

The “choice” in the 2022 US midterm elections: Fascist Republicans vs. war-crazed Democrats

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The US midterm elections will be held on November 8, just under one month away.

The elections are taking place under conditions of extraordinary crisis, including: the escalation of the US-NATO war against Russia, which Biden has said could lead to “Armageddon”; extreme instability in the economic system, including surging inflation and growing signs of a global recession; the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is killing more than 400 Americans every day, prior to an expected “surge” this winter; and mounting expressions of working class unrest and opposition.

Under these conditions, the elections offer a supposed “choice” between one party, the Democrats, whose central preoccupation is the expansion of war, and another, the Republicans, that is led by an outright fascist.

The Biden administration has supplied more than \$50 billion in arms and money to the Ukrainian government in a reckless effort to engineer “regime change” in Russia and open up that vast country to exploitation by the imperialist powers, without consulting the American people and without offering them any choice in the matter.

There is total silence by both Democrats and Republicans about the mounting threat of a new resurgence of the coronavirus pandemic as the colder temperatures of fall and winter drive the population indoors, and new variants and subvariants of SARS-CoV-2 emerge, more infectious, more vaccine-resistant and potentially more lethal. The last act of Congress before recessing for the final month of campaigning was to pass a bipartisan bill to fund the federal government through December 16, after all funding for new COVID vaccines, testing and mitigation had been removed.

There is little or no discussion of the attempt by Trump and his fascist allies to overthrow the US government on January 6, 2021 through a violent assault on the US Capitol to stop Congress from certifying Biden’s electoral victory and install the defeated incumbent as a dictator-president. After giving one speech about the threat to democracy just

over a month ago, Biden has pivoted back to seeking the collaboration of his Republican “colleagues,” even though a majority of them deny the validity of the 2020 elections and regard his presidency as illegitimate.

Insofar as the two parties take a break from mutual mudslinging about corruption and personal misconduct of individual candidates to a discussion of issues, the Republicans indict Biden and the Democrats for the dire state of the US economy, particularly inflation, while the Democrats lay the blame for the Supreme Court’s decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* on the Republicans, who selected a majority of the justices from lists approved by anti-abortion fanatics and Christian fundamentalists.

In each case, real issues are being reduced to demagoguery and lies. Neither party has a solution to inflation, except the massive recession being propelled by repeated hikes in interest rates by the US Federal Reserve Board. The Fed’s main concern—and that of the entire financial aristocracy—is to create mass unemployment to crush the ongoing upsurge of the working class against decades of corporate wage-cutting and job-slashing accomplished with the collaboration of the trade unions and their bureaucratic apparatus.

As for the attack on abortion and other democratic rights, this has only been made possible by decades of cowardice and complicity on the part of the Democratic Party. The Democrats will no more defend abortion rights against Republican attacks than they have the right to vote, the right to be free of police violence, and the rights of immigrants and asylum seekers.

There is a division of labor between the two corporate-controlled parties.

The Democratic Party’s criticism of Trump and the Republicans, even before the billionaire real estate swindler took office, was tied to differences over foreign policy, particularly the Democrats’ unswerving commitment to pressing the advantages for US imperialism stemming from the 2014 coup in Ukraine, which overthrew an elected pro-

Russian government and mobilized fascist groups to install a pro-NATO regime.

This was the basis of the efforts by the Democrats to destabilize the Trump administration, including the Mueller investigation, based on the claims that Trump was a Russian stooge, and the first impeachment of Trump, after he briefly delayed arms shipments to Ukraine that were part of the long-term plan to turn that country into an anti-Russian fortress. Trump's real crimes—the brutal treatment of immigrants and asylum seekers, his blatant racism and support for police violence, his huge tax cut for the super-rich while opposing spending on social programs for working people, his increasingly open preparations for dictatorship, and his COVID policy of mass infection—were passed over with only rhetorical objections.

As the WSWS documented last week, the Democratic Party not only is the most enthusiastic supporter of the CIA and the military, it is increasingly becoming a conduit for the CIA and the military to enter and gain control of the legislature, supposedly a separate branch of government. Dozens of Democratic candidates for the House of Representatives come directly from the military, the CIA and the State Department.

The Republican Party has become a fascist party in all but name. It has become the Trump Party, in which all those unwilling to pay homage to the dictator-in-waiting are being driven out of office, silenced, and threatened with violence. Trump even issued a scarcely veiled death threat against the leader of the Republicans in the Senate, Mitch McConnell, for giving his support to a bill that would spell out the illegality of any attempt to repeat the January 6 attack and block the congressional certification of the Electoral College vote.

The majority of Republican candidates for federal and top state offices, 299 in all, subscribe to Trump's fraudulent claims of a stolen election, according to a study reported by the *Washington Post* last week. This includes many state officials—governors and secretaries of state—who will be directly responsible for the administration of the 2024 presidential election and reporting the decision of the voters to the US Congress.

Even more dangerously, Republican candidates and elected officials increasingly advocate and support the use of violence against their political opponents. For the time being, at least since January 6, this has been confined largely to campaign rhetoric and speeches to ultra-right and fascist political groups. But this fascistic demagoguery is creating the political climate to promote violence not only against the Democrats, but above all against the working class, as workers come openly into conflict with the corporations and the capitalist state.

There is no alternative for working people in the choice between Democratic militarists and Republican fascists. Both parties are instruments of the corporate financial oligarchy. They are bitterly divided over tactics and over the spoils of office, but they are united in the class interests which they serve—the corporate and financial oligarchy—and in the class interests they oppose, the interests of the working people who comprise the vast majority of the population. This was made clear in the unity of Democrats and Republicans in blocking a strike by rail workers, with only tactical differences on whether or not to utilize the services of the trade union apparatus to do so.

There is an upsurge in the international working class against the capitalist system, driven by the plunge in living standards as prices outstrip wages, mounting attacks on jobs, social benefits and democratic rights, and the growing threat of war and fascist dictatorship. This class mobilization, powerful but still only in its initial stages, provides the objective basis for a political offensive by workers in every country.

In the United States, long the richest capitalist country but now riven by economic inequality, social decline and increasingly brutal conditions of life, the working class faces this central political task: It must break free of the corporate-controlled two-party system, a dictatorship of the wealthy in all but name, and build a socialist and revolutionary party of its own, the Socialist Equality Party.

Only the entry of the working class into the political arena, breaking with the Democrats and Republicans and embracing a socialist and antiwar program, offers a road forward.



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