

Harris's Washington speech: Coverup and complicity in the face of fascism

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Vice President Kamala Harris's speech in Washington D.C. Tuesday night was a display of utter prostration and complicity in the face of the growing fascist threat in America.

Harris spoke just two days after Donald Trump's rally at Madison Square Garden, an event filled with vicious denunciations of immigrants and refugees, language drawn directly from the Nazis and threats directed at Trump's political opponents, including Harris herself.

Harris, however, did not refer to the rally in her remarks. Nor did she use the word "fascism," which she has used in recent weeks, though she has always been careful to base her comments on those of former Trump officials and ex-generals. This was not an oversight, the sort of thing that one simply forgets to mention. It was rather a calculated political decision.

On the eve of Harris's remarks, Edward Luce, the US national editor for the *Financial Times*, penned a column under the headline "America isn't too worried about fascism," advising Harris to steer clear of focusing on "Trump's strongman menace." Though the threat of fascism is real, Luce stated, "a stunning share of America is unbothered."

Harris heeded the advice, but not out of concern that no one cares about the threat of fascism in America. Quite the opposite. The Democrats are fearful above all of evoking anxiety and anger, of creating a situation where broader layers of the population will react. In the face of a fascist menace, the Democrats preach quiescence.

In her remarks, Harris barely mentioned the January 6 coup, launched by Trump from the spot upon which she delivered her remarks. She made passing mention of Trump's threats to target the "enemy within," which she presented entirely in individual terms—the product

of an "unstable" man "obsessed with revenge" and "out for unchecked power."

The bulk of Harris's big event, billed as her "closing argument," was a tired rehash, often using the same exact language, of her stump speeches and the remarks she delivered at the Democratic Party National Convention in August.

As Trump and the Republicans speak the language of civil war, Harris's appeal is for a coalition government. She pleaded for "compromise" and "consensus," an end to "division, chaos and mutual distrust." She proclaimed, "Unlike Donald Trump, I don't believe people who disagree with me are the enemy. He wants to put them in jail. I'll give them a seat at the table."

One is compelled to ask: If, despite herself, Harris wins the election and takes office as president, will she offer Trump or his most prominent backers a position in her cabinet? She has, after all, already pledged to implement much of the Republican Party's program, including a massive attack on immigrants, which she reiterated on Tuesday.

Harris is continuing, now at a far more advanced stage of the crisis, Biden's response to the January 6 coup. Biden concluded from the coordinated conspiracy to block his own inauguration, including efforts to kidnap and kill Democratic Party politicians, that it was necessary to have a "strong Republican Party." Harris's hope is that those plotting dictatorship four years later will cast aside their plots and join hands in implementing the shared interests of the capitalist oligarchy.

Trump and the Republicans, meanwhile, are moving in the opposite direction, inciting violence with claims of a rigged election. On Wednesday, even before any ballots in Pennsylvania had been opened or counted, Trump took to his social media platform Truth Social to

allege that “Pennsylvania is cheating, and getting caught, at large scale levels rarely seen before.” His campaign filed a lawsuit against Bucks County, Pennsylvania, alleging “voter intimidation.”

This is not a legal challenge so much as an attempt to create a fraudulent pretext for fascist agitation. Already, ballot boxes in Washington and Oregon have been set on fire—an indication of what the coming days portend.

The Democrats’ political “strategy” is motivated by several factors. There is, first of all, the fact that a substantial section of the corporate and financial oligarchy is openly backing Trump or accommodating itself to a Trump victory. In an article published on Wednesday, the *Wall Street Journal* noted that while many CEOs are publicly neutral, they have quietly approached Trump, seeing his reelection as “insurance” against a potential backlash against Wall Street. Over the past several days, the billionaire owners of the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times* have blocked their editorial boards from publishing endorsements of Harris in next Tuesday’s election.

The Democrats, moreover, require the Republican Party and the two-party system in order to suppress the class struggle. Harris’s repeated references in her speech to “chaos” and “division” were not primarily about the conflicts within the state apparatus. The Democrats are terrified that the breakdown of the traditional political institutions of class rule within the United States will provide an opening for the intervention of the working class. Their real enemy is, as always, not on the right but on the left.

Finally, the central and overriding concern of the Democrats is the escalation of war. Indeed, the most important statement Harris made Tuesday night, drawn verbatim from her speech at the Democratic National Convention, was her pledge that, “As commander in chief, I will make sure America has the strongest, most lethal fighting force in the world.”

In the days and weeks before the election, Israel, with the backing of the White House, is starving the people of Northern Gaza in a campaign of mass murder and has launched a war against Lebanon and missile strikes against Iran. The war in the Middle East is a component part of a world war, including the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine and the looming conflict with China.

The argument of “lesser evilism,” which insists that

the Democratic Party is a bulwark against Trump and the fascist threat, is politically bankrupt. The same arguments now being employed by Bernie Sanders, Ocasio-Cortez and others to insist on the need to support Harris to stop Trump were used four years ago to subordinate all opposition to Biden. And what has that produced? Trump is politically strengthened.

Not only is it dripping in blood from the genocide in Gaza and overseeing an escalating global war, the Democratic Party, as a party of Wall Street, the military-intelligence agencies and privileged sections of the upper-middle class, is unable and uninterested in defending democratic rights. If Harris is the great standard bearer of the fight against fascism, then this fight is already lost.

Only the working class, mobilized independently and in opposition to both capitalist parties, can oppose the descent of capitalism into fascist dictatorship.



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