized by far-right groups. "The FBI received information about an identified armed group intending to travel to Washington, DC on 16 January," the memo states. "They have warned that if Congress attempts to remove POTUS [Trump] via the 25th Amendment, a huge uprising will occur."

Another FBI memo, obtained by Yahoo News, identifies specific plans in Michigan, Minnesota and other states on January 17. In Michigan, members of the far-right "Boogaloo" movement are reported to have been discussing "using a gasoline-based device with a tripwire" to "cause a distraction while other individuals 'take' the capitol." Michigan was the center of a fascistic conspiracy to kidnap and assassinate the governor of the state that was exposed last October.

The working class, young people and all progressive forces must take these threats with the utmost seriousness.

The working class must respond with a general strike to attempts by ultra-right mobs, instigated by the political criminal Donald Trump and his Republican Party accomplices in the Senate and Congress, to threaten the lives of elected representatives and seize government buildings and other strategic sites, whether in Washington DC or in state capitals throughout the country.

The threat of violence on Inauguration Day comes amidst growing evidence of the high-level support from within the Republican Party and critical sections of the military-police apparatus for the January 6 insurrection. The siege of the US Capitol was facilitated by the effective stand-down of the Capitol Police and delays, at the direction of Trump loyalists in the Pentagon, in the deployment of the National Guard.

Democratic Representative Jason Crow, a member of the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, reported a call he held with US Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy on Sunday. McCarthy informed Crow that "long guns, Molotov cocktails, explosives and zip ties were recovered [after the raid on the Capitol], which suggests a greater disaster was narrowly averted."

Crow added that he "raised grave concerns about reports that active duty and reserve military members were involved in the insurrection," and urged that "troops deployed for the inauguration... are not sympathetic to domestic terrorists."

The claims being made by various pseudo-left tendencies that the seriousness of the events in Washington should not be exaggerated, that it is wrong to refer to a coup, are dangerously complacent. *Jacobin* magazine, which is affiliated with the Democratic Socialists of America, argues against "social media posts and liberal magazines of record [that] immediately characterized the rampage as a coup."

The danger of fascistic violence, *Jacobin* claims, is minimal because the ruling class supports democracy. It writes: "The takeover of the Capitol has laid bare the lack of backing, both among corporate elites and within state institutions, for far-right authoritarianism. Capital, it seems, is still committed to liberal democracy, which has served to safeguard its interests throughout American history."

Such comments combine political stupidity with the utter complacency that characterizes the privileged layers of the upper-middle class for whom *Jacobin* speaks. The authoritarian actions of Trump, according to *Jacobin*, are disconnected from the class interests of the ruling oligarchy and the massive social inequality that has eroded the objective basis for democracy. The pressures arising from social polarization have been driven to the point of explosion by the pandemic, in which more than 385,000 people in the United States have died.

Another aspect of the complacent underestimation of the political crisis and the dangers posed by Trump's attempted coup has been the response to the shutting down of Trump's Twitter account over the weekend. To see this action, in the present circumstances, as the main threat to democratic rights expresses a complete underestimation of what is now taking place.

Trump is not merely an individual, let alone the representative of a dissident progressive and left-wing movement. He is the

commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the United States, with staggering power at his disposal—including the power to launch a nuclear war—as long as he is president. To insist on his unfettered access to Twitter and social media—so that he can mobilize and incite his fascistic followers throughout the country—as if this were a critical free speech issue is politically irresponsible, if not insane. And if it is impermissible to shut down his Twitter account, it must be doubly impermissible to demand his immediate removal from the White House and arrest! The politically bankrupt cynics of the pseudo-left should be less worried about Trump’s rights and more concerned about the defense of the democratic rights of the working class.

It is no doubt true that the Biden administration will be a right-wing government of Wall Street, the intelligence agencies and the military. But the task of fighting a reactionary bourgeois government is the responsibility of the working class, and not that of a right-wing dictator mobilizing fascist forces.

