

“Progressive” Democrats seek collaboration with fascist critics of Iran war

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On X/Twitter Tuesday night, Democratic California Representative Ro Khanna posted a statement thanking far-right politicians and political commentators after Trump announced a two-week ceasefire in the war against Iran.

In a 45-second video, Khanna noted that Congress had done nothing to prevent Trump from waging an illegal war against Iran. After stating that he was “relieved” Trump had accepted the “ceasefire,” Khanna said, “Let’s be clear, this did not happen because of Congress, which barely made a whimper.”

Khanna did not mention that Congress’s silence was bipartisan. That is because many Democrats support the illegal war against Iran, just as many supported the genocide in Gaza. Hakeem Jeffries, the top Democrat in the House, deliberately delayed a war powers resolution Khanna filed jointly with Republican representative Thomas Massie last month.

Khanna claimed the “ceasefire” happened “because of the force of the American people, not just progressives and liberals, but conservatives like Tucker Carlson, Marjorie Taylor Greene and even Ann Coulter spoke out against the horror of threatening genocide against another people.”

That some of Trump’s biggest backers, including Carlson and Coulter, who still publicly support him, and Greene, a supporter of Trump’s January 6 coup and his 2024 presidential campaign, voiced opposition to the illegal war against Iran is not a sign they have become anti-war.

First, Trump’s popularity is collapsing among broad layers of the population who are outraged over not only Trump’s warmongering, but also over his attacks on immigrants, his corruption, his cover-up of the Epstein Files, his self-dealing and his dictatorial actions. This includes many workers and young people who may have voted for Trump in the 2024 election under the false impression that the billionaire conman was “anti-war.”

Now that Greene is out of Congress, she joins Carlson and Coulter in offering right-wing commentary and advice to the ruling class, while at the same time keeping the working class divided by promoting nationalism and their own version of “America First.” In order to keep their audiences, who are increasingly anti-war and questioning those who told them to support Trump, the fascists are obliged to make critical noises.

Second, there are many neo-Nazis and antisemites, such as

fascist streamer Nick Fuentes, who object to the genocide in Gaza not because they care about Palestinian life, but because they hate Jewish people and, like the Zionist state itself, falsely conflate the actions of the Israeli government with those of all Jewish people.

Many on the far-right seek to channel popular opposition to the Iran war along antisemitic lines, claiming that the Trump administration has been hoodwinked into fighting “Israel’s war” by Netanyahu and the “Jewish lobby.” They argue that if Jewish influence were excised from Congress and the military, a genuinely American foreign policy would emerge.

While American and Israeli interests are closely linked, and the Zionist state plays a deeply reactionary role in the Middle East and beyond, it is false to claim that Israel dominates in the formulation of American imperialist foreign policy, including the war against Iran. Such claims amount to an alibi for US imperialism, which has been oppressing Iran for more than a century.

The Israeli state has, since its inception, relied on US imperialism for protection and expansion. Through billions in military aid and diplomatic protection, the US government, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, has propped up Israel in pursuit of its own imperialist interests in the region, centered on domination of natural resources and control of strategic waterways.

The phony opposition of Carlson, Greene and Coulter to Trump’s threats to destroy Iran is aimed at corraling the mass opposition in the United States to the war back into capitalist politics and the Republican Party.

That Khanna promotes these figures’ opposition as genuine exposes his “progressive” pretenses and defines him as an enemy of the working class.

Khanna’s statement included overtures to the fascist right with a call for a “broad populist social movement.” He said:

This tells me one thing. The only thing that will save this country, the only thing that will save our democracy, is a broad, populist social movement, anti-Epstein class, anti-war and pro-working class.

Khanna's appeal for unity with the far right is aimed at blocking an independent socialist movement in the working class against both capitalist parties. What he is proposing has a definite historical and political character. It is a form of what has long been known as a "red-brown" alignment: a convergence in which forces speaking in the name of the "left" seek common cause with the nationalist right and even openly fascistic elements.

