

Washington Post reports Trump plan to deploy military against political opponents if he returns to the White House

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Ex-president Donald Trump and his aides are discussing plans to invoke the Insurrection Act on January 20, 2025, his first day in office if he wins the 2024 presidential election, and then use the military against political opponents, the *Washington Post* reported on its website Sunday.

The main target of this operation would be the mass protests that Trump and his fascist advisers fully expect to erupt should Trump return to the White House in 2025. It would be millions of working people and youth who would bear the brunt of police-military violence.

This would be accompanied by an across-the-board effort to prosecute those targeted by Trump for “retribution,” including both Democrats like President Joe Biden and former officials of the Trump administration whom Trump came to regard as disloyal, such as former White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, a retired general, and former Attorney General William Barr.

The *Post* report gives only a brief examination of the dangers of a military coup ordered by a re-elected Trump, and none at all to the danger of intervention by the military or fascist mobs in the event of a closely contested or disputed presidential election.

The article focuses instead primarily on Trump’s plans for legal retaliation against Biden and “disloyal” Republicans, declaring, “Donald Trump and his allies have begun mapping out specific plans for using the federal government to punish critics and opponents should he win a second term, with the former president naming individuals he wants to investigate or prosecute...”

“In private, Trump has told advisers and friends in recent months that he wants the Justice Department to

investigate onetime officials and allies who have become critical of his time in office, including his former chief of staff, John Kelly, and former attorney general William P. Barr, as well as his ex-attorney Ty Cobb and former Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. Mark A. Milley. ... Trump has also talked of prosecuting officials at the FBI and Justice Department, a person familiar with the matter said.”

Much of the planning for the campaign of military violence, repression and persecution has been outsourced to a group of ultra-right figures dubbed “Project 2025,” originally set up by the Heritage Foundation, a right-wing think tank lavishly funded by corporate America.

According to the *Post*, the leading figure in the group drafting plans to invoke the Insurrection Act is Jeffrey Clark, the former assistant attorney general who is now facing conspiracy and racketeering charges, along with Trump, in the case against election interference brought by District Attorney Fani Willis in Fulton County, Georgia (Atlanta). Clark is also an unindicted co-conspirator in the federal election interference case against Trump.

It was Clark whom Trump sought to appoint as acting attorney general in December 2020, since he was the only high-ranking official in the Justice Department willing to send out letters to state governments in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, telling them that the DOJ was investigating significant evidence of fraud in the presidential election.

Trump only backed off from this action after top Justice Department officials threatened to resign en masse rather than work under Clark in an effort to steal

the presidential election. In the course of a discussion with Clark, deputy White House counsel Patrick Philbin warned him that if Trump refused to leave office after losing the election there would be “riots in every major city.” Clark replied, “That’s why there’s an Insurrection Act.”

The first known discussions of the Insurrection Act in the Trump White House took place in late May 2020, after the brutal police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis touched off mass protests throughout the US and worldwide. Trump threatened to invoke the 1807 law and send the military into the streets to disperse the protests, but retreated after encountering resistance from Pentagon officials, including then Secretary of Defense Mark Esper and General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

One of Trump’s first actions after the election was to fire Esper and install a special forces officer, Christopher Miller, as secretary, with several Trump loyalists serving in other key civilian positions. General Charles Flynn played a critical role in the Pentagon during the hours when military assistance was blocked to defend Congress during the coup attempt of January 6, 2021. Charles Flynn is the brother of retired General Michael Flynn, a key Trump adviser and advocate of overturning the election.

As for the prosecution of former officials and political opponents like Biden, a second Trump administration would discard the official posture that the Justice Department has some measure of independence from the White House. It would abandon the precedent, enforced even by Trump’s own White House counsels, that the president does not contact the DOJ directly about ongoing criminal investigations. Jeffrey Clark told the *Post*, “I think that the supposedly independent DOJ is an illusion.”

The *Post* article also reported an assembly of fascist cronies of Trump at his Mar-a-Lago estate Wednesday for the screening of a film criticizing the supposed persecution of those who carried out the violent attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021. Among those attending, the newspaper said, were Clark, Stephen Bannon, Roger Stone, Michael Flynn, and defeated Florida congressional candidate Laura Loomer.

Another participant in the plans for retribution in a second Trump term is Stephen Miller, the fascistic White House counselor who oversaw Trump’s

persecution of immigrants, including the separation of parents and children. Miller has founded another conservative legal outfit called America First Legal, which is vetting prospective Trump administration lawyers and other potential appointees for willingness to defy the Constitution and attack democratic rights.

The *Post* report, along with a few other media reports on “Project 2025,” only underscores that a second Trump administration would be a full-fledged authoritarian rampage from day one. But neither the corporate media—which has yet to comment on the revelations—nor Trump’s supposed opponents in the Democratic Party offer any serious examination of the transformation of the Republican Party into the political vehicle for the installation of a fascistic government.



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