

Trump, flanked by Republican officials, delivers fascist screed at Iowa State Fairgrounds

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Nine months after his January 6 coup attempt, former president Donald Trump, flanked by leading Republican Party officials, delivered a nearly two-hour fascist rant at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines on Saturday before a crowd of several thousand far-right supporters.

Trump's speech served as the unofficial kick-off for his 2024 presidential campaign. Prior to and during the speech, Trump was embraced by leading members of the Republican Party establishment, confirming that the right-wing party is continuing its transformation into a fascist party under the personalist leadership of Trump, with paramilitary militias such as the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers serving as armed auxiliaries.

Pitching himself to the financial oligarchy as a bulwark against socialism and savior of capitalism, Trump began his speech by agitating against immigrants, absurdly claiming that Biden was pursuing a policy of "open borders" and facilitating an invasion of "violent gangs and drug cartels."

Staying on the theme of a country under siege, Trump hissed: "After just nine months under Biden, violent criminals and bloodthirsty gangs are taking over our streets. Illegal aliens and deadly drug cartels are taking over our borders. Inflation is taking over the economy, China is taking over our jobs, the Taliban has taken over Afghanistan, lunatic leftists are taking over our schools and radical socialists are taking over our country. We will not let that happen."

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds and Senator Chuck Grassley made remarks prior to Trump's appearance. In the course of his speech, Trump called Grassley to the stage and ostentatiously endorsed the senator's bid for an eighth term in the 2022 midterm elections.

The 88-year old Grassley accepted the endorsement of the man he had condemned earlier this year for

encouraging "his own, loyal vice president, Mike Pence, to take extraordinary and unconstitutional actions during the Electoral College count." Grassley struck a much different tone Saturday night. "If I didn't accept the endorsement of a person that's got 91 percent of the Republican voters in Iowa, I wouldn't be too smart," he quipped.

Trump's endorsement of Grassley followed last week's release of the Senate Judiciary Committee interim report on the January 6 storming of the US Capitol. The report details Trump's numerous, criminal efforts to enlist the Department of Justice in his effort to overthrow the results of the November 3, 2020 presidential election, which he lost by a wide margin to Democrat Joe Biden.

Grassley, the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee, released a counter report that cherry-picked from the voluminous email exchanges, congressional testimony and confidential documents reprinted in the majority report and divorced them from their broader context in order to claim that Trump did nothing wrong. According to Grassley, Trump's efforts to pressure election officials and Justice Department attorneys were a legitimate response to "reports of crimes."

Facing a growing wave of strikes and protests by workers in response to the ruling class's homicidal "herd immunity" pandemic policy as well as rising inflation and the self-enrichment of the pandemic profiteers, substantial sections of the political establishment are dispensing with all pretenses of democracy and embracing fascism under the banner of "America First" and "Make America Great Again."

Both Grassley and Reynolds in their own speeches borrowed Trump's fascist rhetoric, especially in relation to immigrants. Grassley declared that under Biden the US had "no border" with Mexico, while Reynolds attacked

Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris for not visiting the border.

In his speech, Trump returned to the theme of immigration numerous times, while attacking Biden's wholly inadequate and rapidly dwindling "Build Back Better" social welfare and climate bill as a "radical left \$5 trillion spending spree to end America as we know it." Trump claimed that the bill, which does nothing to challenge the fortunes of the corporate oligarchs, would bring about the "socialist transformation" of the country.

Trump devoted the bulk of his remarks to reiterating his groundless claims that the election was rigged. "I'm telling you," he said, "the single biggest issue, as bad as the border is... the issue that gets the most pull, the most respect, the biggest cheers is talking about the election fraud of the 2020 presidential election."

Earlier in the week, Trump, claiming executive privilege, instructed four of his main co-conspirators to refuse to comply with subpoenas issued by the House Select Committee investigating the January 6 coup attempt. One of the four, former Breitbart editor and White House special advisor Steve Bannon, announced his defiance of his subpoena. In one of his daily "War Room" podcasts, he said he would have 20,000 "shock troops" prepared to "take over the administrative state and deconstruct it" once the Republicans reclaimed Congress in the 2022 elections and the White House in 2024.

In a letter sent to the Archivist of the United States, David Ferriero, and reported by *Politico*, Trump wrote that the information sought by the committee contained information shielded by "executive and other privileges, including but not limited to the presidential communications, deliberative process, and attorney-client privileges."

"Should the committee persist in seeking other privileged information, I will take all necessary and appropriate steps to defend the Office of the Presidency," Trump wrote.

That Trump, along with his Republican accomplices and operatives, is able to ignore the committee's demands, avoid prosecution for the January 6 coup and continue openly to cultivate and build a fascist movement is entirely due to the fecklessness and complicity of the nominal opposition party, the Democrats.

Beholden to the same financial oligarchy and capitalist system as the Republicans, the Democrats, and their various pseudo-left adjuncts, are entirely focused on blocking and suppressing the growth of social and

political opposition to their class agenda of ruthless exploitation and "herd immunity" at home and the preparation of "great power conflict" against China.

That is why Biden continues to appeal for "unity" with the Republicans, even as they solidarize themselves even more firmly with Trump. Speaking last week in Michigan to promote his "Build Back Better" plan, he chided his "friends on the other team" for opposing token tax increases on the rich.

Meanwhile, the Democrats and the Democratic-aligned media, led by the *New York Times*, continue to cover up the significance and scale of the January 6 coup plot and the role of high-level operatives in the police, military and intelligence apparatus in the drive to establish dictatorial rule.

On Friday, California Democratic Representative Zoe Lofgren, a member of the House Select Committee on January 6, told National Public Radio that the panel had yet to receive any "written communication" from Trump conspirators Bannon, former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, former deputy chief of staff for White House communications Dan Scavino, or Kashyap Patel, who was chief of staff for former acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller, all of whom were served subpoenas by the committee.

Speaking to *Politico*, the chairman of the committee, Mississippi Democrat Bennie Thompson, said he would like the committee to wrap up its "investigation" by next spring, which would give Trump's co-conspirators more than enough time to fight their subpoenas in court without ever having to testify. The committee has held only one public hearing since its formation on July 1, consisting entirely of testimony from police officers who came under attack from Trump's insurrectionists on January 6. It has scheduled no further hearings or business meetings.



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