

Trump draft executive order called for military to seize ballots and voting machines as part of coup plot

Jacob Crosse
22 January 2022

On Friday, *Politico* published the draft of an executive order drawn up for Donald Trump, dated December 16, 2020, which authorized Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller to deploy the National Guard to seize voting machines across the country.

The order was a brief for the military to overturn the election of Joe Biden and impose a military dictatorship headed by the defeated incumbent, Trump. It would have given the Pentagon 60 days to submit its analysis of supposed election fraud to the director of national intelligence and a special council to draw up criminal and civil charges against Trump's political opponents, who would undoubtedly have been arrested and likely killed en masse.

The unsigned order, part of a vast, multi-faceted plot that culminated in the fascist coup attempt of January 6, 2021, cites several of Trump's baseless election conspiracy theories to justify the disenfranchisement of 81 million Biden voters.

The document is part of a trove of more than 700 documents Trump sought unsuccessfully to conceal. They were turned over to the House Select Committee on the January 6 Attack by the National Archives following an 8-1 Supreme Court ruling on Wednesday rejecting Trump's blanket assertion of executive privilege.

Repeating the lies found in a slide show turned over to the House committee last month by former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, the executive order would have granted Miller, a career Special Forces killer for US imperialism, the power to "seize, collect, retain and analyze all machines, equipment, electronically stored information, and material records required for retention."

The order would have provided a pseudo-legal pretext for Trump to remain in power well past the January 20, 2021 inauguration date for President-elect Biden.

The publication of the explosive document has thus far been generally downplayed in the capitalist media, with no major television networks prominently reporting its publication on their Friday evening news broadcasts.

The order itself is titled:

"PRESIDENTIAL FINDINGS TO PRESERVE COLLECT AND ANALYZE NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION REGARDING THE 2020 GENERAL ELECTION."

After listing constitutional provisions, prior executive orders and National Security Presidential Memoranda that supposedly legitimized the overthrow of the presidential election, won by a wide margin by Biden, the order cites the first of many fascist conspiracy theories:

I, Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, find that the forensic report of the Antrim County, Michigan voting machines, released December 13, 2020, and other evidence submitted to me in support of this order, provide probable cause sufficient to require action under authorities cited above because of evidence of international and foreign interference in the November 3, 2020, election.

While Antrim County did record a tabulation error the night of the election, due to a late addition to the ballot not being properly calibrated in the software, it was corrected within three days and had no bearing on the outcome in Michigan, which Biden won by 300,000 votes. The county, where only 16,000 votes were cast, was awarded to Trump. Multiple recounts and reports, including a June 2021 analysis by Michigan Republicans of the 2020 statewide vote, have affirmed that the election was fair.

The order then cites supposed "inherent errors" in Dominion Voting Systems "and related companies" that have the "same flaws," and "were subject to foreign interference in the 2020 election in the United States."

The document has the deranged stench of Trump coup lawyers Rudolph Giuliani and Sidney Powell, both of whom were subpoenaed by the House committee earlier this week.

They were appointed by Trump following his electoral defeat on November 3, 2020 to lead the "legal" side of his plot to overturn the election. The lawyers, in concert with Trump, Republican politicians, far-right media and fascist paramilitaries, operated out of a "command center" at the Willard International Hotel in Washington D.C. The Willard "war room" served as a rats' nest of fascist intrigue, second only to the White House itself.

The executive order draft goes on to cite "evidence of crashes" and "impermissible updates" that allegedly caused a "significant percentage of votes" to be wrongly allocated. It calls for the defense secretary not only to seize the voting machines, but also to provide an "initial assessment of operations" to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, then headed by John Ratcliffe, a far-right Trump loyalist and former representative from Texas.

The final point in the three-page document states:

The appointment of a Special Counsel to oversee this operation and institute all criminal and civil proceedings as

appropriate based on the evidence collected and provided all resources necessary to carry out *her* duties consistent with federal laws and the Constitution (emphasis added).

The use of the “her” pronoun corroborates earlier reporting by CNN and the *New York Times* that coup lawyer Powell was lobbying Trump at the White House to appoint her as a special counsel to oversee the seizure of voting machines.

In a December 19, 2020 article, the *Times* reported that Trump “discussed naming Sidney Powell... to be a special counsel overseeing an investigation of voter fraud.” The report stated that Giuliani joined the discussion by phone, “while Ms. Powell” and “retired Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn” were “at the White House for a meeting that became raucous and involved people shouting at each other at times...”

