

Trump's racist diatribe against "shithole countries" exposes bipartisan conspiracy against immigrants

By Barry Grey
12 January 2018

President Donald Trump on Thursday delivered a racist and fascistic rant against immigrants from "shithole countries," such as Haiti and states in Africa, during a bipartisan White House meeting on immigration "reform."

The *Washington Post* first reported Trump's remarks, citing two unnamed people who were briefed on the meeting. Responding to questions later in the day, the White House did not deny that Trump had made the statements.

Trump's outburst came as an embarrassment to congressional Democrats, who over the past week have rushed to reach a deal with Trump that would further militarize the border and expand the crackdown on immigrants. In an editorial published less than 24 hours before Trump's statement, the *Washington Post* encouraged the Democrats to embrace large portions of Trump's immigration policy, including the building of a wall along the US-Mexican border.

Trump made his remarks after rejecting a proposal agreed to by a group of six Republican and Democratic senators. The agreement would restore Obama-era legal protection, terminated last year by the White House, for 800,000 immigrants who were brought to the US as children by undocumented parents, provide billions of dollars to hire more border agents and step up border militarization, drastically cut visas for family members of legal immigrants and gut the diversity visa lottery for immigrants from Africa, Central America and other poor regions of the world.

One part of the plan would restore protected status, terminated by the administration, to immigrants from war-torn and devastated countries such as Haiti and El Salvador. On Monday, the Department of Homeland

Security announced that it was ending protected status for more than 250,000 Salvadorans who have been living in the US for decades.

"What do we want Haitians here for?" Trump asked. "Why do we want all these people from Africa here? Why do we want all these people from shithole countries?" He added, "We should have more people from places like Norway."

These statements produced declarations of shock in the media and indignant denunciations from Democratic politicians. The posturing of outrage from within the media and political establishment is hypocritical and dishonest. The problem for the ruling class is that, once again, Trump has said in public what so many in the corporate-financial oligarchy and the state apparatus think and say in private.

The art of American imperialist politics is to cloak the criminal activities of the US ruling class all over the world in humanitarian rhetoric. The rule is: You can kill as many people as you want, as long as it is done in a manner that pays verbal tribute to democratic and humanitarian ideals.

Trump, whose rise to power is the product of unending war and massive social inequality, dispenses with all that. He articulates the policies of American imperialism in bluntly fascistic language.

The US is busy all around the world invading countries, killing their inhabitants and stealing their resources. It threatens countries—China, Russia, Iran, North Korea—with nuclear annihilation. It bears overwhelming responsibility for the crushing poverty and repression in Haiti, having occupied the country from 1915 to 1934 and repeatedly invaded it since, most recently in 1996 (under Bill Clinton) and 2004

(under George W. Bush).

It led the bombing war that destroyed Libya and is waging drone warfare and covert war in Somalia, Niger and other parts of Africa.

It has brought death and destruction to El Salvador, including by backing the death squads in the 1980–1992 civil war that murdered tens of thousands of civilians.

Now, the Democrats are joining hands with Trump and the Republicans to send the few who escaped the killing fields of these countries and sought asylum in the US back to be brutalized and murdered, while sealing the border to block the many more new refugees created by US aggression from entering the country.

Two things utterly expose the falseness of the official indignation over Trump's outburst. First, he made it in the course of a meeting attended by Democratic Senate Whip Richard Durbin, who has been leading the Democrats in the immigration talks. Just two days before, at televised bipartisan talks chaired by Trump, Durbin had simpered, "We're all honored to be part of this conversation." He went on to pledge Democratic support for "a safe border in America period."

Second, even as the anti-immigrant conspirators were meeting in the White House, the Democratic Party was providing the votes needed in the House of Representatives to block any alteration of the FISA law and extend its Section 702, which authorizes the National Security Agency to sweep up the telephone and electronic communications of millions of Americans without a warrant. The mass domestic and international surveillance law is expected to sail through the Senate with similar Democratic support in the coming days.

The *New York Times*, which articulates the policies of the Democratic Party, lauded the House vote, writing:

Effectively, the vote was almost certainly the end of a debate over 21st-century surveillance and privacy rights that broke out in 2013 after the leaks by the former NSA contractor Edward J. Snowden...

Mr. Snowden's disclosures in 2013 ushered in a period of intense interest in surveillance. Civil libertarians and conservative skeptics of

government power worked together to push for new limits, while intelligence and law enforcement agencies and their backers in Congress from across party lines—and in both the Obama and Trump administrations—tried to hold the line.

The media, the Democrats and the ruling class as a whole are worried that Trump's remarks might undercut a filthy immigration "compromise," and will, more broadly, further discredit the United States in the eyes of the world and the American people. They are well aware how weak and unstable this government is. Their entire focus is to divert, dissipate and sabotage popular opposition—by means of reactionary campaigns such as the anti-Russia drive, the #MeToo witch-hunt and the "fake news" crackdown on free speech and expression on the Internet—so as to prevent a political movement against American capitalism.

Workers and young people should give no support to any of the factions within the ruling class and political establishment and, above all, not allow their opposition to Trump to be channeled behind the right-wing Democratic Party. The struggle against Trump must be waged as an independent and united movement of the working class, in unity with the growing struggles of workers internationally, against the source of war, poverty and racism—the capitalist system.

To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>