The working class must intervene in the crisis independently, waging a struggle against fascism through its own methods and with its own program.

It is impossible to place trust in any section of the ruling class to defend democratic rights. Trump’s opponents within the ruling class are keenly aware that Trump’s incitement of fascistic violence risks unleashing a civil war. However, they are far more concerned with suppressing opposition to Trump that threatens to develop into precisely what they fear the most: a movement of the working class against capitalism.

It is for this reason that the Democrats are seeking to quarantine the issue of Trump’s role in inciting the fascistic coup from the broader political context. In particular, Biden, as the leader of the Democratic Party, is doing everything he can to defend the institution of the Republican Party, whose leaders provided the plot with its necessary political cover by legitimizing Trump’s claims that the election was stolen.

In his only public statements since the coup, Biden said at a press conference on Friday that he was committed to a “strong” Republican Party. He singled out Senate Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for praise, saying he was “so proud” of McConnell’s statements on the afternoon of the coup calling for congressional recognition of Biden’s victory.

The Democrats’ move to pass impeachment charges in the House of Representatives, which could happen as early as Wednesday, is itself part of this effort. The charges are being introduced with all sorts of caveats to ensure the impeachment will have no practical effect. Top Democrats, led by Biden’s close ally Representative James Clyburn, are calling for the House to wait several months before sending any impeachment charges to the Senate, meaning they would have no impact on Trump’s remaining days in office.

If the House does send the charges immediately to the Senate, McConnell, Trump’s henchman, who was praised by Biden, has said that he will not convene a trial until at least January 19, the day before the inauguration.

Moreover, however significant Trump’s personal role, it is part of a much broader political conspiracy, involving national and local officials throughout the Republican Party and elements

within the military and police apparatus. Biden has specifically rejected calls for even the resignation of senators Ted Cruz and Josh Hawley, let alone their immediate arrest for politically abetting Trump’s coup. And there have been no calls for the immediate arrest of Rudolph Giuliani, Trump’s sons and Trump’s lawyers, or any of those directly involved in incitement.

The fascistic coup of January 6 marks a new stage in the crisis of American democracy, and the lessons must be drawn. It is an expression of a comprehensive breakdown of American capitalist society. It is not possible to fight the threat of fascism without recognizing that this is a social movement that arises on the basis of a deep crisis of the existing economic order. Through the medium of fascism, the ruling elites seek to channel mass social discontent into a reactionary movement directed against the working class.

The political antidote to fascism is the development of a mass political movement of the working class for socialism. Moreover, to the extent that the working class comes forward in this fight, it will be immeasurably strengthened in the fight against the Democratic Party and a Biden administration.

The Socialist Equality Party calls on workers to respond to fascist violence on and around January 20 with preparations for a general strike. A network of rank-and-file committees in the factories and workplaces, and in every neighborhood and city, must be developed to mobilize and unify all sections of the working class.

Workers must reject all efforts to inject into the political situation racial conflict and division, including the claims by Democrats that the fascistic coup is an expression of “whiteness,” rather than the interests of the financial oligarchy. This narrative only provides political ammunition for the fascists themselves. Throughout the country, workers of all races and ethnicities work shoulder to shoulder. They face a common social and economic crisis and common enemies in the capitalist ruling elite.

Mass popular opposition to the efforts of the ruling class to destroy democratic rights must be connected to the demand for a full, open and public investigation into the January 6 coup. All those involved in organizing the operation and providing it with political cover must be removed from office, arrested and prosecuted.

Even if Biden—guarded by thousands of armed soldiers and police—takes the oath of office on January 20 and makes it into the White House, the crisis will not have passed. American democracy is in its death throes.

There can be no progressive way out of this crisis except through the building of a powerful mass movement of the working class, allied with the working class throughout the world, for socialism.

All those who now recognize the urgency of building this movement should join the Socialist Equality Party.



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