

Trump Michigan speech: Trade war and anti-communism

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President Donald Trump's campaign appearance in Michigan Monday was a demonstration of his utter indifference to the declining living standards of working people, as he celebrated an economic boom that has no basis in reality, except for the rise in the stock market—73 record highs since he took office!—which enriches billionaires like himself.

He claimed that the United States is building more auto factories than any other country, and more factories of all kinds, although the number has actually dropped since Trump took office in January 2025, especially after his imposition of massive tariffs on virtually every country in the world.

After attacking UAW President Shawn Fain for supporting the Democrats in the 2024 election (Fain has now become a fervent supporter of Trump's trade war policies, particularly tariffs on auto imports), he boasted, "I have been better for autoworkers than your parents. Our country is so successful."

At this point, a heckler could be heard shouting the words "pedophile protector" from the back of the crowd. This is the same label—linking Trump to sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein—which was shouted at Trump during his visit to a Ford factory in the spring.

Oakland County sheriff's deputies immediately grabbed the man and threw him out of the building, while the crowd, consisting largely of Republican Party loyalists, began chanting, "USA! USA!" For his part, Trump declared, "He's a communist. He's a communist."

This red-baiting, along with preposterous claims about the success of his tariffs, were the main content of Trump's speech. Like his remarks at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner Friday night, the speech lasted for more than an hour and featured non-stop lies, crude insults against his political

opponents, and moments where he appeared to lose track, meander and repeat long-stale campaign tropes.

Trump devoted only one sentence to the war with Iran, presenting it as a great success modeled on his earlier attack on Venezuela, in which US special forces kidnapped President Nicolás Maduro, who is now imprisoned in New York City awaiting trial on bogus drug charges.

In his attack on the Democratic Party candidates in the 2026 election, Trump repeated his usual lies about the Biden administration establishing "open borders," although it largely continued his repressive border policy, and he claimed that Democrats "want men playing in women's sports. They want transgender mutilization of your children."

He then returned to the anti-communist hysteria of his July 3 speech at Mt. Rushmore. The Democratic leaders "are siding with the radical left communists taking over the party. They want—in other words, the normal socialists who can destroy a country too, they're not going fast enough... We're going to be a communist country. That's what they want. They skipped socialism. Can you believe it? But communism is the greatest threat to our country in history, including even World War I, World War II, Pearl Harbor, or 9/11, I mean this is a serious threat because they are gonna promise all sorts of things."

This incoherent rant is another demonstration of the fear now wracking the American ruling class. The cause is not the handful of electoral victories for candidates affiliated with the Democratic Socialists of America, which is a faction of the Democratic Party completely committed to defense of the interests of American imperialism, whatever their radical phrases.

What Trump and his fellow billionaires fear is the mass radicalization that is developing among working

people and youth, a turn to the left by millions which finds only partial and distorted reflection in the votes cast in Democratic Party primaries. In Michigan too, where the August 4 primary is the occasion for Trump's visit, a candidate backed by the DSA, Abdul El-Sayed, is closely contesting the Senate nomination against Representative Haley Stevens, the choice of the party establishment.

Contrary to Trump's fantasy of the Democratic leadership embracing communism, the party establishment has funneled \$50 million into a media barrage against El-Sayed, a left-liberal who has explicitly declared that he is not a socialist. This media attack has been largely financed by AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and other pro-Zionist groups, because El-Sayed has criticized the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

The Republican candidates who were called up to share the stage with Trump echoed his diatribe against communism. Representative Lisa McClain said that November would be "an election between common sense and communist crazy." Representative Tim Walberg said he was the chair of the House Education Committee and knew the difference "between education and indoctrination in communist crazy." Walberg was a fundamentalist preacher before winning his congressional seat.

John James, the Republican candidate for governor, embraced Trump's favorite lie, the "stolen" 2020 election, saying that Trump had "won Michigan three times," although he was defeated by Biden in 2020 by more than 150,000 votes.

Trump hinted at the measures his government would take to retain power, saying, "A lot of the Republicans are nice. We're a very nice party. We shouldn't be so nice, to be honest with you... We're having the single greatest year we've ever had as a country. We're not going to let these people destroy it."

This under conditions where more than two-thirds of the American people say the country is on the wrong track, and even greater numbers oppose Trump's economic policies and the war against Iran. It is this threat from below, not the toothless opposition of the Democratic Party, that gives Trump and his fascist colleagues nightmares.

He went on to voice a theme similar to the fascist rant that his closest aide, White House Deputy Chief of

Staff Stephen Miller, delivered recently at a State Department summit of right-wing regimes from around the world.

"This is maybe gonna make news because I have never said that," he said. "I'm just thinking about now when they [the Democrats] take something over, it's always dirty. The sidewalks are dirty. The people are, I hate to say this, not clean, OK. The curbs are loaded with, you know what. The smell is terrible. I mean, I see it happening to cities, blue cities, are all blue, they are all blue."

Or as Miller said at the State Department: "It's not a coincidence that when you look at these violent antifa demonstrations and you see any photograph of those who were assembled—to be blunt, not one of the people that is demonstrating looks like a normal person. Not one looks normal. They're all deformed in some way—in their appearance, in their dress, in their mannerism. Why is that? Why?"

The characterization of political opponents as biologically deformed, or physically dirty, is a hallmark of neo-Nazi politics, which is increasingly coming to the fore, not just in the minds of Trump and his immediate circle or their private discussions, but in the speeches they deliver in public.

As the WSWS warned after Trump's Mt. Rushmore speech, "Beyond the hysterical denunciations, Trump's speech is a declaration of political intent, a conspiracy to overturn the results of the midterm elections and consolidate a presidential dictatorship." The working class must prepare accordingly.



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