

Trump delivers fascist diatribe in year-end speech

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In 1933, analyzing the first months of Hitler's regime in Germany, Leon Trotsky wrote in scathing terms about the historical regression taking place in what had once been a center of European culture.

What inexhaustible reserves they possess of darkness, ignorance and savagery! Despair has raised them to their feet, fascism has given them a banner. Everything that should have been eliminated from the national organism in the form of cultural excrement in the course of normal development of society has now come gushing out from the throat; capitalist society is puking up the undigested barbarism. Such is the physiology of Nazism. ("What is National Socialism?")

These words came to mind while listening to the speech delivered by Donald Trump Wednesday night. In the course of 18 minutes, the president spewed a toxic mix of blatant lies, racist bigotry against immigrants and barely veiled threats of violence against political opponents.

His remarks demonstrated for all the world to see that the president of the United States is a sociopath actively preparing for mass repression and the establishment of a military-police dictatorship in America. His sole policy proposal was to award a bonus of \$1,776 to all US soldiers—a transparent bribe aimed at securing their obedience to Trump's orders, at home and abroad, no matter how illegal.

Trump attempted to cram into the brief time allotted by the television networks all the lies and appeals to backwardness that typically fill his 90-minute campaign-style rallies. He rushed through the speech at a near-manic pace, giving the impression that he was either on medication—or in need of it.

The tone of Trump's speech was significant: He appeared angry at the American population and nearly panicked over the likely consequences of the mass opposition his fascist

policies have provoked. In the past two months, millions have marched in "No Kings" protests, Trump-backed candidates have suffered heavy defeats in the off-year elections, and Trump's own poll numbers have fallen sharply.

His remarks had a Hitlerian character, with immigrants taking the place of Jews in his fascist demonology. He blamed every social ill of American capitalism—high prices, unemployment, crime, homelessness, the housing shortage, decaying schools and a dysfunctional healthcare system—on immigrants. He singled out Somalis, refugees from a crisis provoked by US military intervention, for particular venom.

The "big lie" of a supposed "invasion" by 25 million immigrants (who he claimed come "from prisons and jails, mental institutions and insane asylums") was combined with another falsehood: that Trump's policies are benefiting the working class. He boasted of (entirely fabricated) huge wage increases for factory workers, construction workers and miners, while claiming that wages overall are rising faster than prices.

This flies in the face of the actual experience of working people, whose living standards have steadily eroded, not only under Trump and Biden, but for decades, as the super-rich have seized virtually all the growth in national wealth since the 1970s. Adults under 40 now constitute the first generation in modern American history to face lower incomes and poorer prospects than their parents.

Job figures published this week by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the unemployment rate has risen to 4.6 percent, the highest in four years, with 700,000 more workers unemployed today than when Trump re-entered the White House on January 20.

Trump piled lie upon lie: \$18 trillion in foreign investment supposedly obtained through tariffs; gasoline at \$1.99 a gallon; food prices "falling rapidly"; and negotiations to slash drug prices "by as much as 400, 500 and even 600 percent." (Since a cut of 100 percent would reduce prices to zero, Trump's figures are simply gibberish.) He operates according to the principle of his mentor Roy Cohn: "You

create your own reality.”

Equally significant is what Trump did not say. He made no mention of the impending war against Venezuela or the slaughter of more than 100 people in bomb and missile strikes on small boats in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. Nor did he refer to his deployment of troops in American cities or the tens of thousands of immigrants rounded up and held in detention camps, including children.

Media commentary after the speech bemoaned Trump’s easily exposed falsehoods, his vicious and menacing tone, and his obsessive fixation on blaming every problem either on immigrants or on the Biden administration. But there was no attempt by the Democrats to offer a political rebuttal. By Thursday night, the speech had disappeared entirely from the evening news.

The Democratic Party is doing nothing to oppose Trump’s drive toward dictatorship. There have been no calls by any leading Democrats for his removal from office. Indeed, the Democratic Party leadership has explicitly repudiated any suggestion of impeachment. This despite Trump’s repeated violations of the Constitution, including the illegal deployment of the military in Washington D.C. and other US cities.

Just hours before Trump delivered his speech Wednesday night, a majority of Senate Democrats voted to pass the National Defense Authorization Act, handing the White House nearly \$1 trillion in military funding as it prepares to launch a war of aggression against Venezuela.

When Trump forced a government shutdown in October, throwing hundreds of thousands of federal workers out of their jobs, the Democrats moved to bail him out and avert any confrontation. Since their electoral victories in November, Democratic leaders have only deepened their collaboration. The new governors of Virginia and New Jersey pledged to “work with” Trump. New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani—hailed by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) as a model of “democratic socialism”—visited the White House for a photo-op and announced a “partnership” with the fascist president.

Most importantly, the Democrats are doing everything in their power to chloroform the working class and obscure the fact that preparations for a presidential dictatorship are advancing by leaps and bounds. Democratic governors claim to oppose Trump’s persecution of immigrants—by filing lawsuits. At the same time, they collaborate with the unions to suppress any organized resistance by the working class to this illegal and unconstitutional regime.

Trump speaks not merely as an individual, but as the embodiment of the American capitalist class. He was placed in the White House to serve as the political representative of finance capital and the oligarchy. He is *their man*.

His administration acts on behalf of billionaires like Larry Ellison, Steven Schwarzman, Jeff Bezos and the major banks and hedge funds that dominate every lever of political power. Trump’s drive to accumulate unchecked authority and establish a presidential dictatorship is not simply the product of his grotesque personality. It arises from the insoluble contradictions of American and world capitalism. The US ruling class, beset by crises at home and growing challenges abroad, is turning to authoritarianism to defend its wealth and global dominance.

This class character of Trump’s fascist agenda explains the cowardice and complicity of the Democratic Party. The Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are instruments of corporate America. Whatever tactical differences they have, they both defend the interests of the financial oligarchy and agree on the main elements of policy, abroad and within the United States. The Democrats are terrified above all of opposition from below.

The degraded, panic-stricken, even hysterical character of Trump’s speech is not merely a reflection of his personal instability or increasing incapacity. It is an expression of the mounting fears within the ruling class as a whole, which faces convulsions in world financial markets, the rise of China, and growing resistance in the working class at home to its policies of austerity and militarism.

The physiology of the fascist cabal in the White House is a modern manifestation of what Trotsky described in 1933 as the “cultural excrement” vomited up by a capitalist society in terminal crisis.

The task of the working class is to raise its opposition to the Trump administration and the capitalist system it defends to the level demanded by history: the building of a mass revolutionary movement to establish a workers’ government, committed to socialist policies and the expropriation of the oligarchy. This is inseparable from the fight to unify the working class internationally in a common struggle against imperialism, dictatorship and war.



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