

July 4, 2025: Trump, the oligarchy and the American counter-revolution

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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July 4, 2025 marks 249 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which asserted the right of the people “to alter or to abolish” any government that becomes “destructive” to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Independence Day is celebrated with parades, barbecues, picnics and fireworks. All that is well and good. It is necessary, however, to put aside some time for serious thinking about the fate of the American Revolution and the state of the country. As the United States begins the 250th year of its existence, it is in the throes of a political, social, intellectual and cultural counterrevolution. All the great democratic principles that were proclaimed in Jefferson’s immortal document and which inspired not only the struggle against the British monarchy, but also the Second American Revolution of 1861-65 that abolished slavery, are under violent attack.

In his speech at Gettysburg in 1863, Lincoln asked whether a nation founded on the principle that all men are created equal “can long endure.” One hundred and sixty-two years later, the fascist gangster in the White House and the oligarchy he represents are giving their answer: “No, it cannot, should not and will not.”

The Trump regime is not just a variety of right-wing government, a temporary aberration in the “normal” course of constitutional government. It represents a breakdown of bourgeois democracy. There will be no return to “normalcy.” The “abnormal” is the “new normal.” The ruling class is turning to fascism and dictatorship.

Consider what has happened just in the days leading up to July 4. On Thursday, the US House of Representatives passed a class-war bill that ranks among the largest upward transfers of wealth in American history. When Trump signs the bill today, he will set in motion hundreds of billions of dollars in cuts to Medicaid, food assistance and other social programs that sustain tens of millions of people. These brutal cuts are intended as an initial down payment to pay for trillions in tax breaks for the rich.

The White House and the fascists that comprise it have been focused on an escalating campaign of threats and denunciations of Zohran Mamdani, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America who won the New York Democratic mayoral primary on a platform calling for extremely minor social reforms.

“I’m not going to let this Communist Lunatic destroy New York,” Trump fumed on Wednesday. “Rest assured, I hold all the levers, and have all the cards.” In other words, the hundreds of thousands of people who voted for Mamdani mean nothing; it is the president that will determine who wins. It recalls Henry Kissinger’s infamous remark—“I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its people”—preceding the US-backed military coup that led to the overthrow of Salvador Allende and the murders of tens of thousands in Chile.

Trump also traveled to Florida to celebrate the opening of a concentration camp in the Florida Everglades. At a press conference following the tour, Trump threatened to use the camp not only for undocumented immigrants but also for American citizens. “Many of them were born in our country,” Trump declared. “I think we ought to get them the hell out of here too. You want to know the truth. So maybe that will be the next job.”

In the five months of his second administration, Trump has overseen a conspiracy to establish a presidential dictatorship—from the series of executive orders asserting unlimited executive power to the defiance of court rulings, the mass roundup of immigrant workers by the ICE Gestapo, the deployment of the military on the streets of Los Angeles, and the criminalization of dissent, including the arrest and attempted deportation of opponents of the genocide in Gaza.

The counterrevolution extends across social and intellectual life. Public health, devastated by the pandemic, is being dismantled entirely, with vaccine deniers and conspiracy theorists elevated to top federal posts. On Wednesday, the Food and Drug Administration disclosed that Trump’s appointee, Dr. Vinay Prasad, a leading COVID-19 minimizer, overrode its own scientists’ recommendations on vaccine approvals—an unprecedented breach of scientific protocol.

The same criminality, the same class war being waged at home is being waged by American imperialism around the world. On Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will travel to Washington, as he oversees an ongoing genocide in Gaza. Every day, with American weapons and American money, the Israeli military murders Palestinian men, women and children openly and with impunity. Netanyahu’s visit

follows the bombing of Iran by the Trump administration—an act of war carried out in complete violation of international and domestic law.

In light of these events, to maintain the pretense that something qualitatively new and dangerous is not taking place in the United States is a delusion. The *New York Times*' columnist Jamelle Bouie summed up this attitude of complacency prevailing in the media and Democratic Party circles in a column published yesterday, appearing under the headline, "Face it. Trump is a Normie Republican."

While perhaps engaging in particularly reckless actions, Trump, writes Bouie, is "in most respects, an ordinary Republican president." Two previous Republican presidencies over the past 20 years "ended in disaster," he concludes. "There is no reason to think that Trump's second term will be the exception that breaks the rule."

If Trump is just an "ordinary Republican president," then nothing significant is required in response. Whether conscious or not, the function of such statements is to chloroform the population, to prevent what these layers fear more than anything else, a mass popular movement against the Trump administration and the social system that underlies it.

The Trump administration is the political underworld in power—but this political underworld is the American ruling class. In its New Year statement published on January 3, 2017, just over eight years ago, the *World Socialist Web Site* explained the significance of Trump's first election:

The incoming Trump administration, in its aims as in its personnel, has the character of an insurrection of the oligarchy. As a doomed social class approaches its end, its effort to withstand the tides of history not infrequently assumes the form of an attempt to reverse what it perceives as the longstanding erosion of its power and privilege. It seeks to return conditions to the way they once were (or as it imagines they were), before the inexorable forces of social and economic change began gnawing away at the foundations of its rule...

Trump's pledge to "Make America Great Again" means, in practice, the eradication of whatever remains of the progressive social reforms—achieved through decades of mass struggles—that ameliorated conditions of life for the working class...

This analysis has been fully vindicated. Trump's first term began the process of establishing a dictatorship but proved unable to complete it. The term culminated in the attempted coup of January 6, 2021 aimed at overturning the election.

Far from holding those responsible accountable, the Democratic Party spent the next four years preparing the

conditions for Trump's return. The Democrats' hostility to the interests of the broad mass of the population, and their obsessive promotion of the racial and identity politics of privileged sections of the upper-middle class, allowed the huckster and fascistic demagogue Trump to posture as an opponent of the political establishment.

The Democratic Party is the terminal expression of the collapse of American liberalism. It is a party of Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus. It combines cowardice, complicity and outright collaboration with the Trump regime. Just two weeks ago, in an act of political prostration, the Democratic leadership joined Republicans in voting to kill a resolution to impeach Trump.

There is, however, deep and growing popular opposition. This year has already seen mass protests erupt across the country in response to Trump's attacks on immigrants, students and democratic rights. Millions participated in demonstrations last month under the banner of "No Kings," in the largest anti-government protests in American history.

The democratic traditions embodied in the American Revolution retain a powerful resonance, not in the ruling class, but in the working class. Amidst the shocks of dictatorship, genocide and war, millions are being radicalized.

The critical question is the building of a revolutionary leadership. In the face of a ruling class hurtling toward dictatorship and war, it is necessary to reject all those who counsel complacency and who, like Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Mamdani, speak about "oligarchy" without challenging the foundations of capitalism itself.

Millions of workers in the US and around the world must and will come to see that the counterrevolution of the oligarchy can only be met with the revolution of the working class.

On this anniversary of the American Revolution, the Socialist Equality Party calls for the building of a mass socialist movement to carry out a new revolution—one that overthrows the rule of the oligarchy and reorganizes society on the basis of equality, democracy and social need. The criminal Trump administration must be brought down, through the conscious intervention of the working class, guided by the program of world socialism.



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