

Following Uvalde massacre, Biden and Pelosi offer empty platitudes

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The first funerals have begun this weekend in Uvalde, Texas, for the 19 children and two teachers murdered in last Tuesday's horrific mass killing. Meanwhile, the US Department of Justice (DoJ), in an attempt to contain rising social anger from outraged parents and present the appearance of "accountability," announced on Sunday that they would be leading a so-called "independent account" of "law enforcement actions and responses that day."

The announcement of the DoJ investigation came on the same day Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott and President Joe Biden visited the grieving working class town. Blocked off from the governor by a heavily guarded police line, Uvalde parents and community members greeted Abbott's appearance at the memorial, lined with flowers and 21 white crosses, with jeers and boos.

Many likely remembered Abbott hailing the "courageous" actions of the police during a town hall in Uvalde last Wednesday. In a follow-up Friday press conference at Uvalde High School, Abbott claimed that he was "misled" about what actions police did, or did not take, as 18-year-old Salvador Ramos was massacring children inside Robb Elementary School for roughly 78 minutes uninterrupted.

Aiding their "Republican colleagues" in obfuscating the cause of Tuesday's massacre, and in the process, whitewashing the role of both capitalist parties and the profit system as a whole in creating the conditions for such mass shootings, were President Joe Biden and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. Both Democrats were invited to give commencement addresses over the weekend; Biden at his alma mater, the University of Delaware, while Pelosi spoke at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

In his speech at Delaware, Biden, referencing the two

mass killings this month, said there was "Too much violence. Too much fear. Too much grief."

Biden is a servant of US imperialism for half a century, who this year alone has signed the largest US military budget in history and has overseen the transfer of \$54 billion to the Ukrainian government and US military contractors as part of the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine. For him to complain of "too much violence" is like an arsonist complaining that fire is "too hot."

He employed the same distortion ex-President Donald Trump made in his fascistic speech before the National Rifle Association Convention last Friday in Houston, Texas, equating the massacres in Buffalo, New York, on May 14 and Uvalde 10 days later as expressions of "evil."

Biden said, "Let's be clear evil came to that elementary school classroom in Texas, to that grocery store in New York, in far too many places where innocents have died."

By reducing the Buffalo shooter's actions to "evil," Biden conceals the fact that 18-year-old Payton Gendron was a rabid racist and anti-Semite who was influenced by the fascist "replacement theory." His rants on social media could have been ripped from any recent segment of the Tucker Carlson program or Fox News, or a multitude of far-right meetings, many of them addressed or even sponsored by Republican elected officials.

As with the Buffalo massacre, when Biden spoke of the "insurrection" in his remarks to the Delaware graduates he never once mentioned the Republican Party or Trump by name. After referring to the "Nazi" phrases chanted at Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, Biden remarked: "I thought you could bury hate, you could wipe it out. I learned a lesson, you can't

eliminate hate, it only hides when defeated.”

“But,” Biden continued, “when the prominent leaders breathe oxygen under the rocks it’s hiding in, it takes a new life. It comes roaring back out. In ways, I must tell you, I never thought would happen.”

Biden did not attempt to explain why “prominent leaders” would “breathe oxygen” into “hate” or to be more precise, fascism. While the president usually never misses an opportunity to boast that he is a “capitalist,” he did not say the word in his speech.

Instead, as he did following Trump’s coup, in his inauguration address and throughout his presidency, Biden demanded the country “unify” and “join hands.”

“In the face of such destructive forces, we have to stand stronger,” Biden said. This call for unity is really addressed to the US ruling class, and it amounts to an appeal to circle the wagons against the coming social upheavals from below, from the working class.

In her commencement address at Brown, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, like Biden, absolved the Republican Party of any responsibility for the Buffalo massacre, effectively denying that there was any political significance to the events in either Buffalo or Uvalde, instead lumping them together as “two senseless mass shootings.”

Like Biden, she referenced the January 6 coup, without calling it a coup, or naming the Republican Party and Trump as the leaders of the coup. Instead she spoke of “dangerous factions seeking to dispel democracy.”

Signifying the “unity” Biden and the Democrats seek to build with their increasingly fascist Republican accomplices, she wore a blue and yellow bracelet and spoke of “heroism in Ukraine.”

In Ukraine, Pelosi said the Zelensky government, riddled with fascists from the Azov Battalion and Right Sector, were “defending not only their democracy but our democracy, against dictatorship.”

She spoke in empty abstractions, claiming that “hope will save democracy,” declaring, “In Kiev there is hope ... you have to believe in faith, charity, goodness, hope,” which she said was part of a “vital tradition.” Echoing Biden, she said we “need to bring our country together ... heal America’s fractured soul.”

While the Democrats appealed for unity, including an effort to reach a compromise deal with Republicans in the US Senate in order to pass legislation imposing

minimal limitations on the purchase of assault weapons by teenagers, most Republicans were following the examples of Trump and Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who rejected any gun restrictions and advocated stepped-up militarization of the schools.

The evident failure of the police on the scene at Robb Elementary to intervene allowed both corporate-controlled parties to adopt their favorite pose: demanding more aggressive conduct by the police. Both Democrats and Republicans backed the demand for an investigation by the Department of Justice into the police conduct at the school.

The request for a DoJ inquiry was made by the mayor of Uvalde, Don McLaughlin, a far-right Republican who was first elected in 2014. A frequent guest on the Tucker Carlson program on Fox News, McLaughlin regularly incites violence against immigrants.

In a May 2021 appearance on Carlson’s show, McLaughlin claimed that Uvalde police were having to “lock down our schools ... about once a week,” because “illegal immigrants” were involved in “13-15 [police] chases per week” and, McLaughlin claimed, “almost every one of those cars has armed” occupants.

Despite the apparent frequency and weekly practice Uvalde police had in dealing with armed persons crashing vehicles onto school property, as Ramos did at approximately 11:28 a.m. last Tuesday, the police, as Friday’s press conference, and social media videos revealed, did little to end Tuesday’s carnage, instead focusing their attention on keeping desperate parents away from the school and from their trapped children.



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