

Trump's "Murder, Inc." and the execution of Alex Petti

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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Alex Jeffrey Petti, a 37-year-old intensive care nurse at the Minneapolis Veterans Affairs hospital, was executed on the streets of Minneapolis on Saturday morning. His murder was the Trump administration's brutal response to the massive protests the day before—when more than 100,000 people across Minnesota demanded an end to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) occupation and the police-state measures engulfing the state.

The description of Petti as a "domestic terrorist" by White House officials demonstrates that there is no limit to the depths to which Trump and his satraps are prepared to descend in order to justify their crimes.

Alex was a nurse, who worked in an intensive care unit and dedicated his life to saving the lives of others. His family described him as "a kindhearted soul who cared deeply for his family and friends and also the American veterans whom he cared for." His father wrote: "I do not throw around the 'hero' term lightly. However, his last thought and act was to protect a woman."

That act of bravery cost him his life. As ICE and CBP agents pepper-sprayed a protester and knocked her to the ground, Alex intervened. He was holding a phone. Video evidence shows that he was tackled by federal agents, who removed his legally owned firearm from Petti's belt and then shot him as many as 10 times, the last several as he lay on the ground. This was murder—plain and simple—and it was carried out by what amounts to Trump's "Murder, Inc.": a network of Nazi-like stormtroopers operating entirely outside the law.

The identities of the masked gunmen who murdered Petti in cold blood are being concealed from the public. But the main instigators of the crime are not in doubt. They are President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, chief White House adviser Stephen Miller, Homeland Security secretary Kristi Noem, CBP commander Greg Bovino and FBI Director Kash Patel. Vance traveled to Minneapolis the day before the January 23 protests to deliver the message that there would be no backing down and that it was open season on opponents of ICE and the CBP (Customs and Border Protection).

Millions have now seen the video recording of the shooting. They know exactly what happened. But Trump and his cohorts brazenly respond: "Who are you going to believe? Us or your own eyes?"

As with the killing of Renée Nicole Good, the video evidence is incontrovertible. Independent analyses from multiple major media outlets have confirmed that Petti never drew a weapon and posed no threat. In this situation, the Democrats and the media call for an "independent investigation" and more "transparency" as if there were any doubt about the fact that Petti was murdered. This is an attempt to buy time, cover up the truth and deflect mass outrage.

The murder of Alex Petti is a vast escalation in the paramilitary terror in Minneapolis which is the spearhead of an ongoing conspiracy to invoke the Insurrection Act, send the military into American cities and establish a presidential dictatorship in the United States.

This is not speculation. Trump has said it over and over again. His first

presidency ended in an attempted coup. In this campaign, he declared he would be a "dictator on day one." At the World Economic Forum in Switzerland just days ago, he added, "Sometimes you need a dictator." These are political declarations of criminal intent, and they are being carried out.

Trump is the representative of the financial oligarchy, which is turning to fascism and breaking with all forms of legality. Beneath the growing violence of the Trump administration is a mounting panic within the ruling class over the crisis of American capitalism. The soaring price of gold, which has now burst through the \$5,000 per ounce mark, signifies the ongoing collapse of the US dollar as the world reserve currency. With the national debt now approaching \$40 trillion, the US is faced with the threat of state bankruptcy. As the economy teeters on the edge, the ruling elite is lashing out wildly and hysterically to defend its wealth and power.

The Democratic Party is doing everything it can to evade political reality. Even in the aftermath of the murder of Petti, it desperately promotes the fiction that the actions of the Trump administration, however egregious, do not represent a fundamental break with legality and conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution.

The contradiction between the reality recorded in videos and the cowardly and diversionary political narrative of the Democratic Party is exposed in an editorial published Sunday by the *New York Times*.

Titled "The Trump Administration Is Lying to Our Faces. Congress Must Act," the *Times* acknowledges that Petti was unarmed and executed in broad daylight. It concedes that video evidence shows he had "nothing but a phone in his hands," that one agent had already taken his holstered gun when "a different agent shot him from behind" and that the federal government is "lying in the manner of authoritarian regimes."

But it proclaims that "it is premature to reach conclusions about what exactly happened on that Minneapolis street."

This is preposterous. The video is clear. The footage has been analyzed frame by frame, including by the *Times* itself. The conclusion being drawn by tens of millions of people is not "premature." It is entirely correct.

In the wake of Petti's murder, leading Democrats have raised the possibility of blocking funding for the Department of Homeland Security in the Senate—a move that, even if successful, would not halt ICE operations, which are largely funded through permanent appropriations. Others have appealed to Republicans to "grow a spine" (Representative Angie Craig) and "speak out" (Senator Amy Klobuchar) against Trump, while the Democrats themselves grovel before the administration and its political co-conspirators.

As for appeals to "wait for the elections" in November—nearly 10 months away—there is no guarantee that such elections will even take place, or that they will be held under remotely democratic conditions. On Saturday, the Justice Department issued a memo demanding that Minnesota turn over its entire voter registration database for "eligibility review." These ultimatums are aimed at dismantling voting rights and preparing to rig the 2026 election.

Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and others have issued statements calling for ICE to withdraw from Minneapolis. But they make no proposal for how this should happen, nor have they called for ICE to be disbanded. Their role is not to organize resistance but to foster illusions that the crisis can be resolved by appealing to the same institutions responsible for carrying out the repression.

The trade union apparatus, for its part, is seeking to suppress and block a genuine fight of workers against the Trump regime.

Alex Pretti was a member of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), which is proposing no action in response to his murder. In a statement issued Saturday afternoon, AFGE President Everett Kelley claimed that “details of the incident are still emerging” and called for “peace and calm.” He presented the lies of the DHS as legitimate but said they were “brought into question” by video evidence. However, there is in fact no “question” as to what actually happened.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler issued empty platitudes about “mourning” and “accountability,” calling on Congress and local authorities to investigate. The Minnesota AFL-CIO denounced “Operation Metro Surge” as political retribution but likewise took no steps to mobilize workers. Not a single walkout has been called, despite overwhelming support among rank-and-file workers for a general strike.

What both the Democrats and the trade union apparatus are seeking to prevent is the confrontation of the working class with the capitalist oligarchy that controls every institution of the state, that has elevated Trump because it is not able to enforce its interests, at home and abroad, through legal or democratic means.

None of the existing institutions—from Congress to the courts, from the trade union bureaucracy to the Democratic Party—will do anything to stop the descent into fascism. Indeed, there is no reason to believe that if Trump moves to deploy troops into American cities, he will face any meaningful resistance from the political establishment.

In the final analysis, the Democrats stand with Trump in defense of the capitalist system and the wealth of the oligarchs. Their greatest fear is not a military-police dictatorship but a working class movement that escapes their control and threatens the existing concentration of wealth and the organization of society on a capitalist foundation.

But beneath the paralysis and complicity of the political establishment, a process of political and social radicalization is unfolding. Across the country, popular anger and outrage is developing from below. There is growing talk of the necessity for a general strike. In workplaces, schools and neighborhoods, discussions are intensifying over the need for decisive action.

The mass protests of January 23 marked a turning point in this developing movement. The demand for a general strike did not come from union leaders, Democratic politicians or any section of the official establishment. It arose from workers, students, and progressive sections of the middle class who are coming to understand that protest alone is insufficient, and that only the mass, coordinated action spearheaded by the working class can defeat the Trump regime and halt the escalating campaign of state violence.

The working class is on a collision course with the Trump administration. The decisive issue now is how this movement is consciously developed and organized.

The Socialist Equality Party proposes the preparation and organization of a nationwide general strike with the following demands:

- **The immediate removal of ICE agents from Minneapolis and all other cities;**
- **The disbanding of ICE and the criminal prosecution of all its officials and agents responsible for murder and violence;**
- **The immediate end to the persecution of immigrants and the release of all detainees;**
- **The resignation and prosecution of Trump administration officials**

responsible for these crimes, including the systematic violation of constitutionally protected rights.

To carry this struggle forward, the SEP calls for the formation of rank-and-file committees in every workplace, school and neighborhood. These must be democratically controlled, independent of the trade union apparatus, and tasked with preparing mass action, electing trusted delegates and linking up across industries and states in a unified fight against dictatorship and repression.

The International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) has been initiated to coordinate the development and integration of such committees in the US and throughout the world.

These committees must be rooted in the working class and draw on the initiative already emerging. In neighborhoods across Minneapolis and beyond, grassroots organizations have mobilized to oppose ICE raids and protect immigrants. These must be expanded and connected to workers in every sector—including educators, auto and logistics workers, Amazon and UPS drivers, rail and transit workers, service and tech workers—transforming workplaces into centers of resistance and political organization.

The SEP issues a special appeal to nurses across the country. Alex Pretti was one of your own—a healthcare worker who devoted his life to saving others and was murdered by the state. His execution comes amid a growing wave of resistance by nurses to intolerable and dangerous conditions imposed by a profit-driven healthcare system, including the strike by 15,000 nurses in New York City and the strike by 31,000 nurses and healthcare workers in California and Hawaii that began Monday morning.

We also call on students and young people to take up the fight against dictatorship. With schools and campuses reopening, students must not return as if nothing has happened. The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), the student and youth movement of the SEP, urges the formation of committees to organize walkouts and link up with the working class. Go to the factories and warehouses.

What is taking place in Minneapolis is the spearhead of a nationwide conspiracy to crush democratic rights and establish a dictatorship on behalf of the corporate and financial oligarchy. It must be answered by a movement of millions, armed with the political consciousness and revolutionary program necessary to defeat it.

We appeal to all those who agree with the program and strategy presented in this statement to share it with your co-workers, fellow students and friends. Post it on social media. Above all, contact the Socialist Equality Party, apply for membership and build the movement for workers’ democracy and socialism.



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