

Democrats plead for bipartisanship as the Republicans call for blood

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The House of Representatives voted Wednesday afternoon to impeach President Donald Trump for a second time. The single count charging the president with inciting the mob attack of January 6 against Congress, for the purpose of overthrowing the government and overturning the result of the 2020 election, is fully justified. But the action will not remove Trump from office, expose his co-conspirators or undermine the growth of a fascistic movement in the United States.

President-elect Joe Biden and congressional Democratic leaders have spent the week since the fascist coup attempt pleading with the Republicans for “unity,” “healing” and “bipartisanship.” Behind the scenes, they have no doubt already made concessions on policy and the selection of key personnel, while promising the Republicans effective power-sharing despite the fact that, as of January 20, the Democrats will control both houses of Congress and the presidency.

The nature of the individuals to whom the Democrats refer as their “Republican colleagues” was on display yesterday. In a declaration of continued support for Trump, 197 of the 211 Republicans in the House voted against impeachment.

Democrat after Democrat pleaded with Republicans in the course of Wednesday’s debate, citing the imminent threat of death which congressional representatives of both parties faced only a week ago, with armed fascist thugs pounding on the doors of the House chamber and invading their offices, screaming for blood. Republicans responded by denouncing the entire proceedings.

The lead was given by Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio, who received the Medal of Freedom from Trump earlier this week and spoke first for the Republican delegation. Jordan attacked the “cancel culture” that he said was behind the impeachment drive and repeated the claim that the election was “rigged”—the political framework within which the fascist mobilization was

organized.

Louis Gohmert of Texas said that impeachment “incites violence,” implying that the Democrats would be responsible for further outrages committed by Trump supporters. Andy Biggs of Arizona warned that voting for impeachment “is pouring gasoline on the embers” of the January 6 uprising.

One of the most rabid Trump defenders, Matt Gaetz of Florida, said that Trump had been impeached twice, both times “for being right.” Trump had pointed out the activities of “the Biden crime family,” leading to his impeachment in 2019, and then in the 2020 election, “the president correctly pointed out illegal voting.”

Gun rights enthusiast Lauren Boebert of Colorado began her one-minute diatribe with a brief invocation, “Glory to God,” before attacking “the left” for allegedly inciting violence and justifying rioters during the wave of mass protests against police violence last summer. Boebert nearly came to blows with Capitol police Tuesday when they began requiring all members of Congress to pass through magnetometers before entering the building. She reportedly carries a concealed weapon into the Capitol on a regular basis.

Scott Perry of Pennsylvania went so far as to declare, “What happened during last summer was far closer to an insurrection than anything that happened on January 6.”

The performance on the House floor made all the clearer the fact that Trump’s actions had the support and still have the support of the overwhelming majority of the Republican delegation.

A key political function of the Democratic Party for many decades has been to cover up the transformation of the Republican Party into a toxic mix of fascists and neo-Nazis, presided over but scarcely controlled by establishment figures like House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

It is evident that the aim of those leading the attack on

the Capitol was to take hostages among the congressmen and senators, kill some of them as examples, prevent the congressional certification of Trump's defeat in the presidential election, and begin negotiations, under the threat of mass executions, for the nullification of the results of the 2020 elections.

If a protracted siege had developed in Washington, similar actions would have been duplicated in state capitols throughout the country. And there is reason to believe that sections of the police and military, too, could have gone into action on Trump's behalf.

Among the revelations of the past several days: pipe bombs were planted at the headquarters of the Democratic and Republican parties to divert police away from the Capitol; the "panic buttons" installed in most congressional offices were found to be disabled when it became urgently necessary to call for police assistance; a group of "tourists" being guided through the Capitol by Republicans before January 6 (despite the pandemic) were seen taking notes of the layout of offices, tunnels and other passageways—and some were later recognized among the January 6 attackers.

If events had gone differently on January 6, if hostages had been taken, the same people speaking on the House floor yesterday, the Democrats' "Republican colleagues," would have defended the actions of the fascists and insisted that concessions be made to their legitimate grievances in the interests of "healing" the country. They would have demanded in one form or another the nullification of the 2020 election.

Democratic leaders sought to sweep the mounting evidence of a high-level conspiracy under the rug, in order, as Biden declared last week, to preserve a "strong Republican Party," which he presented as a necessity for the American government. In that spirit, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, in closing the debate, quoted repeatedly the words of Liz Cheney, the Republican caucus chairman and arch-reactionary, who condemned Trump's role in the coup and voted for impeachment. He also praised the performance of Vice President Mike Pence, who backed Trump's unconstitutional and illegal attack on the legitimacy of the 2020 election right up to the point where Trump demanded a directly illegal act on his part—to block a congressional vote to accept the results of the Electoral College.

In the end, the impeachment vote is a toothless action. The whole framework of American politics is shifting violently to the right, with the outright fascists integrated even more closely into the structure of the state.

Biden himself is seeking to establish what amounts to a coalition government with Republicans, even though the Democrats now control both houses of Congress and the executive branch. He deliberately distanced himself from the impeachment and rejected calls for Trump's co-conspirators in the Republican Party to resign, let alone be arrested and prosecuted.

Biden declared yesterday that he will seek to pass a new coronavirus "stimulus" bill on a "bipartisan basis." That means that McConnell and other reactionaries will have veto power, and they will demand provisions like legal immunity for employers whose workers die of COVID-19 contracted on the job.

All the talk of "unity" and "bipartisanship," the Democrats' eternal mantra, means in reality that there will be no settling of accounts with those who incited the insurrection. The Democrats' main concern is not the growth of fascism, but the development of a movement of the working class that threatens the interests of Wall Street and American imperialism.

The decisive question is the independent intervention by the working class into the crisis. This means the building of rank-and-file safety committees in workplaces and neighborhoods to defend working people from the pandemic, and the preparation of a political general strike against any renewed attempt at the violent seizure of the US Capitol or any of the 50 state capitols, which are all now being targeted by the fascist conspirators.

As long as the working class does not intervene independently, in opposition to the entire ruling class political establishment, the fascist conspiracies will continue. The only way to put an end to the threat of fascism is the mobilization of the independent strength of the working class against the capitalist system, which is the fundamental source of the threat of dictatorship.



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