

Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas announces “domestic violence review” at Department following January 6 fascist coup attempt

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Less than four months after fascist militias, aided and abetted by elements of the state, stormed the US Capitol in an attempt to take congressional members hostage in order to overthrow the election and install Trump as president-dictator, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas announced that the department would begin an “internal review to address the threat of domestic violent extremism within the Department of Homeland Security.”

In an extraordinary statement issued Monday, Mayorkas acknowledged that far-right elements have thoroughly infiltrated the massive 240,000-person Homeland Security bureaucracy that is charged with overseeing fascistic repressive agencies such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Customs and Border Patrol (CPB) and the US Marshals Service.

The DHS secretary wrote that “identifying, addressing, and preventing domestic violent extremism,” is the “top priority” of the department, noting that “domestic violent extremism poses the most lethal and persistent terrorism-related threat to our country today. As we work to safeguard our Nation, we must be vigilant in our efforts to identify and combat domestic violent extremism within both the broader community and our own organization.”

“Hateful acts and violent extremism will not be tolerated within our Department,” he added. As part of the order, an internal team led by the DHS chief security officer will produce a report with recommendations for Mayorkas on “how best to identify and respond to threats related to domestic violent extremism, including those based on racially- or ethnically-motivated violent extremism.”

That Mayorkas issued this statement, publicly, less than three days before President Joe Biden is expected to give his first speech before a joint session of Congress since becoming president, reflects the immense fear within sections of the ruling class that these far-right elements still pose a very real threat. Even as Biden is set to give his speech, some 2,400 National Guard soldiers remain deployed in Washington, D.C.

The statement from Mayorkas follows a similar “stand-down” order issued by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin in February of this year. Austin explained that the stand-down order was given in order to “discuss the problem of extremism” throughout the

2.1-million-person US military.

The latest arrest figures from CBS News revealed that of the “more than 410 arrests so far” in the Capitol siege, “at least 42 are current or former military.” At least 20 arrested military members served in the US Marines, and at least one, 55-year-old Virginia man Jeffrey McKellop, was a former “Green Beret” in the US Army Special forces. According to the *Washington Post*, McKellop had been deployed as a contractor in a “overseas combat zone as recently as 2018.”

The 60-day military stand-down concluded earlier this April with little to show for it. Respondents to a *Military Times* survey described the one-day training as “forced” with many noting that leadership did not take the issue seriously.

One naval officer told the *Military Times*, “the stand-down script seemed forced and leadership at times would make it a verbal point that ‘we have to do this,’ obviously not authentically interested in leading the discussion or covering the required topics. They also seemed reluctant to have in-depth discussion, brushing off questions, or just moving the conversation to the next topic. It was very surface-level, without significant substance.”

Another petty officer 1st class told the *Military Times* it was clear that the leader giving the training in her unit “wouldn’t punish anyone for these offenses, which lets sailors know they don’t have to change their words or actions.”

Even as the military stand-down was ongoing, a lightly publicized investigation from NBC News earlier in April revealed that thousands of Special Forces members in private Facebook groups, including current and former Rangers and Green Berets, were sharing memes and posting comments in support of the fascist QAnon conspiracy theory while claiming the election was stolen. NBC News reported that the comments were made in private groups that describe themselves as solely for special operations forces.

In the groups, SF Brotherhood-PAC and US Special Forces Team Room, NBC reported seeing many negative comments made against Secretary Austin after he announced the stand-down. “He has risen to the very peak of his profession, riding on the color of his skin,” wrote a member of SF Brotherhood-PAC on February

26, according to NBC.

NBC reported that in one QAnon post, several members of a special forces group were upset that aides to former Vice President Mike Pence were allegedly part of a “Concerted effort by the thieves and pedophiles walking the hallowed halls of the peoples [sp] government” to undermine Trump.

“In a just world, they would have already been taken out behind the court house [sp] and shot,” another member of the group wrote in agreement. In response to a post criticizing the Black Lives Matter movement, one member posted an image with a noose captioned, “IF WE WANT TO MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN WE WILL HAVE TO MAKE EVIL PEOPLE FEAR PUNISHMENT AGAIN.”

“Trump was sabotaged once again!” wrote another member of the US Special Forces Team Room on January 7. Speaking to NBC, Jack Murphy, a former Army Ranger and Green Beret, said the growing problem of fascistic attitudes within the military is not limited to just a few lower-ranking, young soldiers.

“It’s not just the occasional private in the 3rd Infantry. There are senior officers and noncommissioned officers in the military who believe this.”

The fact is, backward, reactionary and fascistic attitudes have been allowed to fester within the ranks of the US police, military and intelligence agencies for decades under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

The rise of the far right in the recent period, most notably under Trump in the US, but also internationally in countries such as in Spain, Germany and Brazil, is a deliberate decision on the part of sections of the ruling class, to blunt the decline of their global economic position through military means, which requires the promotion of fascistic forces in order to carry out the militarization of society abroad and at home.

This militarization of society is most starkly expressed in the heart of world imperialism, the United States. From the moment Trump announced he was running for president, he sought to cultivate a base of support within the “American Gestapo” by demonizing immigrants as “rapists and murderers” while promising to increase funding for ICE and CBP and to build a “big, beautiful wall” along the southern border with Mexico.

This process however did not begin with Trump and, despite the claims of those on the pseudo-left, has not ended with the election of Biden. The very creation of the DHS following the still unexplained terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, was a part of this still-ongoing process that will end in either imperialist war or socialist revolution.

After US soldiers were sent overseas to claim blood and treasure in the name of US imperialist interests, once they returned home they were recruited and encouraged to join police departments across the country. In 2009, Daryl Johnson, a former intelligence analyst for the Department of Homeland Security, warned about the growing threat of right-wing extremism for the Department titled, “Rightwing Extremism: Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment.”

In the report, Johnson wrote: “Returning veterans possess combat skills and experience that are attractive to right-wing extremists. DHS/I&A is concerned that right-wing extremists will

attempt to recruit and radicalize returning veterans in order to boost their violent capabilities.”

Despite the report accurately noting that veterans of the neo-colonial occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq provided a fertile base of recruitment for fascistic forces, Obama’s then-DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano buckled to Republican fury over the report allegedly “slandering” veterans and for making a delineation between the threats posed from far-right and far-left violence. Napolitano issued an apology before retracting the report entirely.

A more recent example of the DHS being forced to omit the danger of the far right in order to serve the political agenda of more reactionary elements in the ruling class was revealed last year in the whistleblower complaint of the former head of intelligence analysis at DHS, Brian Murphy.

In his complaint, Murphy alleged that then-DHS acting secretary Chad Wolf, and his deputy secretary Ken Cuccinelli, instructed him to modify domestic terrorism threat assessments in order to downplay the threat from the far right and white supremacists while inflating the threat of amorphous groups like antifa.

A similar phenomenon took place during the January 6 attack on the Capitol, as revealed in recent House Administration Committee hearings concerning the response of the Capitol Police department. Last week, chair of the committee Rep. Zoe Lofgren revealed that rank-and-file police were instructed the morning of January 6 to ignore Trump protesters and instead target “anti-Trump” counter-protesters, despite the fact that the Capitol Police department’s own intelligence reports warned of violent Trump supporters viewing January 6 as their last attempt to overturn the election and that “Congress itself” would be the target, not antifa or left-wing counter-protesters.

The Democrats, in an effort to rehabilitate the Republican Party in order to carry out their shared class policy of “herd immunity” at home and “Great Power” competition with China and Russia abroad, are forced to continue to downplay and cover up the ties that the fascists have, not only to the Republican Party but to the state as a whole.



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