

# There Is No Civil War Ahead

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STRUGGLESSESSIONS



The great Cornish Mills. - Still, even the back-land. History  
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There Is No Civil War Ahead

There are comrades, nationally and internationally, who raise concerns about a Civil War approaching in the US. We believe these views to be unfounded, and in some cases a bi-product of spending too much time on the Internet and digesting the bourgeois news uncritically. It is necessary to approach problems with a clear basis in Maoist philosophy first of all, and to analyze with political economy rather than with flights of fancy. Alarmism and attempts to badger the people with the blunt instrument of fear lead to nothing good. It's enough to point to the fear-mongering of the "RCP" -USA and the rat revisionist Avakian around "Christian Fascism" of the George W. Bush presidency, or their wielding of nuclear annihilation alarmism—an alarmism which echoes that of Khrushchev, used to devious effect in service to revisionism internationally.

While an overall examination of international imperialism's position and of the position of the US ruling class is outside the scope of this essay, we should examine certain facts from a basis in Maoism to dispel illusions.

## **1. The Ruling Class Is Not So Divided**

Let us speak clearly: the events of January 6<sup>th</sup>, in the form of reactionary riots that penetrated the pearly gates, have many rushing to alarmist conclusions, even some well-meaning and generally critical thinkers. Breaching entry to the Capitol Building itself is a propaganda victory for reaction; however it was not a palace coup, an insurrection or any other such term propagated by bourgeois demagoguery.

The reality of the matter is this: a symbolic building was attacked because Trump's most dedicated supporters, incited by his comments, were protesting the election results; it was no more an attack on democracy than it was an insurrection. The act was not even very rebellious when you get down to it. The police—who support Trump overwhelmingly, because of the power of police

unions—basically allowed the crowd access, and still not without casualties from guards inside of the White House.

Contrary to bourgeois opinion, Trump and his supporters are not “attacking sacred institutions of democracy”; they are just protesting the vote count by violently confronting the Electoral College. The Electoral College is an institution the majority of voters already take issue with. Let us not forget that this body was opposed by the Democrats themselves when the last election did not go their way, and that they too cried fraud—albeit with less vigor and enthusiasm. The electoral farce is revealed more and more by Jan 6 and its proceeding events.

Trump remains a bourgeois democrat, a liberal at the head (for now) of a deeply reactionary state of the imperialists, a state which deepens in its reaction not based on its figurehead or its “preferred policy” but based on material conditions, as the great Lenin pointed out in his examination of Kautsky’s distortions on the question.

To clarify:

“Trump is not a fascist, not all violence is fascism; while fascism resorts to open violence, it cannot always be identified with fascism, since the bourgeois state itself is organized violence. What Trump has done is to continue what the previous governments of both parties did, to centralize more power in the president (presidential absolutism), strengthening the power of the Executive, of the high bureaucracy of the state and imperialist armed forces to the detriment of the parliament (crisis of parliamentarism), reactionisation of the state corresponding to the general crisis of imperialism.” [1]

It’s important to note here that the state is and must be a tool of class rule, of class dictatorship. Lenin says when speak to the priests of the “free State” of bourgeois democracy: “You say your state is free, whereas in reality, as long as there is private property, your state, even if it is a democratic republic, is nothing but a machine used by the capitalists to suppress the workers, and the

freer the state, the more clearly is this expressed.” [2]

On the one hand is the reactionary mobilization of Trump’s supporters precisely in defense of this concept of the “free State”, and on the other hand is the litany of the priests of the bourgeois republic, crying out that Trump’s rhetoric and mobilization of his base is beyond the respectable limits of the violence of the State. Sophistry abounds, and we must have a clear understanding of the class nature of the state and its dictatorship in order to grasp concepts such as the “fascist coup” or “insurrection” or the potential for a civil war between factions of the imperialist ruling class, pitting one section of the people against another, an act which has its own prerequisites which we will discuss briefly further below. Lenin goes on in the same speech cited above to describe how in Switzerland and the United States, those “most democratic” republics, that the militias and armed extra-state actors act as true auxiliaries to the State in repressing workers’ revolts, in the suppression of the working class movement. It’s from this position that we should view Trump’s “belligerents”.

