

Woodward revelations expose Democrats' calls for "unity" with Republican coup plotters

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The revelations from *Washington Post* journalists Bob Woodward and Robert Costa that General Mark Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, took action to stop what US officials called "a right-wing coup" by former president Donald Trump, have demonstrated how close the United States came to dictatorship and a potential war with China during Trump's final days in office.

Milley told US military officials not to follow orders from Trump without Milley's approval after Trump's attempt to foment an insurrection, and he promised to warn Chinese military officials if Trump attempted to start a war. This reality has exposed the criminality of the Democrats' constant calls for "unity" and "bipartisanship" with Trump's co-conspirators in the Republican Party.

On Wednesday, a spokesman for Milley confirmed one of the main revelations in Woodward and Costa's new book, *Peril*, namely that Milley telephoned his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Li Zuocheng, commander of the People's Liberation Army, on October 30, 2020, four days before the US presidential election, and then again on January 8, 2021, two days after the attack by a pro-Trump mob on the US Capitol.

CIA Director Gina Haspel warned Milley, according to the new book, "We are on our way to a right-wing coup."

In keeping with the Democrats' efforts to cover up the events of January 6, the *Post* and *New York Times* have buried their articles on the revelations on their front pages, and neither newspaper has published an editorial on the subject.

For his part, Biden said on Wednesday that he had "great confidence" in Milley, while avoiding any

comment on the content of the revelations in *Peril*.

By contrast, the Republicans have launched a furious campaign against Milley. Republican Senator Ted Cruz, one of Trump's co-conspirators, accused Milley of "undermining the commander in chief and pledging to our enemies to defy his own commander." Senator Rand Paul demanded that Milley be court martialed, while Trump himself accused Milley of treason.

According to dialogue published verbatim in the new book—obviously based on interviews with Milley or Pelosi, or both—Pelosi told Milley that "the Republicans have blood on their hands" for encouraging Trump to believe he could retain the presidency despite his loss in the election.

"But it is a sad state of affairs for our country that we've been taken over by a dictator who used force against another branch of government," she continued. "And he's still sitting there. He should have been arrested. He should have been arrested on the spot ... He had a coup d'état against us so he can stay in office. There should be some way to remove him."

In other words, the January 6 attack on Congress was not viewed by those in a position to know—the head of the US military and the leader of congressional Democrats—merely as a riotous excess by a pro-Trump crowd. They understood it and openly discussed it as a serious bid for power, an effort by Trump and his inner circle to block the certification of the election's outcome and hijack the presidency: a political coup based on fascist violence.

The quotes from Pelosi are particularly revealing. She was speaking then, on January 8, only two days after her own life had been threatened and her staff had been compelled to barricade themselves into a conference

room, whispering pleas for help on cellphones while the mob howled in the hallways outside. She therefore spoke bluntly and plainly of a “coup d’état” and a would-be “dictator” who posed an imminent threat.

Only a few days later, Pelosi would revert to the boilerplate and blather of capitalist politics, engaging in a series of parliamentary maneuvers—impeachment, which failed, followed by a resolution to establish an “independent commission” into January 6, which failed, followed by the appointment of a “select committee” to investigate the events, which has met exactly once.

The driving force of this cover-up has not been Pelosi, however prominent a role she has been given. The orders come from the White House, where President Biden has decreed a policy of bipartisan “unity” in Washington, seeking, as he said openly, to strengthen the Republican Party: in other words, to legitimize the party of coup-plotters.

In his inauguration speech, Biden did not even mention the events of January 6, much less the fact that the outgoing president had fomented an “insurrection.”

Biden’s policy is not just a matter of seeking Republican support for various pieces of legislation. That is only the pretext. His real concern is the stability of American capitalism, and the political system through which it has ruled for more than a century. Biden seeks to preserve the two-party system, even under conditions where the Republican Party has broken with democracy and is openly embracing the authoritarianism and fascistic politics of Trump.

Since the events of January 6, the Democrats have spent far more time and energy over the alleged transgressions of former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo than responding to an unprecedented effort to overthrow the government and establish a right-wing dictatorship.

The new revelations in the Woodward book confirm everything the *World Socialist Web Site* has said about the January 6 coup attempt, and they shatter the efforts of various pseudo-left groups, ranging from the Democratic Socialists of America to the former opponent of the American surveillance state, Glenn Greenwald, to dismiss the events of that day as insignificant or mere political horseplay.

This was a serious attempt to overturn the election, and it failed only because the decisive centers of power

in the military-intelligence apparatus judged the attempt to be poorly organized and unlikely to succeed. A democracy which depends on the sufferance of generals and CIA directors, however, is not a democracy at all, but a dictatorship in waiting.

The events of January 6, and the subsequent cover-up, demonstrate that the defense of democratic rights cannot be entrusted to any section of the American ruling elite. This task must be taken up by the working class, through the building of a mass socialist movement.



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