

Trump delivers fascist speech amidst threats of violence ahead of Election Day

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Tens of millions of Americans go to the polls today in a midterm election that will decide control of the House of Representatives, the Senate and nearly three dozen state governments. More than 40 million votes have already been cast by mail ballot or in early voting.

On Monday evening, ex-president and failed coup leader Donald Trump delivered a fascist speech in Ohio, north of Dayton, in which he denounced “communism” and threatened violence against political opponents. The speech rally was held in support of Republican candidate for Senate in Ohio, J.D. Vance.

“Tomorrow you have to crush communists at the ballot box,” Trump declared. He also called for executing individuals accused of drug dealing on the spot and sending the bullets to their families.

After viciously attacking immigrants, Trump referred to Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, saying, “She is an animal too.” Since the near-fatal attack on Pelosi’s husband, Paul Pelosi, the Republicans have escalated their attack. Last week, Trump declared at a rally in Iowa, “We are going to end crazy Nancy Pelosi’s political career once and for all.”

Without officially stating that he will be running in 2024, Trump called for the mobilization of his supporters to “take back” the White House.

Concluding his fascist screed, Trump declared, “We will shut down Biden’s border disaster, reinstitute our strong ‘Remain in Mexico’ policy, strengthen the patriots ... of ICE and Border Patrol. ... We will give our police the power we need and the respect they deserve. ... We will restore ‘law and order’ in America. We will hold China accountable for unleashing the [COVID-19] virus upon the world. ... We will abolish all COVID mandates and lockdowns. ... We will proudly uphold the Judeo-Christian values of our nation’s founding.”

Two years after the fascist coup of January 6, 2021, Trump and the Republicans are seeking to take advantage of the reactionary and bankrupt policies of the Democratic Party to possibly take control of the House of Representatives and Senate in the elections that conclude today.

Trump’s speech came amidst an unprecedented number of threats of violence against election workers and efforts to discount or suppress thousands of early votes, driven by fascists and election denialists enlisted by Trump and the Republicans.

In Arizona, perhaps the epicenter of the fascist agitation over Trump’s big lie of a “stolen election” in 2020, armed men have

threatened voters seeking to cast their mail-in ballots in official drop boxes in Maricopa County, the huge population center that includes Phoenix and 62 percent of the people in the state.

All the Republican statewide candidates are election denialists, with Kari Lake, the candidate for governor, and Mark Finchem, the candidate for secretary of state, playing the most prominent roles.

According to a Reuters report, based on a public records request for security records and correspondence of the campaign of threats and harassment against election workers, there were 140 such messages just between July 11 and August 22, a figure that has no doubt skyrocketed in the 10 weeks that have followed. There were numerous additional death threats in readers’ comments to right-wing media postings by sites like Gateway Pundit and by fascist figures like Charlie Kirk of Turning Point USA.

Among the threats reported by Reuters, all in Maricopa County, were “You will all be executed” and “Wire around their limbs and tied & dragged by a car.” Some temporary workers quit after the August 2 primary, county recorder Stephen Richer told Reuters, after self-styled “First Amendment Auditors” photographed workers and the license plates of their cars.

Local election officials have held at least one drill simulating armed attacks on polling sites in which the result was several deaths. Richer himself received a threat that he would be “hung as a traitor.” The sender of the anonymous email added, “I’d like to have a black and white poster in my office of you hanging from the end of a rope.”

This lynch-mob atmosphere has been fomented by the top statewide candidates for the Republican Party. Finchem, in particular, is a member of the Oathkeepers paramilitary group and attended the rally at the White House called by Trump on January 6, 2021. He claims not to have participated in the violent attack on Congress which followed.

In a fundraising appeal last week, Finchem warned of likely voter fraud in the election and claimed in several social media posts that his Democratic opponent, Adrian Fontes, who has a slight lead in the polls, is a member of the Chinese Communist Party and a “Cartel criminal.”

In a thinly veiled appeal to anti-Semitism, he has claimed that Fontes is being “bankrolled” by billionaires George Soros and Michael Bloomberg—both Jewish—and that they want to “RIG our elections & our voter rolls.”

