Speak Out Now
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We Can't Depend on Them or Their Courts

We are facing a reign of chaos. Since starting his second term in office, Trump has passed one executive order after another to implement his policies. When he can't get the legislature to pass a law, he just orders it done. When lawsuits are filed against him, he ignores them. When judges order his actions to stop, he threatens them.

Trump disregarded the Supreme Court's decision that Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a man legally in the U.S., who had been sent to the notorious CECOT prison in El Salvador, must be returned. This shouldn't come as a surprise. When he took office the Supreme Court gave him the ultimate get out of jail free card. He was given total immunity from prosecution when carrying out acts as President.

The Supreme Court has generally followed Trump's orders. It has responded to Trump's request to make a number of emergency decisions when he was challenged by lower courts. It overturned rulings that would delay or halt the kidnapping and deportation of people without any trial or hearing. The Supreme Court moved quickly to allow Trump to fire members of the National Labor Relations Board simply for disagreeing with him.

Most recently, the Court allowed for Trump to move forward in banning all transgender people from serving in the military. Currently there are more than 4,000 transgender people in all levels of the military.

Now, Trump is asking the Supreme Court to revoke the legal status of more than 500,000 immigrants. In a case to be heard later in the month, the rights of naturalized citizens are also being challenged.

With a majority of Republicans in the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Supreme Court, the so-called checks and balances are in one man's hands.

Despite this, the Democrats are still pointing to court rulings as a way to stop the Trump administration's rampage over our rights and benefits. Medicaid, Social Security and other basic programs are on the chopping block in the current budget proposal, along with billions of dollars in tax breaks for the rich.

Many have called this a constitutional crisis. But, in reality, the fake neutrality of the courts has been exposed. The actions of the legislature and the courts should not surprise us at all. They have always existed to defend the interests of the wealthy who control this system. It is just more blatant under Trump's ruthless agenda.

And those who do believe in upholding basic democratic rights face threats and harassment. For example, Wisconsin judge Hannah Dugan was arrested by the FBI for defending the legal rights of a man who was appearing in her court for an immigration hearing.

This may seem confusing. The Supreme Court has a reputation for defending our rights because of high profile cases like Brown v. Board of Education and Roe v. Wade. In reality, most of the time it maintains the corporate interests that dominate our society.

Those decisions and other high-profile cases, where people's rights were upheld, were not the result of the Court's commitment to basic rights. They were the result of massive social movements. And the courts serve as a tool to absorb, redirect, and institutionalize those movements.

Brown v. Board of Education was a response to the growing Civil Rights Movement. Segregation was also an obstacle to U.S. corporate domination of the world. How could the U.S. claim to represent democracy, especially to the people of Africa, when the Black population in the U.S. existed in servitude as second-class citizens?

Similarly, the Roe v. Wade decision was a response to the Women's Movement. For those in power, women's right to abortion wasn't a threat. The economy was changing and increasing numbers of women were being educated and entering the workforce, which could benefit the economy. But, as the momentum of the Women's Movement subsided, growing far-right forces gained political power, and the conservative Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, against popular opinion.

This political system, with its legislatures and courts, never represented the interests of the majority. Especially not the working class, whose labor produces the wealth of this society and is responsible for its day-to-day functioning. If there is one thing we can learn from the arrogance of Trump and his cabinet of billionaires, it is how this system works and who it works for. The racism, sexism, anti-immigrant prejudices it created and maintains serve one purpose – to keep us divided. Our true history, the one they are attempting to shred, shows us that the only gains we can make are when we stand together. It's clear. We have no need for those who rule over us.

We could take care of ourselves, just fine. As the old saying goes, "It's not time to mourn, it's time to organize."