

Republican National Committee resolution declaring January 6 “legitimate political discourse” deepens crisis in both parties

Eric London
9 February 2022

The Republican National Committee’s (RNC) declaration that the January 6, 2021 coup attempt constitutes “legitimate political discourse” has intensified the political crisis wracking both parties of big business.

The RNC resolution, which marked the party’s formal adoption of extra-constitutional methods, also censured Republican Congresspersons Liz Cheney (Wyoming) and Adam Kinzinger (Illinois) for participating in the House Select Committee investigating the putsch attempt. It passed by a voice vote on February 4 with only two of the 168 committee members later making their opposition public.

In the aftermath of the RNC vote, a number of statements by leading Republicans give a sense of the shifting balance of power to far-right forces within the party.

On Tuesday, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, speaking for the party’s arch-conservative old guard, called January 6 a “violent insurrection with the purpose of trying to prevent the peaceful transfer of power.”

Employing guarded language to refer to the censuring of Cheney and Kinzinger, McConnell told the press: “Traditionally, the view of the national party committees is that we support all members of our party regardless of their positions on some issues.” When asked by a reporter whether he still had confidence in RNC Chair Ronna McDaniel, who supported the resolution, he said, “I do.”

McConnell’s statements were echoed by the diminishing number of Senate Republicans, including Mitt Romney (Utah) and Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), who have refused to embrace the attempted overthrow

of the 2020 election.

New York Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, the third-highest-ranking House Republican, who represents a rising generation of Trump supporters within the party, declared that “the RNC has every right to take any action.” She continued, “We believe the January 6 Committee is political theater. It’s about punishing partisan opponents.”

Stefanik’s defense of the RNC resolution was echoed by Republicans such as Rand Paul (Kentucky), who said Monday he would “include Liz Cheney and Kinzinger as basically Democrats now.”

On Sunday, House Republican Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy used an appearance on Fox News’ “Sunday Morning Futures” program to lay out a fascistic, extra-parliamentary legislative agenda in the event Republicans win the 2022 midterm elections. McCarthy said Republicans would prosecute Joe Biden and his family for accepting bribes from China, putting forward a John Birch Society-style lie that the president and the Democrats are agents of a foreign power.

“We might have to go further,” McCarthy told the show’s host, Maria Bartiromo. “You might just have to be able to have a further investigation just within this family. What are they doing, and where did this money come from? You take the actions of the Democrats—I do not know what China has on these people, but it must be so powerful because the actions at every turn stop and harm us, but protect China.”

McCarthy also said Republicans would launch an investigation into the Chinese origins of the COVID-19 pandemic, promoting the concocted conspiracy theory that the SARS-CoV-2 virus originated in a Chinese government lab in Wuhan. This blatant lie is aimed at

directing social opposition to the American ruling class' profits-over-human life policy against an external target of US imperialist intervention.

These statements confirm that a clear majority of Republican officials are incorporating the RNC resolution into their political practice, adopting the method of extra-legal putsch as "legitimate political discourse."

The more explicitly far-right elements of the Republican Party, meanwhile, are engaged in acts of systematic and open intimidation against Democrats.

On Tuesday, Congressional Black Caucus leader Joyce Beatty (Ohio) revealed that Republican Hal Rogers (Kentucky) verbally assaulted her when she asked him to put on a mask as the two boarded a train en route to the US Capitol for a vote. "When I asked him not to touch me, he responded, 'Kiss my ass,'" she said.

Similar threats of violence are emerging across the country. On Monday, the Democratic speaker of the Illinois State House, Emanuel Welch, issued a public letter addressed to Republican Leader Jim Durkin explaining that several Democratic legislators had been forced to close their offices "due to repeated death threats" by far-right elements over Democratic calls to investigate January 6. According to Welch, "[T]he situation was made worse when a member of your Republican caucus issued a statement fanning the flames of this vitriol... At least four of our Democratic colleagues have received threats against their lives, their loved ones or their place of worship in recent months."

On Tuesday, Vice President Kamala Harris' husband, Doug Emhoff, was evacuated from a school in Washington D.C. as a result of a credible bomb threat, according to the US Secret Service, though the origins of the threat are not publicly known.

Despite these threats, the Democratic Party's response consists of pathetic calls for unity and collaboration with their Republican "colleagues."

At a White House briefing Monday, Press Secretary Jan Psaki declared that Biden was eager to work with Republicans to select a replacement for Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, who announced his retirement last month. "Consulting with Republicans and Democrats is an important part of that process, in his view," Psaki said.

Speaking yesterday from the White House at an event on manufacturing, Biden once again urged politicians to "come together—Democrats and Republicans—to get things done."

Later, he said, "The bottom line is the United States is in a position to out-compete the world again. And I look forward to working with governors—Republican and Democrat—to keep that drumbeat going."

He made no reference to the official legitimization of fascist violence by his Republican "colleagues."

Last week, Biden, Harris and a number of Democrats spoke at the National Prayer Breakfast, where they issued increasingly delusional appeals for unity with the Republicans.

"In a moment of a great division, our democracy is at grave risk," Biden said. "I pray that we follow what Jesus taught us: to serve rather than be served."

He continued, "I believe the common objects of our love that define us as Americans are opportunity, liberty, dignity, respect, honor, service, truth—things everybody recognizes both here and around the world. As I stand in this citadel of democracy that was attacked one year ago, the issue for us is unity. How do we unite us again?"

The official strategy of Biden and the Democrats is to turn the other cheek to the growing threat of dictatorship and appeal to the better angels of their fascist opponents.

The strategy of socialists is to crush the threat of fascism by mobilizing the immense social power of the working class against the capitalist system.



To contact the WSWWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)