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By Patrick Martin

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US Attorney General Barr gives fascistic tirade against Antifa, Black Lives Matter

In a television interview Sunday night on Fox News, US Attorney General William Barr declared that some of the Democratic representatives who questioned him at a congressional hearing two weeks ago were revolutionaries seeking to overthrow American capitalism, in league with terrorists.



US Attorney General William Barr on Fox News

The fascistic rant—whose logical conclusion is the criminalization of all political opposition to the Trump administration—came in the course of an appearance on “Life, Liberty & Levin,” a Sunday night interview program.

Barr began with fulsome praise for the police, attacking the Black Lives Matter movement and the protests against police violence that swept the United States after the May 25 police murder of George Floyd. “The fact is, generally speaking, we have superb police in this country,” he said. “There will be some instances of excessive force, but by and large it’s an excellent police force. And if they’re going to be demonized like this, they’re not going to work in these cities.”

Host Mark Levin, in what appeared to be a choreographed effort, cited a report by an ultra-right think tank on the loosely organized protest group Antifa (antifascist). The Gatestone Institute, which sponsors brazenly Islamophobic “research,” was chaired until 2018 by John Bolton, who then joined the Trump administration as national security adviser.

The Gatestone report cites material produced by the *Verfassungschutz*, the German secret service agency that has placed the German Trotskyists of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP—Socialist Equality Party) on its surveillance list, while giving its stamp of approval to the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the principal vehicle for the revival of neo-Nazi trends in Germany.

The report presents Antifa as a large, well-organized international conspiracy of tens of thousands of militants, although it is invariably described by supporters as little more than a signboard used by anarchists and other protesters in different localities, who communicate through social media but do not constitute an organization in any real sense of the term.

Barr hailed the Gatestone report—which quotes his own comments about Antifa—and launched into a diatribe against Antifa. “They are a revolutionary group that is interested in some form of socialism, communism,” he said. “They’re essentially Bolsheviks.”

He went on to claim that Antifa used “fascistic” tactics. According to Barr, they infiltrated the mass protests against police violence. “What they do is, they are essentially shielding themselves or shrouding themselves in First Amendment activity,” he said. “They hijack these demonstrations and they provoke violence. And they have various tiers of people from the sort of top provocateurs down to people who are their minions and run the violent missions.”

He continued, “It’s a new form of urban guerrilla warfare. Mao Tse-Tung used to speak about the guerrilla being like fish swimming in the ocean the way the guerrilla moves through the people. The guerrilla hides out among the people as a fish in the ocean.”

The purpose of this demented presentation, issued without the slightest attempt to present any evidence, was to make an amalgam stretching from the alleged violent protesters through

Black Lives Matter and other groups organizing the anti-police protests, to the Democratic Party.

Barr described this entire range of political opinion as though it were a unified and coherent political tendency, which he described as “the left,” which was seeking power through a coordinated campaign to remove Trump from office. All those opposing Trump constituted “a Rousseauian Revolutionary Party that believes in tearing down the system.”

The attorney general included the corporate media in this amalgam, claiming that the media deliberately concealed evidence of widespread Antifa violence in Portland, Oregon and other US cities.

“Anyone with eyes can see what’s happening,” he declared. “They see the violence. They see these groups of agitators and their black outfits, their helmets and their shields, which, incidentally, have the hammer and sickle on them most of the time, are rushing the police, causing violence, throwing rocks... You don’t see it on any of the national news. You don’t see it on the networks. You don’t see it on the cable stations. And yet you hear about these peaceful demonstrators, so it’s a lie. The American people are being told a lie by the media.”

There is a definite fascistic content to the type of political amalgam concocted by Barr. Just as Trump tweeted that Black Lives Matter protests constituted “treason”—a crime punishable by death—Barr suggests that “the left” is at war with the Trump administration and “America,” and should be treated accordingly.

Referring to the House Judiciary Committee hearing, where there was mild criticism of federal police tactics in Portland, Barr said that some members of the committee were “true believers” and “essentially revolutionary,” while the majority were “cowards who are mostly interested in getting reelected.”

After reading those words, dripping with menace, it is necessary to remind oneself that Barr is not a Nazi jurist condemning all opponents of the *Führer* to be hanged. He is the chief law enforcement official of a government that is nominally democratic, where public opposition to the president is legal, and where the First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees such rights as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

Despite his phlegmatic demeanor and lawyerly word-juggling, however, Barr has much in common with Carl Schmitt, the principal legal theorist of the Third Reich.

That such an individual is the nation’s chief law enforcement official and presides over the machinery of the “justice system” of the United States testifies to the rotted out, degenerate and profoundly antidemocratic character of “American democracy.” Genuine democracy is incompatible with the staggering levels of social inequality that prevail in the US. More

accurately, the United States is an oligarchic society that has yet to fully shed the trappings of bourgeois democracy, but, in the face of mounting social tensions and a growing threat of working-class revolution, is lurching toward dictatorial forms of rule.

Trump's attorney general is well aware that groups like Antifa and acts of minor vandalism—overturning fences outside federal buildings and setting small fires—are no threat whatsoever to the capitalist system. In his reference to the Bolsheviks, however, Barr reveals his real fears and those of the entire American ruling elite, whether pro-Trump or anti-Trump.

The Bolshevik Party led the first successful mass revolutionary workers' uprising in history, the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia, which established the Soviet Union as the first workers' state. It is the repetition of that example, on a much wider scale, that is the nightmare of American imperialism and its official thugs like Barr.

For their own political reasons, they choose to lump together the threat from below, from the working class, and their opponents within the ruling elite, in the Democratic Party. But it is the working class that is the real target of the repressive measures that Barr & Co. are preparing.

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