Top Democrats plead for meeting with fascist Trump as government shutdown looms

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On Tuesday, President Donald Trump abruptly cancelled a White House meeting announced the previous day with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries. The meeting had been billed as an attempt to avert a government shutdown when the new fiscal year begins on Wednesday, October 1.

In a fascistic rant, Trump wrote on his social media platform Truth Social:

> After reviewing the details of the unserious and ridiculous demands being made by the Minority Radical Left Democrats in return for their Votes to keep our thriving Country open, I have decided that no meeting with their Congressional Leaders could possibly be productive. They are threatening to shut down the Government of the United States unless they can have over $1 Trillion Dollars in new spending to continue free healthcare for Illegal Aliens (A monumental cost!), force Taxpayers to fund Transgender surgery for minors, have dead people on the Medicaid roles, allow Illegal Alien Criminals to steal Billions of Dollars in American Taxpayer Benefits, try to force our Country to again open our Borders to Criminals and to the World, allow men to play in women's sports, and essentially create Transgender operations for everybody… All Congressional Democrats want to do is enact Radical Left Policies that nobody voted for — High Taxes, Open Borders, No Consequences for Violent Criminals…

Trump held open the possibility of a meeting if the Democrats capitulated in advance. He insisted that they support a Republican continuing resolution along the lines of that passed by the House last Friday to extend funding for the federal government through November 21. He wrote, "I'll be happy to meet with them if they agree to the Principles in this Letter."

Schumer made clear the supine posture of the Democrats. He criticized Trump for "running away from the negotiating table before he even gets there," and added, "Democrats are ready to work to avoid a shutdown…"

The Democrats are desperate to maintain funding for a fascist administration that is waging war on democratic rights and on the social conditions and jobs of the working class. Schumer's statement came just two days after Trump and his cabinet headlined a Christian fascist rally in Phoenix to honor far-right Republican operative Charlie Kirk, a racist, antisemite and supporter of authoritarian rule.

At the rally, Trump, Vice-President JD Vance, White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller and others called for war against the left and all critics of the Trump administration. Trump reiterated his intention to send troops into Chicago and other US cities to crack down on social opposition and back up his campaign of mass raids and deportations against immigrants. The rally also followed the direct intervention of the Trump government to suspend the Jimmy Kimmel late night show and threats to rescind broadcast licenses for all media outlets that criticize Trump.

The Democrats and aligned pseudo-left organizations such as the Democratic Socialists of America have remained virtually silent on Sunday's rally, the first time in US history such a gathering of fascists was organized by a sitting government. Last week the Senate voted unanimously for a resolution making October 14, Kirk's birthday, a "national day of remembrance." Not one senator, including Bernie Sanders, objected. In the House, 90 Democrats, including the party's leadership, voted with the Republicans to pass a resolution "honoring the life and legacy" of the fascist Kirk. The Democrats seek to chloroform the population about the seriousness of the assault on democratic rights and the erection of a presidential dictatorship.

On Friday, the House passed its funding measure in a 217-212 vote, with two Republicans voting against and one Democrat voting in favor. Later that day in the Senate, where 60 votes are required to surmount the filibuster rule

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and pass legislation, the House measure was voted down 44 to 48, with two Republicans voting "no" and one Democrat, John Fetterman of Pennsylvania, voting in favor. A Democratic counter bill calling for the reversal of $800 billion in Medicaid cuts included in Trump's tax and spending bill enacted in July and an extension of Affordable Care Act (ACA) subsidies, in return for extending federal funding through October 31, failed with 47 in favor and 45 opposed.

Both the House and Senate are adjourned for the Jewish holidays, with the Senate slated to return on September 29. House Speaker Mike Johnson extended the House recess until after October 1 to place additional pressure on the Democrats to come to terms.

The Democrats' demand to reverse the Medicaid cuts is pure bluster. They have since signaled that they are more serious about extending the ACA subsidies, which are set to expire at the end of this year. They are pursuing this as a face-saving measure to provide cover for their capitulation and complicity with the Trump regime.

Last March, when a funding deadline was at hand, Schumer reversed himself and threw his support behind a Republican continuing resolution to keep the Trump administration running. He brought behind him nine other Senate Democrats to pass the measure, underscoring the Democrats' complicity in Trump's anti-democratic and anti-social rampage. The vote highlighted the fact that both parties represent the corporate-financial oligarchy that runs the country and determines government policy.

Since the Democrats' green light to Trump in March, the administration has escalated its rampage against democratic rights and the social conditions of the working class. It has deployed troops to Los Angeles, including active duty Marines, and militarily occupied Washington D.C. with National Guard troops, all in violation of the Posse Comitatus law. It has imposed tariffs, driving up consumer prices and wiping out thousands of jobs. It has fired regulatory agency officials in order to gut restrictions on corporate profit-making at the expense of the safety, health and very lives of workers.

A federal shutdown would mean the suspension of many government operations deemed non-essential and furloughs for hundreds of thousands of government workers. Thousands of other federal workers would be required to work without pay until funding resumes. "Essential" services such as border protection, law enforcement, air traffic control and in-hospital medical care would continue. Social Security checks, Medicare and Medicaid would continue, but with limited support staff.

Trump would gain temporary discretion over which functions persist during the shutdown, allowing him to restructure or eliminate agencies and programs.

The Democrats are desperate to avoid a government shutdown, not out of concern for the social dislocation caused by worker furloughs and halted or reduced government services, but for fear that a shutdown, coming in the midst of rising public anger over government policies, will trigger mass social resistance from below. The Democratic Party does not call for impeachment and opposes a struggle to bring down the Trump regime. It fears the emergence of a revolutionary movement of workers against capitalism, not fascism and dictatorship.

As the Socialist Equality Party explained in its statement posted last week on the *World Socialist Web Site*, "Trump's fascist conspiracy and how to fight it: A socialist strategy:"

> … the correct identification of the source of Trump's war against the working class leads to critical political conclusions. The starting point for any serious struggle against dictatorship is a break with the Democratic Party. To rely on the Democratic Party to oppose Trump is to guarantee defeat.

The statement called for the formation of rank-and-file committees in the factories, job sites and neighborhoods to break the grip of the trade union bureaucracies and coordinate an industrial and political struggle by the working class to defend democratic rights by bringing down the Trump government, expropriating the corporate oligarchy and implementing socialist policies.

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