

Trump's attack on The Squad is an attack on all workers

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‘The Squad’: Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

“Go back where you came from” is one of the oldest slurs directed at oppressed workers. This slogan — with its implied threat of deportation — denies and hides the very long history of U.S. bosses occupying, enslaving, colonizing, robbing and destroying the Americas and the rest of the planet.

So, it was true to form that the bigoted, demagogic U.S. president, Donald Trump, used this vile slogan against four progressive, nonwhite, women members of Congress, known collectively as The Squad: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan.

[In a series of tweets July 14](#), