

# Democrats, corporate media cover for Trump's military coup

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Crises have one benefit: They expose political tendencies, compelling them to show their true colors. In the ongoing US political crisis, in which Donald Trump is carrying out nothing less than a presidential coup d'état, the Democratic Party is demonstrating both impotence and complicity.

Despite pretended opposition to Trump, the Democrats are a party of the capitalist system, the financial oligarchy that dominates it and the military-intelligence apparatus that defends it. They are far more afraid of a popular movement from below against Trump's attempt to tear up the Constitution and install a dictatorial regime than they are of Trump himself and his circle of fascist aides in the White House.

On Saturday, Trump ordered the deployment of US troops into Portland, the largest city in Oregon and the center of a metropolitan area of more than 2.5 million people. He claimed that the city was a “war zone,” in which Antifa terrorists were laying violent siege to government buildings and, in particular, to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) regional office there.

In his statement on his Truth Social platform, Trump wrote that he was “directing Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to provide all necessary Troops” to Portland and “authorizing Full Force, if necessary.” According to a lawsuit filed by the city of Portland and the state of Oregon Sunday afternoon, Hegseth has already called up 200 National Guard troops for deployment, though Trump's statement indicates that this could be followed by active-duty military, as in Los Angeles.

Trump's portrayal of Portland is a lie. In reality, a few dozen protesters, often seated in lawn chairs, wave signs against ICE's mass detentions, exercising their First Amendment rights. When ICE vehicles arrive, they march peacefully. They are unarmed. The only violence has come from ICE itself, whose agents have repeatedly used so much teargas that a nearby school had to relocate after children fell ill.

The presidential order for troops to use “full force” against civilians is a direct violation of the Posse Comitatus Act, which prohibits the use of the military for domestic law enforcement, and an assault on the basic principles of democratic governance and the constitutional foundations of the American republic. It is worth recalling that it was the dispatch of British troops to attack, intimidate and arrest citizens of Massachusetts that

touched off the American Revolution 250 years ago.

Trump's deployment of troops is clearly partisan. In Republican-led Tennessee, he has coordinated with the governor on sending federal agents and Guard troops into Memphis. But in Democratic-controlled states, such as California, Oregon and Illinois, he bypasses governors and mayors, treating cities like Los Angeles, Portland and Chicago as enemy territory.

Trump's top aide, fascist Stephen Miller, has declared, “The Democrat Party is not a political party. It is a domestic extremist organization,” a statement DHS Secretary Kristi Noem, who requested Trump's deployment to Portland, effectively endorsed. Following the killing of Charlie Kirk, Trump issued orders for a “national strategy” to target supposed networks of political violence, with all federal police and surveillance agencies reporting directly to Miller.

Miller is very familiar with the methods of the Nazi regime during Hitler's consolidation of power and has openly copied the speeches of Josef Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda chief. When he suggests that the Democratic Party is not a party but a “domestic extremist organization,” he is guided by the example of the Nazis, who within six months of coming to power had banned all other political parties.

Even under conditions in which their own right to exist is under threat, the Democrats are doing everything they can to block any popular mobilization. On Monday, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries will visit the White House for talks on a budget deal with their Republican counterparts and Trump. The meeting comes after Trump previously denounced the two as “radical left lunatics” and said there was no reason to talk to the Democrats.

In appearances on Sunday television interview programs, Schumer and Jeffries hailed Trump's decision to convene the talks as a “good first step,” while raising concerns of a purely fiscal character over Trump's cancellation of premium subsidies for middle income families eligible to enroll under the Affordable Care Act. They did not suggest that the budget talks—supposedly the Democrats' only point of leverage against the Trump administration—should be premised on political demands that Trump halt his military coup, withdraw troops

from targeted cities and remove aides like Miller, who have declared the Democrats “terrorists.”

The overriding concern of the Democratic leadership is not how to stop Trump’s drive to dictatorship, but how to secure bipartisan agreement on a budget that assures the continuation of the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, which was instigated by the Democratic administration of Biden and Harris and remains the central priority of the Democratic Party.

Equally telling is the response of the corporate media, which treats Trump’s moves toward dictatorship as though they were routine or merely the expression of his personal intolerance. After Charlie Kirk was shot to death, the *New York Times* rushed out an editorial eulogizing the fascist propagandist under the headline (later changed), “America Mourns Charlie Kirk.”

But after Trump’s announcement that he was ordering troops into Portland, the “newspaper of record” and mouthpiece of the Democratic Party waited hours to post even a short article. By Sunday night, this had been replaced with a followup depicting Trump’s attitude to Portland as a private obsession and unserious. Portland residents, it claimed, are “rolling their eyes” over Trump’s threat to militarily occupy their city.

None of the Sunday television interview programs focused on Portland, with ABC and CNN saying nothing, and CBS raising the issue only with a Republican guest, Senator Rand Paul, who defended Trump’s action. Even on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” where host Kristen Welker asked both Schumer and Senate Majority Leader John Thune about the deployment, it was her final question to each, after lengthy discussion of the budget talks and the indictment of former FBI Director James Comey.

While Schumer called the deployment “indefensible,” he avoided drawing any political conclusions, saying only that Trump should leave “domestic problems” in terms of crime and violence to local and state authorities. Asked directly if he could do anything to stop Trump’s action, Schumer said, “We will fight it in the courts along with, you know, people who will file suits.” Then he expressed the hope that some congressional Republicans “would join us in legislation to prevent it from happening.”

In other words, the highest-ranking Democrat in Washington declares that it is up to the courts—headed by a Supreme Court with a 6-3 ultra-right majority—and Republican defectors in Congress to decide whether the American people will live under a presidential military dictatorship.

Neither the corporate media nor the Democrats suggested any link between Trump’s dispatch of federal troops into American cities and his summoning of the entire general staff of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines for an unprecedented meeting just outside Washington on Tuesday, even after Trump announced that he and not just Secretary of War Pete Hegseth would address the assembled officers.

There is every reason to believe that the purpose of this meeting is to ensure the loyalty of the general staff as the

“commander-in-chief” presses ahead with his plans for dictatorship. Any reservations or objections will be met with a swift purge by Hegseth, who has already fired dozens of top officers promoted or appointed under the Biden administration.

Nor do the media or the Democrats suggest that the military deployments in cities throughout the US have any connection with the massive and escalating assault on the working class and social programs being carried out by the Trump government, acting on behalf of the oligarchy.

The working class must draw the necessary political conclusions. No section of the existing political establishment, Democratic or Republican, will defend the democratic rights of working people. They will either directly participate in the imposition of authoritarian rule or work as collaborators, peddling illusions in the courts and seeking at all costs to block any open resistance by the American population.

As the Socialist Equality Party declared in its statement published yesterday:

The struggle against Trump’s coup can be carried forward only through the independent mobilization of the working class against the capitalist oligarchy and the capitalist system as a whole.

We call on workers, young people and all those committed to the defense of democratic rights to support and join the effort by the Socialist Equality Party to arm the growing opposition with a socialist and internationalist program, and to build the revolutionary leadership necessary to guide this fight.



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