

United States: Trump's slow coup? - The Crisis of American Bourgeois Democracy

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Tens of thousands of Trump supporters rallied in Washington, D.C. on November 14. President Trump drove his motorcade through the marchers expressing his support, on his way to Trump National golf course to play a round.

The mainly white crowd waved flags, sang the national anthem and called Biden's election to the presidency a "theft." Prominent signs said, "Stop the steal."

The march began at Freedom Plaza then headed toward the U.S. Supreme Court. The protesters attacked "big media" for calling state elections for Biden. When a reporter pointed out to a demonstrator that the media called North Carolina for Trump, the reply was "that's different".

Welcomed by the crowd was the domestic fascist group the "Proud Boys" and other white supremacists. A separate march by "Women for America First" also took place.

The protests were built on right wing social media and by Fox News commentators. The theme was the "Million MAGA [Make America Great Again] March".

Trump has never excepted the normal rules, norms and traditions of the office. The Imperial Presidency that Richard Nixon sought but didn't attain in the 1970s is what Trump also seeks.

He continues to refuse to accept the results of the November 3 presidential election. He says the popular vote and the apparent Electoral College loss to Democrat Joseph Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris, the first woman and Black to win that position, was rigged.

The electoral system in the United States is far from fully democratic, from the Electoral College itself down to the fact that there is no Constitutional federal provision for how elections are conducted and these are left to the states, including who gets the right to vote. Each state has its own different laws, which are set up to be dominated by politicians, who "gerrymander" election districts in their favor.

An international ranking of how democratic 47 countries considered to be "democracies" are, puts the U.S. at 46, just ahead of Albania.

The U.S. Constitution was written to keep power in the hands of the wealthy property owners and out of the hands of the common people. The ruling class nevertheless understands that to rule the country means convincing working people they actually have the power even if it is not true.

Every time the people rise up demanding change, the norm has been that a legal relief valve must be opened without threatening their rule.

Trump rejects that approach to ruling. He openly declares the only "real Americans" are those who

support him. Trump is using his mass base to pressure Republican state legislators where they have the majority not to approve certification of the state election results.

Another path he is pursuing is legal challenges to the voting results in certain states. So far, not a single state court has upheld his bogus challenges. All 50 state election officials have declared the elections fair and no fraud was found.

The government's own security officials released a report challenging Trump's charge of fraudulent election results. As reported by *The New York Times*: "A group of federal, state and local officials working with a Department of Homeland Security agency declared flatly that the election was the most secure in the nation's history."

The November 12 official statement of the "Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Office" said:

"When states have close elections, many will recount ballots. All of the states with close results in the 2020 presidential race have paper records of each vote, allowing the ability to go back and count each ballot if necessary. This is an added benefit for security and resilience. This process allows for the identification and correction of any mistakes or errors. There is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised."

"Other security measures like pre-election testing, state certification of voting equipment, and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's (EAC) certification of voting equipment help to build additional confidence in the voting systems used in 2020."

Trump still hopes that one of his legal challenges get approved and finds its way to the Supreme Court. He has said that his most recent appointee to the Court, Amy Barrett, will move to get him elected by the Court.

Either legal path, have state legislatures overturn their state's election results and appoint enough Trump electors, or election by the supreme Court, would amount to a legal coup.

Those who believe Trump will eventually recognize that Biden won have not been watching his career and his presidency.

Some left commentators are calling Trump's declarations and actions a "slow coup". This is not far-fetched. Almost all Republican Senators continue to back up Trump's claims that the election was stolen from him. The same is true of the members of his cabinet.

Tens of millions of his followers, backed up by over 70 million votes, believe that the election was stolen from Trump. This puts great pressure on Republican politicians to back him.

A test for them will come if the states confirm the results and then the Electoral College, which will vote on December 14, votes to elect Biden.

As long as Trump continues to refuse to accept the election results, the danger of a coup, legal or not, remains.

Another danger is becoming a possibility. Biden becomes president but Trump continues to not recognize the election. He has continued to play to his base, who feel stabbed in the back by "the establishment" and are enraged. He may remain in politics as the leader of this base, and use their grievances to move further to the right, in preparation for a future move.

Bourgeois democracy is much weaker than many believed. The facts—Biden has a majority of popular and electoral votes—are irrelevant to Trump.

The current system is facing deep fissures. Whether it moves toward open authoritarian rule or a new type of bourgeois democracy, is too soon to know. Those who say, "everything will go back to the way it was," are really just hoping it will.

Trump is serious about staying in or regaining power by any means necessary one way or another.

There must be a mass response to stop him, whether he is in or out of office. As a beginning that would mean a remobilization of Black Lives Matter, Latinx, climate activists, women, and hopefully the labor movement.

They will face an obstacle in a Biden administration. The establishments of both capitalist parties fear mass actions, and seek to blunt them and/or use repression. Right now, that is evident in a fierce attack by the Democratic establishment against the progressive wing of the party, whose most public representative have been Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

In particular, they say their support for the demands of the Blacks Lives Matter such as defund the police cost the establishment Democrats in losses in both the Senate and House. The opposite it true.

Sanders has noted that all but one progressive won re-election across the country and demands like Medicare for all are supported by a majority of voters.

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