

Democrats rally to defend fired Attorney General Sessions, Special Counsel Mueller

By Tom Eley
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The Democrats and their fake “left” allies held war-mongering demonstrations in a number of cities on Thursday in defense of the fired far-right attorney general, Jeff Sessions, and the anti-Russia investigation being conducted by Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

Wednesday’s ouster of Sessions and his replacement by Trump ally Matthew G. Whitaker has brought forth a wave of condemnation from Democratic Party figures and their media allies, including the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, asserting that the move is the prelude to Trump’s closing down of the Justice Department probe into allegations of Russian “meddling” in the 2016 elections and possible collusion by the Trump campaign.

Trump had repeatedly denounced Sessions for having recused himself from the Russia investigation in March of 2017, leaving Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, a defender of the investigation, in overall charge of its conduct. Whitaker, a former US attorney and now acting attorney general and therefore responsible for overseeing the Mueller probe, is on record criticizing Mueller and suggesting that the Justice Department could cut off funding for his office.

Mueller’s investigation has been at the center of a McCarthyite-style campaign against Russia spearheaded by the intelligence agencies and the Democratic Party, based on fabricated claims that Russian President Vladimir Putin interfered in the presidential election to undermine the candidacy of Democrat Hillary Clinton and boost Trump. It has been used as a weapon in the drive by the Democrats and sections of the military/intelligence establishment to force Trump to adopt a more aggressive posture against Moscow and in the war for regime-change in Syria.

To the extent that the Democrats oppose the right-wing Trump administration, it is on this entirely

reactionary basis. In the lead-up to Tuesday’s midterm elections, they not only called no demonstrations, they were entirely silent on Trump’s fascistic attacks on immigrants, his deployment of troops to the border against the caravan of Central American asylum seekers, and his pledge to overturn the 14th Amendment guarantee of birthright citizenship—a cornerstone of the Bill of Rights.

Following the election, in which the Democrats won control of the House of Representatives, the party leadership called repeatedly for bipartisan unity and collaboration with Trump, underscoring their essential agreement with his policies of war, austerity and repression. It was only when Trump fired Sessions, a right-wing anti-immigrant zealot, that they swung into action, reviving their denunciations of Trump as a stooge of Putin.

The aim of shifting the Trump administration to a war footing against Russia has been achieved to the extent that there is now a substantial risk of nuclear conflict between the US and the second-leading nuclear power. War could quickly erupt in a number of flash points, especially Syria, where Russian soldiers, sailors and airmen carry out combat operations within miles of their American counterparts, as well as US-allied Islamist proxies armed by Saudi Arabia.

Though promoted in the media and sponsored by over 50 Democratic Party-linked organizations, including MoveOn.org, the rallies on Tuesday were small, reflecting the lack of support in the general population for the anti-Russia crusade. The protests were notable primarily for their unvarnished right-wing and neo-McCarthyite character.

Two of the largest were in Washington DC and New York City, which each drew roughly 1,000 demonstrators, many of whom held hammer and cycle

posters with Putin's image. Sessions began his career as a segregationist in Jim Crow Alabama and went on to become a right-wing Republican senator from the state. Mueller, for his part, was director of the FBI from 2001 to 2013, during which time he helped institute mass domestic surveillance and other sweeping attacks on democratic rights linked to the so-called "war on terror."

At the Washington demonstration, Democratic Congressman Jamie Raskin led those in attendance in a round of applause for Sessions. Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, appealed to the military against Trump, declaring, "You are the defenders of our democracy," and led a chant of "protect Mueller."

In defending Sessions, the Democrats and their allies are rallying around the most right-wing attorney general in American history, who, prior to joining the Trump cabinet, had won a well-earned reputation as a bitter opponent of civil rights. As attorney general, Sessions will primarily be remembered for the persecution of immigrants, most notably the separation of immigrant children from their parents and their imprisonment in detention camps built in the desert.

The task of spearheading the attack on immigrants and democratic rights will now fall, pending the installation of a permanent attorney general, to Whitaker, who has boasted that he interprets the Constitution from a biblical standpoint. His very first act as head of the Department of Justice was to issue, in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security, a directive stripping the right to asylum from anyone who enters the US over the Mexican border and has not first gained legal status—a move that is tantamount to abolishing the right to asylum, which is guaranteed under international and US law.

This move, a new landmark in the attack on immigrants, due process and basic democratic rights, has been virtually ignored by the media and the Democratic Party. It was not mentioned in the press release calling Thursday's demonstration, nor by speakers at the demonstrations in Washington and New York.

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