

MOBILIZE THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST TRUMP'S DICTATORSHIP!

Statement of Socialist Equality Party · June 14, 2025

The United States is passing through a crisis without precedent in more than a century, comparable only to the Civil War. Then, it was a life-and-death struggle against the slavocracy; today, it is a life-and-death struggle against capitalism and the ruling oligarchy.

As thousands protest across the US today, a massive military parade is underway in Washington, D.C. While officially marking the Army's 250th anniversary, its real purpose is to pay tribute to Trump on his 79th birthday and showcase his personal grip over the military.

The parade is Trump's warning to his opponents: he rules through the armed forces and police. The constitutional framework of checks and balances is being scrapped and replaced by presidential rule through emergency orders, military power, and fascistic violence. Thursday's assault on California Senator Alex Padilla is in line with this campaign of intimidation. Padilla was violently handcuffed by FBI agents while questioning DHS Secretary Kristi Noem.

The administration speaks in the language of violence and repression. At Fort Bragg on Tuesday, Trump called protesters "animals" and "enemies" to be crushed. At the same press conference where Padilla was assaulted, Noem vowed to keep the military in Los Angeles to "liberate the city from the socialists." When Hitler came to power, he too declared that it was the end of socialism.

All of Trump's actions are flagrantly illegal. On Thursday, a federal judge blocked the National Guard deployment to LA, ruling that it exceeded "the scope of his statutory authority and [violated] the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution." That night, an appeals court temporarily stayed the order, pending a June 17 hearing.

No one should be under the illusion that judicial decisions, even if they go against the administration, will stop it. Earlier in the week, Trump's fascistic defense secretary, Pete Hegseth, repeatedly refused to state that the White House would abide by judicial orders restricting the deployment of the military.

For those protesting on Saturday, critical questions are posed: How will this be stopped? How can Trump's coup be defeated?

The events of the past week have made one thing absolutely clear: No significant opposition will come from the Democratic Party. While Trump speaks in the language of violence and civil war, the Democrats respond with lawsuits and tearful lamentations.

While offering tepid criticisms of Trump's "excesses," the Democrats have echoed his narrative and aided in suppressing opposition. California Governor Gavin Newsom has deployed 800 state police to oversee mass arrests in Los Angeles, while Mayor Karen Bass has mobilized the LAPD to crack down on



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COUP
AND HOW
TO STOP IT**

SUNDAY

JUNE 15
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protests. The message is clear: "Let us handle the repression."

The party's cowardice was epitomized by "left" Democrat Elizabeth Warren, who, amid Trump's unfolding coup, used a New York Times op-ed to state her agreement with his proposal to abolish the debt ceiling. It is as if one were to say, "I don't like fascism, but Mussolini made the trains run on time."

Bernie Sanders is again playing his assigned role as political safety valve. He combines demagogic denunciations of the oligarchy with slavish support for the capitalist Democratic Party and appeals for better behavior by the Republicans. In the most flagrant display of political cynicism and opportunism, Sanders has stated that Trump has "done right" in closing the border and attacking immigrants.

As always, the response of the Democrats is characterized by a combination of cowardice, fecklessness, and outright deceit. Underlying this, however, are class interests. The Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are a party of the oligarchy. Their principal disagreements with Trump center on matters of foreign policy.

The Democrats are terrified that resistance to Trump could develop into a broader movement against capitalism and

imperialism. They seek to maintain the pretense that the present crisis is nothing more than a temporary diversion from political norms. What they will not say is that the violent restructuring of the state is aimed at the creation of a permanent political dictatorship.

The Trump administration is a government of, by, and for the oligarchy.

The breakdown of democratic forms did not arise overnight. It is more than 60 years since Eisenhower warned of the military-industrial complex. It is half a century since the Watergate crisis exposed the political conspiracies of Nixon. It is 25 years since the theft of a presidential election through the Supreme Court's 5-4 decision in *Bush v. Gore*.

The "war on terror" following the attacks of September 11, 2001 was used to justify the systematic assault on democratic rights—the Patriot Act, the Department of Homeland Security, Guantanamo Bay, CIA torture, domestic spying and drone assassination by presidential order.

These developments are bound up with three interrelated causes: 1) the long-term decline of American capitalism, 2) the efforts to reverse this decline through military violence, and 3) the extreme growth of social inequality.

Trump, the huckster and conman, has risen to the presidency out of these conditions. His second term conforms to a definite logic of oligarchic rule.

The wave of brutal assaults on immigrants follows the arrest and detention of students protesting the genocide in Gaza; attacks on scientists and medical professionals; and efforts to bring culture and education under authoritarian control.

The fundamental target is the working class. Everything that detracts from the wealth of the capitalist elite—public education, environmental and workplace regulations, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare—is to be dismantled.

And the turn to dictatorship within the United States is inseparable from the eruption of imperialist violence abroad. The expanding war in the Middle East, with Israel's bombing of Iran, is part of an escalating global conflict, with the Trump administration setting its sights on China. Trump is building upon the record of Biden, who initiated the US-NATO war against Russia and gave full backing to the Gaza genocide.

Those demonstrating Saturday must draw the conclusions from this reality. It is impossible to stop fascism and dictatorship without fighting its source: Capitalism.

The Socialist Equality Party advances the following program to fight Trump's coup d'état:

First, the fight against Trump must be rooted in the working class. There is enormous opposition throughout society—among scientists, professionals, students and broad elements within the middle class. However, the social force that must lead the movement against Trump is the working class.

The immense strength of the working class must be mobilized in a general strike—the utilization of the power of the workers, rooted in the process of production, to bring production to a halt.

This requires the organization of workers independently of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which is treating Trump's coup and the brutal assault on immigrant workers as if it is not even

happening. As workers are being seized and deported and democratic rights obliterated at every turn, the union apparatus, wedded to the corporations and the state, is doing nothing.

The SEP calls for the formation of rank-and-file committees in every factory, workplace, and neighborhood, uniting workers of all races and ethnicities, immigrant and native-born.

Second, mass popular opposition to Trump must be connected to clear and urgent demands: the immediate withdrawal of all troops from American cities; the dismantling of ICE and an end to all immigration raids; the disbanding of paramilitary units and reversal of executive orders enabling dictatorship; and the removal and prosecution of all those involved in the conspiracy to overturn the Constitution.

Third, the fight against dictatorship is necessarily an international struggle. The ruling elites in every major capitalist country are lurching to the right, waging war on democratic rights as they escalate their assault on the working class. And every worker knows that the establishment of dictatorship in the United States will sound the death knell for democratic rights everywhere. The crisis is global, and the response must be global.

Fourth, there can be no fight against fascism and dictatorship without a frontal assault on the wealth of the ruling class. The oligarchy must be expropriated and the gigantic corporations and banks transformed into public utilities, under the control of the working class. The defense of democratic rights must be connected to the establishment of democratic control over social and economic life, as the basis for establishing genuine social equality.

The vast political changes underway in social relations require a profound transformation in strategy. What has passed for "left" politics—based on race and gender identity, the politics of the upper middle class—never could, and certainly cannot now, provide a way forward.

The struggle against dictatorship requires the revival of genuine socialism—rooted in the revolutionary, internationalist traditions of Marxism and embodied in the program and history of the Trotskyist movement, the International Committee of the Fourth International. It is only on this foundation that the working class can build the leadership necessary to confront the immense dangers it faces.

On June 15, the WSWS is holding an urgent online meeting, "Trump's coup and how to stop it." Register now at WSWS.ORG/JUNE15-25

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