In a December 18, 2020 appearance on the far-right Newsmax network with Greg Kelly, Flynn, who was briefly Trump’s national security adviser, claimed that due to “voter fraud” Trump “could immediately, on his order, seize every single one of these voting machines.”

Flynn continued: “He could order the, within the swing states, if he wanted to, he could take military capabilities, and he could place those in states and basically rerun an election in each of those states.”

While Michael Flynn was calling for the military to rerun the election at gunpoint, less than three weeks later his brother, Gen. Charles Flynn, would play a pivotal role in delaying the deployment of National Guard troops to the Capitol for more than three hours while it was under siege by fascist paramilitaries. The leader of the Oath Keepers, Stewart Rhodes, along with 10 other members of his militia, were charged by the Department of Justice with seditious conspiracy last week.

The same day Flynn called for martial law to “rerun” the election, Giuliani called the second-in-command at the Department of Homeland Security, Ken Cuccinelli, and inquired “whether DHS could seize voting machines,” according to the *New York Times*.

Further revelations on the pseudo-legal machinations of Giuliani and Powell were made in recent reporting by the *Washington Post* and CNN. Citing “three sources with direct knowledge of the scheme,” CNN reported that Giuliani personally led a seven-state effort to pressure state lawmakers and Republican Party officials to submit illegitimate slates of pro-Trump electors to the National Archives. The idea was to have the pro-Trump slates of electors already filed and ready to be imposed in key swing states won by Biden.

Fake slates were submitted by Trump loyalists in Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin and Nevada.

In a recording obtained by CNN, Meshawn Maddock, co-chair of the Michigan Republican Party, boasted not only of her role as a fake elector, but of her close coordination with the Trump campaign.

“We fought to seat the electors,” she said at a public event last week, according to CNN. “The Trump campaign asked us to do that.”

Meshawn and her husband, Michigan State Representative Matt Maddock, have been ardent supporters of Trump’s “big lie.” The pair was involved in the January 6 attack, helping to organize bus transportation for Trump’s foot soldiers.

The Maddocks also are deeply implicated in the assassination plot against Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, which was exposed by the FBI and Michigan prosecutors in early October, 2020. As detailed by *World Socialist Web Site* writer Eric London, Matt Maddock has

held multiple fundraisers and meetings at the Huron Valley Guns store. In addition to employing Paul Edward Bellar, an ex-Army soldier who has been indicted in the plot against Whitmer, the store has been the recipient of thousands of dollars in government contracts for the FBI and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The day after the fascist plot against Whitmer was revealed, the WSWS wrote:

Trump’s plan for election day is no longer a matter of conjecture. In battleground states that support Biden, Trump will falsely proclaim himself the victim of election fraud, deploy violent groups to intimidate voters, seize statehouses and eliminate political opponents. Armed supporters will declare the vote invalid or compel state legislatures to certify pro-Trump slates of electors. Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin have Democratic governors and Republican-controlled legislatures and will therefore be the central target of this plot.

January 6, 2021 was a fascist coup that came within minutes of achieving its objectives. The storming and occupation of the Capitol by Trump loyalists was not a random act of violence, or an inconsequential “tour visit” that has been blown out of proportion. It was the culmination of a definite political strategy orchestrated by Trump and carried out by his supporters throughout the Republican Party and US government.

Despite ongoing revelations implicating Trump, his lawyers and Republican politicians throughout the country, not one of the principal architects and schemers has been arrested. Over a year after Trump and the Republicans tried to prevent Biden from assuming the office of president, the life-long Democratic politician expressed shock in his press conference Wednesday night that this party of fascists and insurrectionists would block his voting rights and limited social welfare bills.

As David North warned the day after Trump’s failed coup: “The events of January 6, 2021 must be taken as a warning. The working class must elaborate a political strategy and plan of action to defeat future efforts to impose a dictatorship.”

The fight to secure democratic rights cannot be left to the Democrats, a party of Wall Street and the CIA. The Democrats would sooner capitulate to their fascistic “Republican friends” than chance exposing the terminal rot that has infected the entire capitalist state.

The only social force capable of defeating the ruling class’ turn toward dictatorship and eliminating the fascist threat is the American and international working class, mobilized and united on the basis of a revolutionary socialist program.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact