

Georgia indictment of Trump exposes the rot of American political system

Patrick Martin
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The indictment of ex-President Donald Trump in Georgia, the fourth in five months, is the most serious so far. It outlines, in nearly 100 pages of detail, how Trump and dozens of co-conspirators, some indicted, some not yet, engaged in a conspiracy to overturn his defeat in the 2020 presidential election.

Though limited to a single state, the indictment gives a much fuller picture than the federal indictment brought two weeks ago of the efforts by Trump and his aides to steal Georgia's electoral votes, won by Democrat Joe Biden by a margin of 11,779 votes. It charges, among others, White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, Trump's top campaign lawyers Rudy Giuliani, Sidney Powell, Jenna Ellis and Kenneth Chesebro, outside consultants like John Eastman and high-ranking officials of the Georgia Republican Party.

The charging document lists 41 criminal counts against the 19 defendants, including the blanket conspiracy charge brought against all of them, under the Georgia law targeting Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO). Some 161 overt acts are cited in furtherance of this conspiracy.

These actions ranged from submitting legal tracts claiming—entirely falsely—that Vice President Mike Pence had the authority to reject electoral votes while chairing the ceremonial congressional certification of the election—to thuggish efforts to intimidate Atlanta election worker Ruby Freeman by visiting her home at night.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis set August 25 as a deadline for Trump and his co-defendants to appear for arraignment and booking and expressed the desire to bring the case to trial within six months, a daunting task with so many defendants and charges.

Whatever the immediate outcome, the stage is being

set for a presidential election year of unprecedented political tension and crisis.

There are certain points that must be reiterated in response to the Georgia indictment. First, it is further confirmation that Trump and his co-conspirators engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the election, culminating in the attempted fascistic coup of January 6, 2021. The arrest and prosecution of all those involved is entirely appropriate and necessary.

Second, just as in the federal indictment brought by Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith, the Georgia indictment raises the question: Why did it take more than two years to bring indictments against Trump and his co-conspirators? Nearly all the overt acts cited were reported in the corporate press early in 2021. Many were public, like Trump's incessant tweets giving instructions in furtherance of the campaign to overturn the election.

Third, also like the federal indictment, the Georgia case limits itself mainly to the efforts by Trump to discredit the 2020 election and substitute fake electors for the Biden electors actually chosen by the voters. It is silent on the events of January 6, 2021 themselves. But in several places it touches on these events, referring to the advice of Trump aides like Jenna Ellis and Kenneth Chesebro that the then-president should adopt “a strategy for disrupting and delaying the joint session of Congress on January 6, 2021.”

The various prosecutors and the Biden administration have tiptoed around the events of January 6 to avoid any exposure of the wider conspiracy involving most of the Republican Party leadership and significant sections of the military-intelligence apparatus, which sought to ensure the success of the Trump coup. The purpose of this cover-up is to preserve these key institutions of the ruling class and insure bipartisan support for the war

policy of the Biden administration against Russia in Ukraine.

But the indictment raises broader issues. The entire political system in the United States, the center of finance capital and the cockpit of imperialist war planning, is in a state of intractable crisis and factional warfare.

How the ruling class will even carry out the 2024 presidential election is unclear. Trump, the leading candidate for the Republicans, faces as many as four criminal trials and five civil trials, assuming no additional cases are brought against him. Meanwhile, Hunter Biden, the son of the president, faces at least one trial for his evasion of taxes amid a continuing investigation into his corrupt dealings in both China and Ukraine, where he raked in millions trading on his father's role as vice president in the Obama administration. Joe Biden could well be impeached by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives for his alleged role in his son's influence peddling, particularly if there is evidence that he profited personally from it.

To think that the crisis originates from the personality of Trump is to blind oneself to reality. Trump is only the most grotesque expression of a political system that is rotten through and through, with pus seeping out of every pore.

Congress—where a large majority of House Republicans voted not to certify Biden's election—is comprised of millionaires and ignoramuses. Both Democrats and Republicans in the House have rejected even token restrictions on their own financial dealings, such as a ban on stock trading.

The Supreme Court is itself awash in corruption, functioning now as a permanent conspiracy against the democratic rights of the American population. Should a close election end up being decided by the Supreme Court, as in 2000, the decisive vote could well be cast by Clarence Thomas, exposed in recent months as the recipient of lavish vacations, travel and other subsidies from a group of fascist billionaires, all of them seeking to influence the decisions of the high court.

Politics does not exist in a void but reflects social processes. The US economy is a massive Ponzi scheme, with giant banks, corporations and hedge funds having used trillions of dollars in government bailout funds to carry out financial operations even more

convoluted and opaque than those which sparked the Wall Street crash of 2008-2009. Cryptocurrency billionaire Samuel Bankman-Fried has been arrested and charged with massive fraud, but his is only the most glaring case among hundreds.

Social infrastructure is in an advanced state of decay and disintegration, as exemplified most recently in the horrific destruction and devastation caused by the fire in Hawaii. Biden, speaking for a financial oligarchy obsessed with its own self-enrichment and militarist plunder, could hardly manage to speak a coherent word about it.

Trump brought into the political system the methods of gangsterism, financial skullduggery and media manipulation which he learned in the course of his business career in Manhattan construction and real estate, Atlantic City casinos, and "reality" television. He personifies what Karl Marx wrote, describing the political decay of the French financial aristocracy before the 1848 revolution, as the "*rebirth of the lumpenproletariat on the heights of bourgeois society.*"

But the political system as a whole takes on more and more the character of the ancient Roman Empire, a diseased apparatus sitting atop a dying social order. It is through the development of the class struggle, politically armed with a socialist perspective and leadership, that this state apparatus can be swept away, together with the capitalist system it defends.



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