

Republican Party officially endorses Trump's January 6 putsch as "legitimate political discourse"

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The Republican National Committee issued a resolution yesterday at its leadership conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, officially endorsing Donald Trump's plot to overturn the 2020 election.

For the first time, the RNC formally called the events of January 6, 2021, "legitimate political discourse" and censured Republican representatives Liz Cheney of Wyoming and Adam Kinzinger of Illinois for participating in the congressional select committee investigating the coup attempt.

The resolution marks a turning point in the political history of the United States and the capitalist two-party system. The Republican Party first came to power in 1861 confronting the insurrection of the southern slaveowners, but Friday's resolution shows the Republican Party is now transforming itself into the party of anti-democratic insurrection.

The phrase used by the RNC to describe January 6—"legitimate political discourse"—is a deliberate endorsement of all the methods employed by Trump in the putsch, including the mobilization of fascist paramilitaries, attempts to impose martial law and deploy the military or ICE and border patrol officials to seize ballot boxes.

The resolution passed at the Salt Lake City winter conference has a distinctly fascistic character:

"The Biden Administration and Democrats in Congress have embarked on a systematic effort to replace liberty with socialism; eliminate border security in favor of lawless, open borders; create record inflation designed to steal the American dream from our children and grandchildren; neuter our national defense and a peace through strength foreign policy; replace President Trump's 'Operation Warp Speed'

with incompetence and illegal mandates; and destroy America's economy with the Green New Deal."

Referencing January 6, it then states that Cheney and Kinzinger are "participating in a Democrat-led persecution of ordinary citizens engaged in legitimate political discourse."

The passage of the resolution indicates that a significant section of the financial oligarchy is supporting dictatorship as a means to enrich itself, suppress social discontent and advance the interests of American imperialism abroad. If the Republicans win another national election, it is not clear they would ever peacefully relinquish power.

The resolution endorsing the methods of January 6 passed with little opposition. According to the *New York Times*, it "was carefully negotiated in private among party members," no doubt in coordination with major power players in the corporate, military-intelligence and media worlds.

On Thursday, the resolution unanimously passed the RNC's resolutions committee. The *Washington Post* reported that when the resolution came before the full 168-member national committee, it "passed overwhelmingly on a voice vote without debate or discussion, with the whole process taking about one minute."

The vote of the resolutions committee took place hours after Trump denounced the January 6 committee Thursday morning, calling it the "corrupt Unselect Committee of political hacks and highly partisan sleazebags" and attacking it for refusing to investigate "massive voter fraud and irregularities that took place in the 2020 President Election, rather than spending all of its time investigating those who were protesting its

result?"

In addition, the RNC passed a related resolution demanding the US government "hold Communist China accountable for Covid-19," officially endorsing the Trumpian lie that China is responsible for the spread of coronavirus, which has killed 900,000 people in the United States alone.

In the days prior to the RNC vote, more details have emerged of Trump's efforts to utilize the military and Department of Homeland Security to seize ballot boxes and steal the election. Last week Trump declared he would pardon those involved in the January 6 coup attempt if re-elected.

Serious divisions are emerging within the Republican Party, indicating an extreme level of political crisis. On Tuesday, as the RNC was preparing to vote on the upcoming resolutions, Trump suggested that Congress should investigate former Vice President Mike Pence for his failure to reject the Electoral College results on January 6. In a written statement, Trump claimed that Pence "could have sent the votes back to various legislators for reassessment after so much fraud and irregularities were found."

Pence responded Friday, speaking at a conference of the right-wing Federalist Society at roughly the same time as the RNC vote endorsing the January 6 putsch attempt.

"There are those in our party who believe that as the presiding officer over the joint session of Congress, I possessed unilateral authority to reject Electoral College votes," Pence said. "And I heard this week that President Trump said I had the right to 'overturn the election.'"

"President Trump is wrong. I had no right to overturn the election," Pence continued. "The presidency belongs to the American people, and the American people alone. Frankly, there is almost no idea more un-American than the notion that any one person could choose the American president."

"Under the Constitution, I had no right to change the outcome of our election, and [Vice President] Kamala Harris will have no right to overturn the election when we beat them in 2024," Pence said.

Later on Friday, Trump responded with a statement defending the insurrection. Trump made most explicit denunciation yet of Republican leadership, accusing them of working to elect Biden:

"Just saw Mike Pence's statement on the fact that he had no right to do anything with respect to the Electoral Vote Count, other than being an automatic conveyor belt for the Old Crow Mitch McConnell to get Biden elected President as quickly as possible. Well, the Vice President's position is not an automatic conveyor if obvious signs of voter fraud or irregularities exist...it would have been appropriate to send those votes back to the legislatures to figure it out ... The Dems and RINOS [Republicans In Name Only] want to take that right away. A great opportunity lost, but not forever, in the meantime our Country is going to hell!"

Those sections of the political and media elite aligned with the Democratic Party are responding with typical fecklessness. In an editorial board statement published last night, the *Washington Post* responded to the RNC resolution by propping up the Republican Party and presenting figures like the arch-reactionary Liz Cheney as symbols of democracy and progress.

Cheney "rightly believes commitment to democracy should override partisan allegiances and that policy preferences on issues stand insignificant next to commitment to the constitutional order," the *Post* wrote. In reality, Cheney and her father, former Vice President Dick Cheney, are themselves responsible for pioneering attacks on the Constitution through permanent war, torture and domestic surveillance. Voters "must remember this moment in November," the *Post* concludes.

But Biden and the Democrats have consistently stressed their willingness to work with their "colleagues" in the Republican Party, even as the party officially endorses insurrection as "legitimate political discourse." On January 8, 2021, Biden appeared on national television and declared: "We need a Republican Party. We need an opposition that's principled and strong." He is now getting his wish. But the "principles" on which the Republicans are consolidating are those of fascism and dictatorship.



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