

SEP (US) 2022 Congress Resolution

No to oligarchic rule! Mobilize the working class against the threat of dictatorship!

Socialist Equality Party (US)
17 August 2022

This resolution was adopted unanimously at the Seventh National Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (US), held from July 31 to August 5, 2022. Read the full report on the Congress and the other resolutions here.

1. Donald Trump's attempted coup of January 6, 2021 was an irreversible turning point in the breakdown of American democracy. The sitting US president led a vast conspiracy involving the leadership of the Republican Party and substantial sections of the military, police and intelligence apparatus to overthrow the 2020 election and keep himself in power as president-dictator. The conspirators mobilized fascist paramilitary groups to storm the US Capitol and kidnap and kill elected officials deemed obstacles to the plot.

2. The coup attempt came at the conclusion of an election campaign like none other in American history, in which Trump instigated fascist violence, attempted to seize ballots, and promoted the Big Lie that the election was stolen from him. The Trump-led mob on January 6 came seconds away from killing Vice President Mike Pence and capturing many others. Capitol police were deliberately left unprepared for the attack, which everyone knew was coming. The military withheld troops needed to free hundreds of members of Congress, including the top leadership.

3. The plot failed, but not because it met political opposition from the Democratic Party. At no point during the events of January 6 did the Democratic Party make a single appeal to the population to stop the plot. President-elect Biden even encouraged Trump to speak on national television as his coup was underway. Had it not been for the inexperience of the plotters, the plan would have succeeded.

4. The threat of dictatorship has not passed. It is a clear and present danger that grows more urgent each day. Though Trump's coup attempt was and remains widely unpopular, the Democratic Party has refused to bring the coup plotters to justice. Throughout the conspiracy, from the attempt by Trump to invoke the Insurrection Act in June 2020, to the plot to kidnap and kill the governor of Michigan and governors of other states, to January 6 itself, the Democrats worked to cover up the far-reaching threat to democratic forms of rule in the United States. Democratic leaders waited a year and a half to even begin holding public hearings on the events of January 6. Each new revelation presented by the House committee only begs the question: Why did the Democrats stand by and allow the coup to unfold?

5. The Democratic Party, which now controls both houses of Congress and the White House, has done nothing to politically mobilize the population against Trump. It has implemented no social

reforms. It presides over rapid rises to the cost of living and is pouring tens of billions of dollars into a war against Russia that has no support in the population beyond a small section of the affluent middle class. Biden and the entire Democratic Party, including its Democratic Socialists of America faction, are creating conditions favorable to the far right in this November's congressional elections.

6. Emboldened by the Democratic Party's fecklessness, the Republican Party has developed into an open and aggressive advocate of dictatorship. It continues to carry out its reactionary assault on democratic rights at every level of government, while the Democratic Party has proven unable and unwilling to mount any challenge.

7. In the House of Representatives, the majority of the Republican Party consists of individuals who voted to uphold the challenge to Biden electors demanded by Trump's insurrectionary mob. House Democrats have made no attempt to expel their "colleagues," who tried to have them killed just over a year ago. On the contrary, this network of seditious conspirators threatens to become the dominant bloc after the 2022 midterms and would likely elect Trump crony Kevin McCarthy as Speaker of the House.

8. In the Senate, the allocation of two representatives per state means that a tremendous amount of power is vested in sparsely populated midwestern and mountain states, where elections are easily manipulated by a handful of oligarchs. The gross inequality of representation in the upper chamber means that the nearly 40 million people of California have no more weight than the 550,000 people of Wyoming. In the last three Senate cycles, Democrats won 50 seats with 142 million votes, while Republicans won the same number of seats with 30 million fewer votes. Due to the arcane rules of the Senate, January 6 co-conspirators such as Ted Cruz and Josh Hawley can block most legislation. The Republican minority has an effective veto because of the filibuster. Nonetheless, Biden and the Democrats continue to protect the filibuster and other anti-democratic rules, in the spirit of "bipartisanship."

9. The Supreme Court, far from upholding "the law of the land," has transformed itself into a battering ram for extreme reaction and religious zealotry. Five of its nine justices were appointed by presidents who lost the popular vote, including three by Trump, the most of any president since Richard Nixon. Two, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, are personally implicated in the events of January 6.

10. The Supreme Court's decision abolishing the right to abortion marks the first time in its history that the Court has taken away a constitutional right that was broadly accepted by masses of people. In

its first full term after the coup attempt, the Supreme Court has issued substantial decisions granting police virtual immunity from prosecution, facilitating corporate lawbreaking, restricting the government's ability to regulate polluters, and ending the separation of church and state. It has decided to take up a case from North Carolina that could well validate Trump's claim that state legislatures have the power to overturn the vote of their own citizens and award electoral votes to the presidential candidate of their choice. The Democrats refuse to impeach the coup plotters Thomas and Alito.

