

# Silence of the Democrats aids Trump dictatorship

**Patrick Martin**  
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While Trump and his top fascist aides, like Stephen Miller, Kristi Noem and Pam Bondi, speak the language of civil war and openly incite violence against the American people, the Democratic Party, the supposed opposition party in Congress and the states, is doing everything it can to disarm the public and block any systematic response to Trump's drive to establish a presidential dictatorship.

Even as Democratic governors in states like Illinois, Oregon and California have denounced Trump's authoritarian actions, including the invasion of their states by heavily armed federal agents and National Guard troops, the congressional leadership of the party proceeds on a business-as-usual basis in Washington, pleading with Trump and congressional Republicans to carry out "negotiations" and reach "compromises" on policy.

The extraordinary events of the past five days, with Trump calling up National Guard troops for deployment to Portland and Chicago, and Stephen Miller denouncing unfavorable court orders—issued by judges appointed by Trump himself—as a "judicial insurrection," have not prompted the Democratic Party leadership to declare that this is a government that seeks to overthrow the Constitution and establish Trump as king in all but name.

The Democrats treat the deadlock over the federal budget that led to the partial shutdown of the national government on October 1 as though it was a mere repetition of previous budget clashes and shutdowns over the past two decades. They went to the White House last week for talks with Trump and continue to beg for a deal in which they would approve funding for Trump to continue his authoritarian rampage in return for minor concessions on healthcare spending.

Not a single Democrat declares that there can be no negotiations with a president seeking to overthrow the Constitution and establish his dictatorship or that the central task is to build support for removing Trump and his fascist sidekick JD Vance from office. Not a single Democrat even makes a connection between the budget shutdown and the deployment of troops to American cities, although both are

component parts of Trump's long-planned coup d'état.

Neither Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer nor House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries has even acknowledged the ongoing coup. Their social media accounts make no mention of the deployment of troops to American cities or the invocation of martial law. Schumer, in between appeals for Republicans to "work with us to fix the ACA tax credits," found time to post a tribute to Saul Zabar, the late founder of a New York deli. But nothing about Trump's threat to invoke the Insurrection Act and effectively proclaim martial law.

The entirely unserious character of Democratic Party "opposition" to Trump was revealed Tuesday at a lengthy appearance by Attorney General Pam Bondi before the Senate Judiciary Committee. In his opening statement, the senior Democrat on the committee, Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois, depicted Trump as a "strongman on television." Thus even the senator's framing of the issue concealed more than it revealed.

When Durbin asked Bondi what legal basis there was for Trump sending National Guard troops to Chicago against the wishes of Governor JB Pritzker, Bondi did not disguise her contempt. She flatly declared that she would not discuss any conversations with the president and then baited Durbin, declaring, "I wish you loved Chicago as much as you hate President Trump."

Rather than press the issue and demand that the attorney general defer to the rights of Congress to oversee the executive branch, other Democrats on the committee moved on to a series of diversions—the firing of career lawyers at the Justice Department, Bondi's role in the suppression of documents related to Jeffrey Epstein and his ties to Trump, and who authorized dropping a criminal investigation into White House immigration "czar" Tom Homan for accepting bribes.

Even as the hearing was taking place, 200 National Guard troops from Texas arrived in Illinois, despite a lawsuit filed by the state of Illinois and the city of Chicago contesting the unprecedented deployment of troops from one state against

the citizens of another. Federal District Judge April Perry declined to issue an immediate order and set Thursday for a hearing.

Pritzker called the troop deployment “Trump’s Invasion,” and California Governor Gavin Newsom wrote on X, “America is on the brink of martial law. Do not be silent.” But that is precisely the policy of the Democratic Party as a whole. The governors issue protests, but their actions are limited to filing lawsuits. The national leadership of the Democrats treats Trump as a legitimate president, not a would-be dictator.

And the state officials, away from press conferences where they strike a defiant pose for political purposes, have as a central concern the necessity to uphold federal authority. Thus, Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield, appearing on a podcast with *The New Republic*, said, “We actually do want a rational president to have deference in being able to determine when there’s an emergency that might necessitate the military, right?”

He went on to criticize Stephen Miller as “incredibly inflammatory,” adding, “it’s incredibly short-sighted, because if you start expanding the power of the executive branch, those powers will be expanded for the next Democratic president.” He urged a unified response, from Democrats and Republicans alike, adding, “let’s also not forget some of the real positive things coming from some Republicans.” The Democratic state attorney-general expressed the hope that the Supreme Court would uphold the lower court ruling blocking deployment of the National Guard in Portland: “They’re going to do what’s right, ultimately. ... They’re incredibly well-educated, smart judges.”

As for the supposed “left wing” of the Democratic Party, Senator Bernie Sanders has said little about the threat of a Trump dictatorship, merely indicating his support for the state Democrats like Pritzker and Newsom. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez gave the most frivolous response, suggesting to her millions of social media followers that they should make fun of Stephen Miller by taunting him about his height.

The current darling of the pseudo-left and the Democratic Socialists of America, New York mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani, embraced the “go to court” response of the Democratic governors. Asked by the *New York Times* what three specific steps he would take if Trump sent the National Guard to New York City, he replied, “The first is to preemptively hire 200 lawyers,” followed by speaking publicly against the deployment and then filing lawsuits modeled on those in other states faced with National Guard deployments.

The Democrats’ silence is not simply a matter of

cowardice or miscalculation. It flows from their class character. The Democratic Party is a party of Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus. Its verbal opposition to Trump is limited by its defense of the capitalist system. What the Democrats fear most is not Trump’s dictatorship but the emergence of a mass movement of workers and youth from below that would threaten the wealth and power of the ruling elite. Moreover, on the fundamental issues of social policy, the Democrats agree with Trump.

To defeat Trump’s ongoing coup requires the independent intervention of the working class, using its immense social power at the point of production and rallying behind it millions of young people and all those devoted to the defense of democratic rights. Opposition to dictatorship is inextricably connected to the fight against the capitalist oligarchy and the capitalist system itself.

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) calls on workers to take the initiative by forming rank-and-file committees in every workplace, school and neighborhood to defend their coworkers, their families and their communities. The SEP is spearheading the building of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) to unify workers across all industries and countries into a single movement against dictatorship, inequality and capitalist oligarchy.

There is growing anger over the deployment of the military into major American cities and the terror operations of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Independent committees must become centers of resistance and coordination, linking the fight against fascism with the struggle against the escalating jobs massacre and the assault on social programs.

All those who want to oppose Trump’s dictatorship and take up this fight should contact and join the Socialist Equality Party today.



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