In North Carolina, where the governor is a Democrat and the

state legislature is controlled by the Republicans, the state government has registered more than a dozen cases of potential intimidation or interference with voters and election workers, according to another Reuters report.

The news agency reported that the North Carolina State Board of Elections “is tracking eight instances of potential voter intimidation, one of potential voter interference and five of potential interference with election workers during early voting. The alleged incidents are spread across nine counties and include major metropolitan areas such as Mecklenburg County, where Charlotte is located, as well as more rural areas.”

The incidents mainly involve harassment, including photographing workers or voters, as well as the license plates of their cars, but several involve more physically aggressive behavior.

There are anecdotal reports from many states of verbal threats, either by telephone or social media, largely directed at officials in charge of elections (the secretary of state’s office in most states) as well as voters making use of drop boxes to cast their mail ballots.

Trump has made mail-in ballots a major target at his campaign rallies, urging all Republican voters to cast their votes on November 8 and not make use of the mail, drop boxes or early voting. The purpose of these appeals is to create the illusion of a Republican victory, since most states conduct a preliminary tally of votes cast on Election Day and only later turn to the more time-consuming task of counting mail-in ballots, many of which cannot be run through tabulation machines because they have been damaged in transit.

The threats of violence and intimidation are accompanied by lawsuits aimed at discarding and suppressing votes already cast by mail. In at least three of the most closely contested states, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, Republican Party officials or candidates have asked the courts to throw out ballots.

In Pennsylvania, the Republican National Committee obtained a ruling by the state Supreme Court that ballots mailed in by voters without the required date on the outer envelope should not be counted, even though the ballots arrived well before Election Day and therefore were legally cast.

The RNC went even further, seeking a court order to bar counties from notifying the voters of their minor mistake, so that they could make a correction and have their votes counted. This was too much for the justices, who allowed, but did not require, counties to send out notifications.

Since 7,000 ballots have been found so far with this technical flaw, including 2,000 from overwhelmingly Democratic Philadelphia, suppressing them could affect the outcome of a tight contest.

In Michigan, Kristina Karamo, the Republican candidate for secretary of state, filed a suit to suppress thousands of absentee votes cast in Detroit, claiming that they should be disqualified because of “corruption” in the city, although she provided no evidence. Her lawyer could not explain why Karamo sought this remedy only in the heavily Democratic city and nowhere else in the state.

In Wisconsin, Republicans succeeded in throwing out mail-in

ballots with a different technical defect than in the Pennsylvania case. In this state, mail-in ballots must be witnessed, and the witness must sign the ballot and include his or her address. Any ballot where the witness failed to include the address--in the common case of married couples who witness each other’s vote, the address is the same as that of the voter--will not be counted.

The campaign draws to its close with the two corporate-controlled parties and their billionaire backers having spent more than \$16 billion in the course of a seemingly endless campaign, culminating in an advertising blitz over the final two weeks in which virtually every minute of television commercial time was taken up by mudslinging and lies from one or the other party.

There is a vast social distance between the capitalist politicians and the working people who comprise the majority of the US population. Neither party offers any solution to the dire economic circumstances facing working people, who face runaway price increases for basic goods while their jobs are threatened by a looming recession.

The Democrats offer endless spending on the war with Russia in Ukraine, while the Republicans pledge to provide billions more in tax cuts for the wealthy and the giant corporations.

In the past week, since President Biden’s speech last Wednesday in Washington, the Democratic Party has begun to raise the threat to democracy from the election denialists and outright fascists who now dominate the Republican Party. But this effort is half-hearted, belated and fundamentally insincere.

The Democratic Party is far more afraid of the developing upsurge of the class struggle than it is of a Trump-led fascist dictatorship. It is prepared to use authoritarian methods of its own against the working class, beginning with the railroad workers who have revolted against the rail union officialdom and the settlement devised by Biden’s Presidential Emergency Board. This rotten deal is to be enforced by back-to-work legislation imposed by Congress, regardless of which party controls the levers of power after November 8.



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