

After hailing midterm elections as “victory for democracy”

New York Times warns right-wing political violence from within the US military and police “put the nation at risk”

Jacob Crosse
14 November 2022

Only a day after two *New York Times* op-ed writers published columns promoting the results of the midterm elections as a “return to normalcy,” a major editorial in the newspaper directly contradicted this rosy assessment, warning that “Extremists in Uniform Put the Nation at Risk.”

Far from “normal” the *Times* editors describe in detail the ongoing threat of right-wing political violence in the United States, even after the alleged “victory” of democracy at the polls.

In the editorial, the *Times* noted the prominent role played by current and former police and military members in former president Donald Trump’s failed fascist coup: “At least 24 current and former police officers have been charged with crimes in relation to the Jan. 6 attacks, and dozens of others have been identified as part of the crowd at the Capitol.”

Furthermore, “Some officers who participated wanted things to go further than they did. ‘Kill them all,’ Peter Heneen, a sheriff’s deputy in Florida, texted another deputy during the attack. The streets of the capital, he wrote, needed to ‘run red with the blood of these tyrants.’”

The outsized role former and current police and military members played in Trump’s coup, which nearly succeeded, was a “cause of concern” wrote the *Times* editors.

“Of the more than 900 people arrested in connection with the Jan. 6 attacks, 135 had military or law enforcement backgrounds,” they wrote, adding, “The Program on Extremism at George Washington University found that among those in policing, 18 are

retired, and six are active. One Capitol Police officer who was not on the scene that day but was aware of the attack later advised a participant on how to avoid being caught.”

After citing several examples of current and former military and police members engaging in fascist political violence and/or being exposed as members of far-right paramilitary groups, such as the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys, the *Times* warned that the “majority of political violence has come at the hands of members of right-wing extremist groups or unaffiliated adherents of their white supremacist and antigovernment ideologies,” and that “America needs to reduce this threat.”

Coming from the *Times*, a direct conduit for the Democratic Party wing of the ruling elite, and of the US military and Central Intelligence Agency, this is a damning admission which may come to a shock to the millions of *Times* readers who have been bombarded with columns and delusional television segments in the past week claiming that the “threat to democracy” was defeated at the polls by voting for the Democrats.

Without saying Trump’s name, the column is an admission that the self-serving narrative, parroted by the *Times* and the January 6 House Select Committee for nearly two years, that Trump alone was a unique aberration to an otherwise functioning “American Democracy,” is false.

American capitalism is rotting on its feet. The danger of fascism has not subsided even though Trump’s preferred election-denying candidates seem to have lost many of the highest-profile races.

As the *Times* itself noted last week, despite the ~~in~~performance of many of the election-denying candidates, “Nearly 200 Republicans so far who questioned or denied the results from 2020 have been elected.”

Among those re-elected included the lead organizers of the “Stop the Steal” campaign in Congress, such as fascist Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, Paul Gosar of Arizona and Matt Gaetz of Florida.

Senators Ted Cruz (Texas), Tommy Tuberville (Alabama), Josh Hawley (Missouri) and newly elected J.D. Vance of Ohio have either said the 2020 election was stolen from Trump, or voted against certifying the election after the attack on Congress. More than 150 Republican members of Congress or members-elect take the same position.

While the Republican-caucus is dominated by election-deniers and outright fascists, the rise of fascist elements is not relegated to the halls of Congress.

The “blowback” from decades of US imperialist wars is expressed in what might be described as the “soldier for US imperialism to fascist militia member pipeline.” The *Times* noted that a 2020 survey “found that at least 25 percent of members of extremist paramilitary groups have a military background.”

In a January 2020 report to Congress, the Department of Defense reported 45 allegations of “supremacist, neo-Nazi, and other extremist affiliations by Service members during the preceding 12 months.”

This included “10 cases involving Sailors or Marines,” in the Navy, “24 cases involving Soldiers” in the Army, and, “11 cases involving Airmen” in the Air Force, “affiliated with extremist or hate groups.”

The true number is undoubtedly far higher because, as the report acknowledges, the Department of Defense lacks “a clear definition ... of extremism” and there are “difficulties identifying and reporting extremist activities within the DoD.” More importantly, many of those responsible for tallying such figures are themselves part of the fascist tendency and therefore have reason to conceal its existence while it grows in strength.

Expressing fear that a military and police riddled with fascists will “erode the public’s trust in the institutions,” threaten, “good order and discipline” within the military and “compromise national security”

in ~~for~~federal agencies, the worried *Times* editors write, “Protecting those institutions and the nation they serve demands urgent action.”

They recommend a series of cosmetic measures such as better reporting and enhanced background checks to screen for “extremist” attitudes beforehand. Another suggestion was for more “funding” for the Department of Veterans of Affairs which the *Times* argues, will allow “members who are struggling” to be “coaxed down a different path.”

But according to a 2020 study by the Brennan Center for Justice, most police departments do not “have explicit prohibitions on officers joining extremist paramilitary groups,” and as previously noted, the DoD does not track or even know how to define “extremism.”

The *Times* analysis deliberately ignores the class role of the police and military in capitalist America. The police and military exist to enforce bourgeois class rule, that is, to protect profits and the ruling class abroad and “domestically,” not to advance “democracy” or protect the democratic rights of workers and youth.

Furthermore, in their editorial, the *Times* leaves out its own filthy role in the growth of fascism within the United States.

As a leading paper of the Democratic Party and Wall Street, the *Times* has backed every single imperialist war and “humanitarian” intervention that the US government has engaged in.

In addition to promoting wars of aggression that have cost billions of dollars, the *Times* laundered the Iraqi “WMDs” lie on behalf of the Republican George W. Bush administration, which led to the deaths of millions of people around the world and the physical and psychological destruction of thousands of American veterans, and similar lies by about the “war on terror” by Obama and Trump, leaving them ripe for fascist demagoguery.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact