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Trump gloats over impeachment, but popular opposition mounts to his administration

On Thursday, President Donald Trump hailed his acquittal in the Democrats' impeachment drive with a foul-mouthed, rambling tirade in which he called his opponents "evil," "corrupt" and "scum."

In a 90-minute rant broadcast on every major US TV channel, Trump called the impeachment "bullshit," forcing newscasters to apologize for violating FCC guidelines on profanity.

The former reality TV star referred to ex-FBI Director James Comey as a "sleazebag" and called the impeachment a "battle" in a "war." This came just hours after White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said Trump's opponents should be "made to pay." Trump added that under other circumstances his adversaries would "be in jail for a long time already."



President Donald Trump holds up a newspaper with a headline that reads “Trump acquitted” as he speaks in the East Room of the White House, Thursday, February 6, 2020, in Washington [Credit: AP Photo/Evan Vucci]

The media, its impeachment drive in shambles, responded to this deranged rant with mute acceptance.

By this point, no one should be under any illusion as to what Trump represents. American capitalism has vomited up a figurehead who expresses its most predatory and criminal features: its greed, violence, backwardness and ignorance.

Trump represents the intersection of two powerful impulses within American society: the parasitic growth of social inequality and US imperialism’s perpetual war drive.

Less than 10 years before Trump was elected, the Obama administration carried out a bank bailout that handed trillions of dollars to the financial oligarchy, even as millions of people lost their homes and their jobs as the result of an orgy of criminal swindling unprecedented in American history—for which no one was punished.

Since the 2008 bank bailout, the stock market has nearly quadrupled, massively enriching the wealthiest 10 percent of society, which owns 84 percent of stocks, even as working class incomes have stagnated or fallen.

In this context, Trump’s off-the cuff rant, in which he rambled aimlessly from one topic to another, naturally honed in on his central appeal to the ruling class: He will make it richer. He declared:

Let me tell you, if we didn’t win, the stock market would have crashed, and the market was going up a lot before the election because it was looking like we had a good chance to win. Then it went up tremendously from the time we won the election to the time we took office, which was November 8 to January 20, and that’s all our credit.

At the same time, decades of continuous war have brutalized the country and eroded whatever vestiges of democratic rule remained.

After the Republicans’ failed impeachment drive against Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, with the blessings of the Supreme Court, stole the 2000 presidential election. He then used the September 11, 2001 terror attacks to launch a frontal assault on democratic rights under the cover of the “war on terror.”

The United States went on to invade Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, led an air war to overthrow the government of Libya in 2011, and fomented a devastating civil war the

same year in an attempt to bring down the government of Syria. These wars have killed millions of people and destroyed entire societies.

Within the framework of the “war on terror,” the United States has tortured thousands of people—an example of which was revealed in the horrific Abu Ghraib prison photos. It has carried out mass warrantless domestic spying and committed thousands of extra-judicial assassinations, including of American citizens.

All of these wars and attacks on democratic rights have been carried out on a bipartisan basis, expressing the impulses of the financial oligarchy that dominates American society.

These tendencies are embodied in the person of Trump—the right-wing bigot and demagogue descended from the fascistic “America First” strain in American politics that was aligned with Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

These reactionary impulses have been strengthened by the impeachment debacle. The Democrats’ demoralization in the aftermath of Trump’s victory was summed up in an editorial published Thursday by the *New York Times*. The *Times* wrote that Trump’s State of the Union speech showed that “Mr. Trump, unlike the Democratic Party, has a simple, powerful message.”

The newspaper added that “it was perhaps a human reaction on the part of the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, to tear [the State of the Union address] to shreds.” But, it continued, “It was still disappointing to see her stoop to the kind of stunt the president himself would pull, and, as she certainly knows as well as anyone, a gesture like that won’t defeat the president’s argument. So, what will?

“Not the incoherent, if not to say chaotic, display the Democratic Party has mustered to date.”

The editorial fails to answer the question it asks in the headline: “What Will Finally Defeat Donald Trump?” The “newspaper of record” is simply out of ideas.

The strategy of the Democrats has ended in shambles. From the beginning of Trump’s presidency, the Democrats have pursued the methods of palace coup, with the primary aim of deflecting and disorienting popular opposition to the Trump administration.

Again and again, Trump has been saved by the Democrats. Their qualities of cowardice and fecklessness are determined by the interests of the privileged social layers for which they speak.

The Democrats have sought an escalation of the conflict with Russia. Beyond that, they have no fundamental differences with Trump. If they were forced to choose sides between Trump and a movement of the working class, they would unreservedly back Trump.

This may be the last word for the *Times*, but it will not be the last word for masses of workers and young people in America. It is easy for Trump to intimidate a feckless party of the oligarchs that has no stomach to fight him. It is a very different thing to face an insurgent popular movement.

Millions marched to oppose Trump in the wake of his inauguration. He remains hated, with an approval rating among the lowest of any post-World War II president. His crimes against immigrant children, his racist overtures to fascists, his advocacy of torture and his sadistic militarism have made his name a profanity, a synonym for vulgarity, criminality and brutality.

The processes that created Trump—above all, the unprecedented growth of social polarization and economic inequality—have also created the social basis for his removal. Millions of workers throughout the United States live in hardship and oppression, toiling every day for the enrichment of the oligarchy, totally excluded from political life, yet yearning for equality, peace and democracy.

This broad popular opposition to Trump *must* find expression and *will* find expression. But it will do so only to the extent that it breaks from the Democratic Party.

Trump can be removed only by mobilizing the American working class, in alliance with the working class of the whole world, and uniting all of the progressive elements within the population.

The Socialist Equality Party is running candidates in the 2020 US elections. Our candidate for president is Joseph Kishore, the national secretary of the SEP. Our candidate for vice president is Norissa Santa Cruz, a leading member of the SEP. We are advancing an internationalist and socialist program upon which the fight against Trump and the oligarchic capitalist system that he represents must be based.

For more information on the SEP election campaign and to sign up, visit socialism2020.org.

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