

Trump Justice Department indicts former National Security Adviser John Bolton

Barry Grey
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On Thursday, a federal grand jury in Maryland indicted John Bolton, Donald Trump's national security adviser for 18 months of his first term, on 18 counts of mishandling national defense information. Bolton was arraigned on Friday and pleaded not guilty on all counts.

If convicted, Bolton could receive a 10-year prison sentence on each count.

Trump publicly demanded Bolton's indictment, part of a Justice Department campaign to indict and jail opponents of Trump within the state apparatus and political establishment. Bolton is the third such person to be indicted over the past three weeks, the other two being former FBI Director James Comey and New York Attorney General Letitia James.

These indictments mark a significant further step in Trump's drive to establish a presidential dictatorship. With the support of the corporate oligarchy, he is seeking to consolidate a personalist regime to take on and smash the resistance of the working class with an unprecedented and violent assault on democratic and social rights.

Trump's top White House aide, Stephen Miller, has called the Democratic Party a "domestic extremist organization," and Trump officials have identified popular opposition to his administration with "antifa terrorism."

At Trump's urging, federal prosecutors have opened up investigations of other targets, including former CIA Director John Brennan, former FBI Director Christopher Wray, Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook and Democratic Senator Adam Schiff. On Wednesday, he pointed to other people he thought should be prosecuted, including Jack Smith, the former special counsel who indicted him twice.

Responding to the indictment of Bolton on Thursday,

Attorney General Pam Bondi said, "Anyone who abuses a position of power and jeopardizes our national security will be held accountable. No one is above the law." This is doubly cynical given the fact that Trump was indicted two years ago under the same law, the Espionage Act of 1917, used to indict Bolton.

Federal authorities found 13,000 government documents at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate, over 300 of which were classified. When Trump refused to turn over all of the classified documents, the FBI carried out a court-authorized search and found 102 additional classified documents at Mar-a-Lago. A pro-Trump judge dismissed the case.

Bolton, a right-wing warmonger, is known as an "architect" of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. He has held top posts at the State and Justice Departments and was US ambassador to the UN as well as national security adviser. During his time as national security adviser, from April 2018 to September 2019, he clashed with Trump over Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, Russia and Venezuela, generally pushing an even more militaristic and bellicose line than that of the president.

Since his dismissal by Trump, the two have been bitter enemies. Bolton has called Trump "unfit for office." The White House tried to block the publication in 2020 of Bolton's tell-all memoir of his time in the Trump White House, titled *The Room Where It Happened*. In it, Bolton called Trump "erratic" and a "stunningly uninformed leader." Trump called for Bolton's prosecution, claiming he published classified information.

This past August, the FBI carried out highly publicized searches of Bolton's home in Bethesda, Maryland, and his office in downtown Washington D.C. Agents were shown carting off Bolton's computers, phones and reams of documents.

It is necessary to place the indictment of Bolton within the broader political context of Trump's escalating assault on democratic rights and the drive to dictatorship. The indictment comes two days before mass anti-Trump demonstrations across the US under the rubric of "No Kings." The Republican Party has denounced the protests as "Hate America Day," calling it a conspiracy of pro-Hamas, antifa terrorists. The Democrats, as usual, have said virtually nothing about the protests, refusing to defend or mobilize support for them. That includes so-called progressives like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott, a Trump ally and fellow fascist, announced on social media on Thursday that he had directed the Department of Public Safety and the National Guard to "surge forces into Austin ahead of the Antifa-linked protest," adding that Texas would not tolerate chaos.

In Virginia, Republican Governor Glenn Youngkin ordered the National Guard to be on active duty during Saturday's protests across the state.

In Chicago, the Trump administration is ignoring court orders and unleashing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) thugs to carry out violent attacks on peaceful protesters seeking to defend immigrants facing mass raids and deportations. These attacks, including assaults on journalists and observers, using tear gas, pepper balls and flash-bang grenades, are calculated to create clashes that will be used as the pretext for invoking the Insurrection Act, which gives Trump the authority to deploy active-duty troops in cities across the country.

Also on Thursday, federal prosecutors unsealed terrorism charges against two men accused of attacking an immigration detention center outside Dallas on July 4, claiming they were part of a heavily armed "cell" of antifa. The indictment against Cameron Arnold and Zachary Evetts marks the first time that terrorism charges have been filed against people said to be associated with antifa.

This is a major step in implementing Trump's executive order signed last month designating antifa—which stands for anti-fascist and does not even exist as an organization—as a "domestic terrorist organization." This signals an unconstitutional crackdown against all those who oppose the Trump administration's fascist policies.

The indictment of Arnold and Evetts calls antifa a "militant enterprise made up of networks of individuals and small groups, primarily ascribing to a revolutionary anarchist or autonomous Marxist ideology."

The *New York Times* account points to the far-reaching significance of the use of the term "enterprise." Citing Thomas E. Brzozowski, the former counsel for domestic terrorism in the Justice Department's national security division, the *Times* writes: "Enterprise investigations allow the federal authorities to deeply scrutinize the structure, finances, membership and goals of targeted groups or organizations."

It quotes Brzozowski as saying, "That's what happens when you open such a broad investigation into what is essentially an idea."



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