The imperialist ruling class in their vast majority find Trump to be a poor representative of their class, and so have united around Biden as the capable administrator. Unlike other administrators, Trump commands a sizable movement among the people with his vile personality at the center. Trump is above all an imperialist, but he is also a skilled entertainer; this has always been his stand-in for politics, and it has a great appeal to his base. While Trump’s command over a sizable reactionary movement makes him a dangerous provocateur and has pitted him more and more against his imperialist compatriots who view him as increasingly *unwieldy*, *inconvenient*, there is no great split in the camp of the ruling class but rather a consistent progress down the road of reaction driven on by the crises of imperialism.

We see how the ruling class manages the influence of Trump and makes him, as stubborn as he is, bend to the class he purports to still be leading since the November elections. Deutsche Bank, which has been one of the main creditors to the Trump Organization in the past decade, has said they were closing off all

business with him, and Signature Bank has said it is closing Trump's personal accounts. Tech monopolies Amazon, Apple and Google has shut down popular reactionary social media app Parler, which was used to organize the January 6 protest, on all of its websites. Facebook and Twitter has removed Trump's personal accounts.

In order to get a feel for this, and to tease out the intertwined questions of Trump's supposed fascism, of January 6 as a supposed coup attempt, and of the supposed irreconcilable contradictions within the ruling class camp, let us continue our quotation from the important document "The US Elections and the Role of Avakian" with a somewhat lengthy quote:

"Trump neither declares himself an enemy of parliament, nor of the other institutions of bourgeois democracy like the parties and the so-called 'individual liberties,' but rather he proclaims to defend them, accusing the governors of the Democratic Party of subjugating them with the measures of 'corona-quarantine'. Trump and the Republican Party do not advocate an organic restructuring of society (corporatism); Trump is as much a supporter of the representative system as his rival Biden; according to this system, representatives are elected by citizens who have different conflicting interests; This is not the case in the corporatist organization, where the organs of the state, such as the legislative chamber, are made up of members who come from the different strata of the nation or community headed by the Fuehrer or Duce, as the faithful interpreter of the will of the 'community of the people' or of 'the nation'; Therefore, its members are designated according to the system of participation, coming from the state, the company and the workers (system of corporate participation) and organized in the fascist party, which can have different names, next to which many times there are some other parties but only in name. It seeks to 'suppress the class struggle and the parties', not only the communist party but also the demo-bourgeois parties.

"In the case of Trump, he presents himself as a defender of the freedom of the individual and demagogically demands 'less state' which means less taxes for the big monopolists. Being a chauvinist and using reactionary violence does

not make any reactionary a fascist. All reactionaries, opportunists and revisionists are chauvinists, striving to defend their imperialist nation.” [3]

This last point is especially prescient now when the bourgeois monopoly media are cackling about the defense of democracy and liberties from Trump and his supporters; we must approach the problem with a firm basis in Maoism, understanding the class contradiction at play.

Defense of the imperialists’ interests now falls squarely on the shoulders of Biden, and this is precisely what he is prepared to do, off-loading misery onto the backs of the people and continuing and deepening the reactionization of the State.

The reactionaries are trembling at the rising of the masses globally; this characterized the last few years and is aptly described in “Hoist Defend and Apply Maoism To Solve New Problems in the New Situation That World History Is Entering”:

“The new great wave of the world proletarian revolution is developing and the explosiveness of the masses is manifesting everywhere and filling the world reaction with fear. Representatives of imperialism, reaction and revisionism are calling for plans to lower the explosiveness of the masses and to avert the liaison with the leadership of the Communist Party to organise themselves in revolution, in People’s War, as a scientific organisation of poverty”. [4]

To Biden now falls this task.

To further make this point, consider where important forces of imperialism sided in the past election, where did the military industrial complex, the large scale corporate arms manufacturers and top military officials put their support? They put their support with Biden. Here, the imperialists are united. What about the “anti-Trump” Republicans who only saw growth after this last debacle? And the external but essential imperialist powers who ally themselves most often with US imperialism—where is their confidence? The

answer to the above is that the Biden Harris administration is increasing the imperialist unity behind itself and Trump is painting himself into a corner. There is imperialist unity, and not disunity of any sort that would precipitate civil war.

