

Democrats seek “common ground,” as Trump prepares government of, by and for the oligarchs

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The re-election of Donald Trump signifies the violent realignment of American politics with its underlying social reality: a society dominated by staggering inequality and ruled by a capitalist oligarchy. This realignment is expressed not only in Trump’s appointments, but in the Democratic Party’s swift accommodation to—and even embrace of—the incoming regime.

Trump is assembling a government that epitomizes the naked rule of the rich. Each appointment reflects two overriding criteria: personal loyalty to Trump and an unwavering commitment to a program of war, repression and social counterrevolution.

His selections for leading positions over the past week are a gallery of reactionaries, multi-millionaires and outright fascists, tasked with implementing a program of dictatorship at home and war abroad.

The appointments include:

- Matt Gaetz as attorney general, flanked by Trump’s personal lawyers Todd Blanche and D. John Sauer as deputy attorney general and solicitor general, respectively. Gaetz, one of the most fascistic figures in Congress before his resignation, represents the consolidation of the Justice Department as a weapon of political persecution. Sauer’s appointment, in particular, underscores the legal foundation for dictatorship: he argued *Trump v. United States*, the Supreme Court case that granted the president immunity for unconstitutional actions.

- Thomas Homan as “border czar” and Stephen Miller as deputy chief of staff for policy, together orchestrating a massive assault on immigrant workers, along with Trump’s designated Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem. Homan is tasked with carrying

out Trump’s pledge to deport millions of immigrants, while Miller, the architect of the family separation policy during Trump’s first term, will oversee the expansion of detention centers and mass roundups. Noem will command the Border Patrol, ICE and other repressive agencies.

- Pete Hegseth as secretary of defense, Marco Rubio as secretary of state, Elise Stefanik as UN ambassador, and Mike Huckabee as ambassador to Israel. This war cabinet is engineered to escalate US militarism, particularly against China, and to deepen support for Israel’s genocidal campaign against the Palestinians. Hegseth, a Christian fascist and former Fox News commentator, has built his career defending war crimes, while Huckabee has openly called for the extermination of Palestinians.

- Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as secretary of health and human services and Jay Bhattacharya, whom the *Washington Post* reported Saturday is a frontrunner to head the National Institutes of Health. Both are proponents of unrestrained “herd immunity” policies in relation to COVID-19 and other pathogens, guaranteeing the prioritization of profit over public health, with catastrophic consequences for the population.

- Elon Musk, the wealthiest individual in the world, and biotech billionaire Vivek Ramaswamy to lead the “Department of Government Efficiency.” This new agency will spearhead a \$2 trillion assault on government spending, targeting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and public education. Musk, who has personally profited to the tune of \$50 billion since Trump’s election, embodies the fusion of political power, economic self-interest and personal corruption

at the heart of the new regime.

To implement these deeply unpopular policies, Trump and his advisers are moving rapidly to consolidate unlimited power in the hands of the White House. A central component of this strategy is the plan to bypass the Senate through recess appointments, effectively overriding its constitutional role to “advise and consent.”

The *Wall Street Journal* referred to this move on Sunday as the “White House power grab,” writing, “Trump and his team have shown they are pushing not just for adjustments but for a substantial reshaping of the government and its power structures,” that is to say, the establishment of a presidential dictatorship.

More than 800 billionaires in the United States now control a staggering \$6.2 trillion in wealth. The top 10 percent of the population possesses more than two-thirds of all wealth, while the bottom half possesses only 2.5 percent. Individual oligarchs function almost as economic ecosystems, controlling vast sections of economic life and profiting off of the exploitation of millions of workers in the US and internationally.

A social system characterized by such vast social inequality is incompatible with democratic forms of rule. The structures of political life are being brought into alignment with this social reality.

This class realignment is not only evident in Trump’s actions, but also in the rapid acquiescence of the Democratic Party following the election. Biden’s invitation to Trump to the White House last week, and his pledge to ensure that Trump has “what you need,” have set the tone.

On Sunday, Democratic House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries declared that he had “congratulated incoming President Donald Trump.” House Democrats, he said, “look forward to working with the incoming administration whenever and wherever possible to find bipartisan common ground to solve problems for the American people.” Former Speaker Nancy Pelosi, in an interview with the *New York Times* last week, declared of Trump, “We all want the president to succeed.”

Perhaps the most craven response was reserved for Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, who issued a statement on X over the weekend that he “looks forward to working with the Trump Administration on fulfilling his promise to cap credit card interest rates at 10%.”

The Democratic Party is a party of the military-intelligence agencies, Wall Street and privileged sections of the upper-middle class. For the social layers it represents, Trump’s authoritarianism is no cause for alarm; in fact, his policies promise to further enrich their stock portfolios.

The Democrats’ central priority is ensuring that the incoming administration continues its war policy, particularly the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, the main subject of Biden’s meeting with Trump last week. In advance of the return of Trump, Biden administration officials told the *New York Times* on Sunday that the White House has officially authorized Ukraine to use US-supplied long-range missiles to target locations deep inside Russia. This act of staggering recklessness, which risks nuclear war, would have been coordinated with Trump and discussed at their meeting last week.

The Trump administration will face enormous opposition, but it will not come from the Democratic Party or any faction of the political establishment. The real opposition will come from the working class, which is the central target of the Trump regime.

However, this opposition must be armed with a political program and strategy. The working class must fight not only against the immediate policies of the Trump administration, but against the capitalist system that underlies them. This requires the development of an independent, international movement of workers, armed with a socialist program aimed at expropriating the wealth of the oligarchy and reorganizing society to meet human needs, not private profit.

The Socialist Equality Party (US) has announced that it is holding an online meeting Wednesday, “Of the oligarchy, by the oligarchy, for the oligarchy: Trump’s appointments and the restructuring of the American state,” to discuss the second Trump administration and the political perspective upon which opposition must be developed. Register to attend by filling out the form below.



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