11. The January 6 coup and the ongoing conspiracy arise out of a protracted crisis of American democracy. A critical milestone was the 5-4 ruling of the Supreme Court in the 2000 election to halt the counting of ballots in Florida and hand the election to George W. Bush, who lost the popular vote, and the refusal of the Democratic Party to contest that decision. The WSWS drew the conclusion that the theft of the election "revealed the lack of any significant constituency within the ruling elite for a democratic adjudication of the presidential election." This conclusion has been proven correct.

12. The 2000 election was followed, under Bush and then Obama, by a sweeping assault on core Constitutional rights justified by a "war on terror" following the attacks of September 11, 2001. This included the Patriot Act, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security and the Northern Command, warrantless mass surveillance, indefinite detention without trial, torture and "extraordinary rendition," and drone assassinations, including of US citizens. These measures meant a vast expansion of the military-intelligence apparatus in domestic affairs. Multiple administrations, Democratic and Republican, have worked together to prosecute Julian Assange, whose "crime" is his exposure of the crimes of American imperialism in its dirty wars and foreign coup attempts.

13. The essential objective factors underlying the collapse of democratic forms of rule are: 1) endless war abroad, and 2) staggering levels of social inequality.

14. Imperialism, Lenin wrote in his seminal 1916 work *Imperialism and the Split in Socialism*, is "reaction all down the line." In both war and domestic policy, he explained, "finance capital strives for domination, not freedom." After three decades of endless war, the American ruling class has instigated a war with Russia over Ukraine and is planning war with China. The massive diversion of resources into military conflict and the preparation for world war is not compatible with democratic forms of rule.

15. As for American society, it is dominated by an oligarchy whose massive wealth is based on the plundering of social resources and the increased exploitation of the working class. The wealth of US billionaires stands at over \$5 trillion, two-thirds more than the wealth held by the bottom 50 percent and up by 70 percent since the start of the pandemic. This tiny layer of society dominates elections through its control of the two-party system, supplemented by such grossly anti-democratic methods as gerrymandering and the Supreme Court's benediction of unlimited dark money contributions in its 2010 Citizens United decision.

16. The horrific social implications of the modern form of financial parasitism have been exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the US, over one million people have been killed on the altar of corporate profit, while the ruling elite has handed over trillions of dollars to itself. After initially adopting the pretense of seeking to end the pandemic through limited mitigation measures, since the emergence of the Omicron variant the Biden administration has fully embraced the 'herd immunity' strategy pioneered by Trump. Thousands of

children have died of COVID, and hundreds of thousands have been orphaned. Millions of people will suffer for the rest of their lives from the effects of Long COVID. The government has made clear it plans no change of course.

17. Trump and his band of fascist conspirators are a product of this diseased social and political system. As for the Democrats, they are a party of Wall Street and the military and intelligence apparatus, with a broader base among affluent sections of the middle class mobilized through racial and gender politics. Throughout Trump's presidency, the Democrats centered their opposition to Trump on issues of foreign policy, particularly the demand for a more aggressive campaign against Russia, while acquiescing in his reactionary attacks on immigrants and democratic rights. The Democrats led the campaign for internet censorship targeting left-wing opponents of war and social inequality.

18. As Trump was plotting his conspiracy against the Constitution, the Democrats waged their own campaign against the democratic traditions of the American Revolution and Civil War. As part of the effort to divide the working class along racial lines, the *New York Times* launched its "1619 Project" in August 2019 to falsely portray all of American history as a racially-determined conflict in which blacks fought alone against their oppression, and all whites, no matter how poor or how rich, supported slavery, segregation and other forms of bigotry and discrimination in order to maintain their position of "privilege" within society. This campaign has not only undermined democratic consciousness, it has provided political fodder for fascists, anti-immigrant xenophobes and white supremacists.

19. The crisis of American democracy is rooted fundamentally in the capitalist system. There are two alternatives: the path toward fascism and dictatorship or the path toward socialism. The defense of the most basic democratic rights depends upon the independent organization and political mobilization of the working class, the conquest of power, and the socialist reorganization of social and economic life.

20. There is not a single political party outside of the Socialist Equality Party that has warned about the coup plots of Trump, explained their significance, and sought to mobilize popular opposition. This is because the SEP, along with its sister parties in the International Committee of the Fourth International, is the conscious expression of the interests of the working class. The defense of democratic rights depends upon the recruitment of workers into the party and the building of the SEP as the revolutionary leadership, to connect the fight against fascism with opposition to war, inequality, exploitation and the capitalist system.



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