## **2. Trump Is Most Likely to Remain a Problem But His Administration Is Over**

Trump is best known for his inciting rhetoric; this helped bring him both in and out of the White House. His brand is “anti-establishment”, but is essentially still aligned with imperialism. It is likely that his rhetoric will continue once the Biden Harris administration steps in, especially on whatever public platforms his personal wealth and media monopolies will award him. This is the form. What about the essence? In essence, he will accept the transition, because there is nothing else he can do. It is best not to confuse his rowdy support base for any sort of guerrilla army or insurgent force, mis-characterizing the nature of the contradiction between Trump (or his support base) and the rest of reaction as an antagonistic one. Nor is there the basis for a sort of “Trumpist insurgency” on the one hand and an “antifascist counter-insurgency” on the other, the relative preponderance of street confrontations between reactionaries and “antifa” notwithstanding. This highlights again the need for clear language corresponding to reality and cutting through demagoguery.

Acceptance of transition by Trump will go one of two ways: 1) he continues to remain the center of unity of his own mass movement and his supporters continue to rally around his figure, likely based on some promised return, or 2) he is seen as weak and irrelevant and his movement will splinter into a thousand rival factions, continuing on without him.

What is clear is that he has accepted going out and has lost much of what inflates him to superhuman size. It is still to be determined how he goes out, along which of the two points outlined above, but his determination on this point will be based on whatever secures for him the most attention and praise from the reactionary movements among the people, whatever preserves his already tainted legacy.

While Trump's personality has been critical in uniting the most reactionary sections of the right-wing in the US, his personality has played second chair to his presidency as such at mobilizing reactionaries at the street level. We have seen a strong sizable right-wing and reactionary presence in opposition to things which do not relate to Trump directly, such as mask laws and pandemic restrictions, the latter of which do harm the masses inevitably. This movement has been limited mainly to the petty bourgeoisie, business owners, especially bar owners have been the most active; it has not spread to the millions of unemployed to secure a more solid and broad mass base, leaving Trump's presidency, and its potential—in their minds—contingent as the greatest single unifier and mobilizer of reactionaries across the class spectrum.

Time will tell how the above issue of continuity pans out, whether through even less credible claims that he is the true president, or through a 2024 re-election bid from himself or a campaign from his son. There is no point in spending much time speculating, however; it is enough to say that this could offer a future cohesion to his movement which will become destabilized in the meantime.

On the question of stability and continuity: the same general laws of practice apply to the right that apply to the left; if things are taken too far without the proper politicization of the support base, then there will be a consequence which is superior to the initial force and the initial force cannot handle this and instead must adapt or become overwhelmed. Chairman Gonzalo describes it as an angle: "Excesses can be committed. The problem is to go to a certain point and not beyond it, because if you go past that point you go off course. It's like an angle; it can be opened up to a certain point and no further." [5]

Time will show this to be the case for the January 6<sup>th</sup> riot. Lessons can be derived from the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville which engraved the epitaph onto the stone of the "alt-right" and forced them to organize more secretly to save themselves from other reactionary Trump supporters and from constant harassment from the left. So while we called the Capitol Building riot a propaganda victory for Trump's reactionary support base above, it is so only



when considered in the short term. Strategically, it is not a victory but rather an event radiating destabilization among Trump's base.

### **3. The Buildings of the US Government Are Not a Fortress**

There are those swept up in the symbolism and losing grasp of the facts. As we have explored in our detour through the great Lenin's lessons on the nature of the State—and will discuss further below—the role of the police unions in influencing cops to give Trump supporters a wide range of activity is still within the limits set by the federal agencies and the military itself, agencies who overwhelmingly fall closer to the Biden administration.

To view in shock and disbelief that an angry mob could penetrate the Capitol Building is to view the Capitol Building and other government buildings as a fortress, which it is not. It is common knowledge for instance that the current White House is the second White House, that the English burned the first in 1814 in what was a much more dramatic display of reactionary-on-reactionary violence than we are seeing play out now. In 1841, angry representatives and supporters of a bank which was closed down rioted, broke windows on the White House, shot into the building and set fires. This reactionary riot would cause the District of Columbia to form its own police department. There are many other instances: stolen helicopters flying into controlled airspace, a plane crash into the White House walls, shots from outside penetrating walls and windows, which further shatter the constructed myth of invulnerability.

The Capitol Building itself was bombed by the Weather Underground in 1971 in retaliation for the US military bombing campaign against Laos, and in 1972 the Weather Underground also bombed the Pentagon in retaliation for US bombing of Hanoi. These acts were not coups or insurrections and they did not fundamentally shake the ruling class's grasp on power.

