

Trump threatens military crackdown on the “enemy within”

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In a series of interviews and public statements since Sunday, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has expanded his threats of violent repression, initially focused on immigrants, to include wider sections of the working class and youth, Democratic Party leaders and virtually anyone who opposes his fascistic policies.

The latest threats began with Trump’s appearance on the Fox program “Sunday Morning Futures,” where he told host Maria Bartiromo that “radical-left lunatics” were a greater threat to the United States than any outside power, and that the National Guard or regular military would be needed to move against them.

“I always say, we have two enemies,” he said. “We have the outside enemy, and then we have the enemy from within, and the enemy from within, in my opinion, is more dangerous than China, Russia and all these countries.”

Trump singled out Representative Adam Schiff of California and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, calling them “evil” and “dangerous” at a town hall election meeting Tuesday night. “They’re Marxists and communists and fascists, and they’re sick,” he claimed. Handling foreign antagonists was important, he declared, but “[t]he more difficult are, you know, the Pelosis, these people, they’re so sick and they’re so evil.”

Claiming that right-wing capitalist politicians like Schiff, Pelosi, Kamala Harris and President Joe Biden are advocates of socialism and Marxism might appear to be evidence of the 78-year-old Trump’s ongoing mental decline. But such charges are a staple of the fascist wing of the capitalist class, for whom even a pretended sympathy for the working class is considered an incitement to revolution.

The Republican presidential candidate reiterated his threats before a corporate audience Tuesday at the Economic Club of Chicago, where he refused to commit himself to recognize the results of the election and again

repeated his desire to use military force against his opponents. When Bloomberg News moderator John Micklethwait asked him if he would support a peaceful transfer of power, Trump replied that in 2020, “you had a peaceful transfer of power.” He was referring to the fact that he left Washington on January 20, as Biden was being inaugurated, because his attempted coup had failed on January 6.

Earlier, at a Saturday evening rally in Coachella, California, Trump described his “Operation Aurora” plan for mass deportations of immigrants. “We’re like an occupied country,” he said, adding that November 5, Election Day, would be “liberation day.” Such language from Trump has already been the precursor of violence. When he called on supporters during the COVID lockdowns to “liberate Michigan” and several other states, fascists armed with semi-automatic weapons mobilized at the state capitol in Lansing and elsewhere.

The *New York Times* reported, with evident alarm, “never before has a presidential nominee—let alone a former president—openly suggested turning the military on American citizens simply because they oppose his candidacy. As he escalates his threats of political retribution, Trump is offering voters the choice of a very different, and far less democratic, form of American government.”

Contrary to the *Times*, Trump is not offering voters this as a “choice.” He is signaling to his allies in the military-intelligence apparatus, the Supreme Court and in fascist and militia circles that they must make ready to intervene, either during or immediately after the election, to hijack the election and deny the voters any choice at all.

Trump’s remarks come shortly after the publication of a new book, *War*, by longtime *Washington Post* journalist Bob Woodward, which includes interviews with a number of leading figures in the US capital on Trump’s plans for dictatorship. General Mark Milley, nominated by Trump

as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2019, told Woodward that the former commander-in-chief was “fascist to the core.”

In his public embrace of authoritarian violence, Trump is responding to the urgings of key billionaire supporters, who recently pumped \$220 million into his campaign, which was falling considerably behind Democratic candidate Harris in the fundraising department. This includes \$75 million from Elon Musk, who has begun a series of public campaign events for Trump, as well as billionaire Zionist Miriam Adelson, widow of a Las Vegas casino mogul, and ultra-right packaging billionaire Richard Uehlein.

This section of the American ruling elite is clearly alarmed by the developing movement of workers and young people against the policies of imperialist war, economic austerity and attacks on democratic rights. They look at events like the Boeing workers’ strike and student protests against the US-Israeli genocide in Gaza, and have, for good reason, nightmares about social revolution.

The nominal opposition, Harris, Biden and the Democrats, is just as ferociously committed to the program of the capitalist ruling elite as Trump and the Republicans. They advocate only a different tactic, relying on the trade unions to suppress the class struggle and on the pseudo-left groups and figures like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to mislead and disorient those opposed to imperialist war and genocide.

This fundamental class agreement explains the half-hearted and spineless response by the Democrats to Trump’s threats of violence and mass repression. For weeks after outgoing President Biden warned the Democratic National Convention that Trump would not accept the results of the 2024 election, the Harris-Walz campaign has downplayed the fascist threat.

Only this week, at a rally in Erie, Pennsylvania, on Monday did Harris focus on Trump’s call for the use of the National Guard or the military against political opponents, and she limited her critique to describing Trump as “unhinged” and mentally unstable.

Appearing Tuesday at a town hall meeting convened by black talk radio host Charlamagne tha God, Harris had to be prompted against her will to call Trump’s political orientation by its right name. “The other is about fascism,” Charlamagne said. “Why can’t we just say it?” Harris responded, with undisguised reluctance, “Yes, we can say that.”

The two capitalist parties which have a monopoly on official politics are equally hostile to the working class. In

his appearance before the Chicago business audience, Trump mocked autoworkers, claiming that their work was so simple that any child could do it. Harris, for her part, embraces the United Auto Workers union officials, who serve the auto bosses as their police force inside the factories.

Less than three weeks until the November 5 election, with early voting already under way in many states, political tensions within the United States are approaching the point of an explosion. Trump and the Republicans express in the most brutal language the determination of the ruling class to maintain its wealth and power. The Democrats demonstrate the same brutality in action, fueling the proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and enabling the Israeli genocide in Gaza, which is now metastasizing into a general war in the Middle East.

November 5 will not end the political crisis but only mark a new stage. Trump and the Republicans are preparing to drag out the vote count if Harris is the likely winner, using violence and court challenges to delay certification by the states and the vote December 17 by the Electoral College. Their goal is to create the conditions where the Supreme Court can intervene, as it did in 2000, to choose the president or throw the election into the House of Representatives, now controlled by the Republicans, or to create such instability that a new version of the 2021 coup can be carried out, this time successfully.

A clearcut outcome of the vote will settle nothing. A restored Trump administration would operate with the president as a “dictator” from day one, as the candidate has pledged. A Harris administration would be committed to carrying out the agenda of the Democratic Party wing of the ruling class: imperialist war against Russia, Iran and eventually China and war against the working class at home.

The only way forward, in America and internationally, is to mobilize the independent strength of the working class against the capitalist profit system. This means building the Socialist Equality Party as the new revolutionary leadership of the working class.



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