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USA

Biden Moves Ahead as Republicans Line Up Behind Trump

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President Joseph Biden, in office for less than a month, continued to move ahead with his plan to solve the American health and economic crises and to reassert U.S. global dominance. As he pushes ahead with his relief program, Republicans have lined up behind Trump, whose impeachment trial in the Senate has begun.

All of this as the health and economic crises continue with 465,000 pandemic deaths, over twenty million unemployed, and millions facing eviction and hunger. Biden's initial domestic and foreign policy positions are more liberal than some on the left would have predicted, and the expected split in the Republican Party had not happened. Where does all of this put the left?

Biden, who often seeks compromise, has decided instead to push ahead with his \$1.9 trillion stimulus plan to deal with the health and economic crises. The Republicans want a program less than half that size. The Democrats, however, have only a one-vote majority in the Senate and only a ten-vote majority in the House, and at least one Democratic Senator has questioned the Biden plan.

In foreign policy, in a reversal of Trump positions, Biden has ended military aid to Saudi Arabia in its war against the Houthi rebels. The Saudi Arabian war has taken at least 100,000 lives and killed some 10,000 civilians, while 85,000 have died in the famine and 2,500 from cholera. While U.S. aid will end, the Gulf States have the arms to continue the war; still, Biden's change in policy could be a first step toward ending the horror. Biden is also exploring the possibility of rejoining the Iran nuclear deal, seeking to align the U.S. with its Western European allies.

Many, like leftist writer Mike Davis, predicted that after the January 6 attack on the capitol, the Republican Party would split. It has not happened yet. Trump's continued dominance seems clear. In the congressional vote to recognize Biden's victory in the election, 7 senators and 120 members of the house voted against certifying Biden's victory. On the impeachment vote in the House 272 Democrats and a few Republicans voted for impeachment but 197 Republicans voted against. These votes reflect the Republicans' fear of offending Trump and his base.

The most recent test for the Republicans is the case of newly elected Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene who since her election has been backed by former president Trump. Greene claimed that former president Barack Obama was a Muslim. She supported the conspiracy theories of QAnon, who believes that a cabal of pedophiles runs the U.S. government. She also argued that the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York did not involve airliners but was an inside job. And she said that school shootings in which dozens of children died were staged events to justify new gun laws. As if that were not enough, she claimed that laser beams controlled by the Rothschild family started California wildfires to benefit Jewish businessmen.

Pushed to discipline her, the Republican Party rallied around her, and when in a caucus meeting she repudiated these theories, it gave her a standing ovation. So, in an unprecedented move, the Democrats stripped her of all committee assignments, nullifying her influence in the House. Now Trump's impeachment trial has begun, but with Republicans fearing him, there is little chance of his being convicted.

The Democratic Socialist of America, the largest left group, has been largely defined by its electoral strategy. In 2016 and 2020, it supported Bernie Sanders whose campaigns buoyed up DSA for five years. DSA pursued an electoral strategy of supporting Democratic Party socialist and progressive candidates and elected a few. With Biden now leading the Democrats and two-thirds of Americans supporting his policies, DSA is emphasizing local politics and calling for taxing the rich. Will DSA be able to continue to grow in this new terrain? Will workers take action? Will

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social movements revive?

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