

Liberal cowards join in the Supreme Court's unanimous ruling in favor of Trump

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On Monday, the US Supreme Court handed down a unanimous ruling in favor of Donald Trump, clearing the way for him to appear on the ballot in the 2024 US presidential election despite the violent coup attempt he led after he lost the 2020 election.

The written decision by the far-right majority on the Supreme Court goes even further, declaring not only that Colorado's Supreme Court cannot remove Trump from the ballot as an ineligible "insurrectionist," but also that nothing short of a new act of Congress can provide the mechanism for doing so.

This judicial overreach is plainly designed not only to shield Trump from future challenges to his eligibility, but also to shield Trump's many accomplices in the coup attempt, who to this day remain in leading positions in the Republican Party. The ruling was so extreme that even Justice Amy Coney Barrett, a Trump appointee, was compelled to author a concurring opinion to distance herself from it.

The composition of the far-right majority underscores the illegitimacy of its rulings. It consists of two other justices appointed by Trump (Brett Kavanaugh and Neil Gorsuch); two justices appointed by George W. Bush, who assumed the presidency after the stolen election of 2000 (Samuel Alito and John Roberts); and the scandal-plagued and notoriously corrupt Clarence Thomas, whose own wife, Ginni Thomas, was a key figure in Trump's conspiracy to overturn the 2020 election.

The majority's interpretation of Section 3 of the Fourteenth Amendment, passed in the aftermath of the Civil War to bar the participants of the slaveholders' rebellion from returning to power, is so contrary to the plain meaning of the words that the result is to "effectively erase the words from the constitutional page," in the words of David French in the *New York Times*.

If the word "insurrection" has any meaning, it applies to the far-reaching, deadly and sophisticated plot to overturn the election and install Trump as dictator on January 6, 2021.

Trump, for his part, continues to openly court neo-Confederate elements, including Texas Governor Greg Abbott, who flagrantly defies the federal Constitution in imitation of the antebellum slave states, and who is personally implicated in the January 6 insurrection plot.

The Supreme Court's decision Monday is equally if not more remarkable for the positions of the nominally "liberal" bloc of Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson. They justified their decision to rule in Trump's favor on the grounds that if they failed to do so, the result would be a chaotic "patchwork" election, because Republican-controlled states would likely respond to Trump's removal by removing Democratic Party candidates from their ballots.

This is not a legal reason to rule in Trump's favor—it is merely an assertion of collective political and personal cowardice. They effectively state: "We have to rule in favor of the would-be American Führer because if we don't, his accomplices will cause chaos and aggravate the danger of civil war."

The capitulation of the Supreme Court "liberals" mirrors the conduct of the Democratic Party during, immediately after and ever since Trump's coup attempt. During the insurrection itself, then-President-Elect Joe Biden remained silent before finally issuing a verbal request for Trump to call it off. After taking office, Biden refused to take action against the Republicans in Congress and in the military-intelligence apparatus who had been part of the conspiracy, insisting on maintaining a "strong" Republican Party.

More recently, in response to far-right provocations on the southern border involving open defiance of constitutional legality, and amid Trump's use of neo-Nazi rhetoric to justify a mass roundup of migrants by the military, Biden personally traveled to the border and appealed for far-right support for his own reactionary anti-immigrant bill. Directly addressing Trump, he said, "Join me, or I will join you."

In an effort to achieve bipartisan unity behind the US-NATO war against Russia over Ukraine, US/Israeli genocide in Gaza, and US military provocations against China over Taiwan, the Democrats have not only refused to fight the insurrectionist Republicans, but have instead courted them as allies. In so doing they have strengthened and rehabilitated Trump, who is expected to win the Republican Party nomination in this year's elections, if not the November election itself.

An editorial board statement Tuesday by the *Washington Post*, owned by Amazon oligarch Jeff Bezos, sums up the outlook of the Democratic Party establishment. Calling the insurrection clause of the constitution a "weird trick" and the Supreme Court ruling the "right call," the newspaper treats the question of whether Trump was "even an insurrectionist" as one of many "intricacies" that "the Supreme Court didn't need to bother with."

While the Supreme Court unanimously went out of its way Monday to ensure that Trump's name can appear on the ballot in every state, Socialist Equality Party presidential candidate Joseph Kishore and vice presidential candidate Jerry White will be excluded from the ballot in most states on account of anti-democratic laws designed to restrict ballot access to candidates of the two establishment parties.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* has insisted throughout, the January 6 coup attempt was not a one-time, one-off event, but an episode in a protracted and accelerating process. The danger has not passed. It is growing more immediate.

Nor is the fascist danger the result of the personality of Donald Trump as an individual. As David North said in his recent internet address announcing the launch of the Socialist Equality Party election campaign in the US, the billionaire reality television personality who once kept a book of Hitler speeches by his bed "only personifies the criminality of American capitalism."

"The attempted coup of January 6, 2021," North stated, "was not an isolated episode. Indeed, it had more the character of a dress rehearsal. American democracy is on its last legs. It cannot survive on the basis of capitalism."

Within a week of North's address, the Supreme Court's unanimous decision in favor of the January 6 insurrectionists underscores this prognosis.

Contrary to the position of the *Post*, voting for Biden will not halt or reverse the dynamic that is causing the far right to gather momentum. The crisis of democratic forms of rule is rooted in the extreme growth of social inequality and the escalating global war, which requires the suppression of opposition at home. There is no democratic faction of the ruling elite. The Democrats and the Republicans represent two reactionary factions of the capitalist oligarchy.

The danger from the far right cannot be halted by casting a vote in November for "Genocide Joe," but by a decisive break with the Democratic Party, which has been an essential factor in the process that produced Trump the first place. The international working class must declare its political independence from the parties of the capitalist class, independently mobilize its industrial and political strength against the capitalist governments, and advance its own, socialist program for the resolution of the crisis.



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