Such alliances do not express the interests of the working class. They arise from the politics of privileged middle-class layers, sections of the labor bureaucracy and other petty-bourgeois forces whose essential aim is the preservation of their own social position amid deepening crisis. Terrified by the growth of mass opposition to capitalism from below, they look for ways to channel popular anger into forms compatible with bourgeois rule, even if that means adapting to the language and personnel of extreme reaction.

The classic and most disastrous example was provided in Germany during the final crisis of the Weimar Republic. Following the Stalinist line, the Communist Party of Germany rejected Trotsky's call for a united front of the workers' parties against Hitler and instead treated the Social Democratic Party (SPD) as the main enemy. This policy led not only to the division and paralysis of the working class, but at key moments to direct political convergence with the Nazis against the SPD, most notoriously in the 1931 Prussian referendum. After Hitler's victory, Stalinism swung to the opposite extreme, promoting the anti-fascist "Popular Front," which subordinated workers to alliances with liberal democratic sections of the bourgeoisie.

Leon Trotsky opposed this as another mechanism for disarming the proletariat. In France and Spain, the Popular Front subordinated revolutionary struggles to capitalist governments in the name of defending democracy, strangling the independent movement of workers and opening the way for fascist reaction.

The essential lesson is that the working class cannot fight fascism, war or dictatorship through alliances either with the far right or with liberal sections of the bourgeoisie. Every form of class collaboration serves, in the end, to weaken the workers and strengthen the class enemy.

Khanna is not alone in appealing to, and promoting, the Republican Party as the only political force capable of opposing Trump's warmongering and fascism. In a statement posted on social media on April 7, hours before Trump's deadline for Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz or face annihilation, Senator Bernie Sanders called for "REPUBLICANS TO SPEAK UP."

In two other posts, one from April 3 and another from April 8, Sanders falsely presented the war against Iran as an expression of the personalities of Trump and Netanyahu and suggested that they were the only ones capable of ending it.

On April 3, Sanders wrote, "Trump and Netanyahu started this war. Now they must end it." On April 8, Sanders posted:

No great surprise. Netanyahu talked Trump into the disastrous war in Iran. We cannot allow Israel to continue shaping US military and foreign policy. Next week I will be offering a resolution to stop US military aid to Israel.

Sanders repeats, in a slightly different form, the same essential falsehood advanced by antisemites when he tries to attribute American war crimes to the Israeli government and its supposed control over US foreign policy.

Khanna's appeals to the far right and Sanders's false explanation for the war against Iran both flow from the same class logic. These bourgeois politicians are not telling the truth because they seek to preserve capitalism and American imperialism.

Under conditions in which, less than two weeks ago, some 8 million people marched in opposition to the immigration Gestapo, Trump's budding dictatorship and the illegal war against Iran, the "progressive" Democrats are doing everything they can to keep this movement trapped within the Democratic Party and subordinated to capitalist politics, rather than developing into a revolutionary class struggle. This includes making alliances with fascists who played an instrumental role in Trump's political ascension.

Appearing Wednesday at Democratic Party politician Al Sharpton's National Action Network Convention 2026, Khanna revealed that he is considering a run for president in 2028. Appealing to the crowd, Khanna insisted that his immediate focus was making Hakeem Jeffries, a steadfast supporter of Israel, speaker of the House.

"I am a supporter of Hakeem Jeffries. I believe he will be speaker of the House, and he will be the first black speaker of the House, and I believe he will do that with unanimity," Khanna told Sharpton.

Presaging his own presidential ambitions, Khanna last week published an opinion piece in Jeff Bezos's *Washington Post* calling for "progressive capitalism." The article, titled "Progressive capitalism for the post-Trump era," called for making billionaires pay a "fair share" in taxes, including through Bernie Sanders's proposed 5 percent wealth tax.

The billionaires will not voluntarily allow their unearned wealth to be taxed. It must be expropriated through the independent mass movement of the working class, organized against those whose class function is to save capitalism from its historic crisis, and who are prepared to legitimize fascists in order to do so.



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