The most recent attacks have been mainly individual acts and, while the collective action of the reactionary rioters brings with it a special fan-fair, it is by no means unprecedented in US history.

#### 4. Impending Civil War? No. World War? Maybe

We must broaden our scope and move in steps from the international context down to the national context. The current deepening of the imperialist crisis means war, a continuation mainly of war by proxy forces as the imperialist superpowers and imperialist powers collude and contend with one another to gain hegemony. This finds itself within the principal contradiction in the world today—between nations oppressed by imperialism and imperialism; there is no doubting the fact that there will be more war as a result. That much is clear; the imperialists have no other way out. Our point here is that the contradictions in the US are not such that a Civil War in particular is impending.

A World War is still more probable than a Civil War—and World War must be turned into civil war, in the form of proletarian against bourgeois civil war—still, a World War itself is not conceivable in the near future. In any account, the Biden presidency, desperate to maintain US hegemony against its rivals and uniting around it the sectors of the imperialist ruling class, has more potential to cause or pursue another World War than to cause a Civil War between factions of the US ruling class. Furthermore, the proletariat is not readied for war at this time.

When speaking of the inter-imperialist contradiction, Chairman Gonzalo remarks that: “Contradictions among them are resolved through aggression, and imperialist wars, and tend toward defining who will have hegemony through a third world war”.

Still he treats this as a possibility and not an impending certainty:

“We apply the principle that the masses make history, and we take into account that World War II caused the masses to stand up politically (something that even the reactionary US analysts recognize). We think that should the inter-imperialist contradiction generate world war, it would be a new inter-imperialist war for world hegemony and re-division of the world; and therefore it would be to divide up the spoils of war, and the spoils are the

oppressed nations. They would have to therefore proceed to occupy our countries in order to rule us. And so, once again, the contradiction between the oppressed nations on one side and the imperialist superpowers and the imperialist powers on another would become principal”.

And further:

“...even a world war will provide more favorable conditions for them [revolutionaries in imperialist countries] to make revolution”. [6]

We ask our readers: can the US imperialist ruling class, as the world sole hegemonic imperialist superpower, afford a civil war between factions of itself? Can they afford to lose footing internationally as the world great gendarme in times when they are wracked with crisis? They cannot; they will remain united until there is no other choice. Instead, they will off-load misery onto the masses, continue killing and continue attacking the conquests and rights of the people, squeezing more and more the working class, and here we recognize always that with repression comes resistance. This is what we see in the victory of Biden Harris, “Law and Order” politicians now charged with developing the reactionization of the state on a firmer footing for the imperialist ruling class this state serves. Their global hegemony is after all constantly threatened by other imperialist super powers and other imperialist powers who themselves desire hegemony, making world war more likely than an inter-bourgeois civil war in the US.

## Conclusion

It is critical to proceed in answering any question first from a firm basis in Maoist philosophy and, in the United States, from the standpoint of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie which is the primary contradiction. Only then will situations become clear, will abstraction from the facts deepen understanding rather than detract from it, and will problems be solved. Trump’s reactionary base, aside from some notable outlier groupings, are not fascists pushing for civil war but the *gendarmes* of the

reactionary demo-bourgeois regime. Their actions on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January in Washington DC underscore this fact, and they will continue in one form or another to act as these *gendarmes* with the passing of the current Trump presidency. The material conditions of the decrepit US imperialism demand it of them, and it is the duty of revolutionaries in the US to speak clearly on these matters, with words not tainted with fear-mongering or the demagoguery of the reactionaries, opportunists, and revisionists. More and more the people will hear these words of clarity and truth and act accordingly. Study again and again the Greats on the question of the state and imperialism, on the United Front, and begin from the basis of philosophy which is at the heart of the ideology, all-powerful because it is true.

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## Citations

[1] The US Elections and the Role of Avakian, Communist International Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Internet Review, Oct 31 2020

[2] The State: A Lecture Delivered at Sverdlov University, V.I. Lenin, Marxists.org

[3] The US Elections and the Role of Avakian, Communist International Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Internet Review, Oct 31 2020

[4] Hoist Defend and Apply Maoism To Solve New Problems in the New Situation That the World Is Entering, Communist International Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Internet Review, Dec 26 2020

[5] Interview With Chairman Gonzalo, El Diario

[6] Ibid

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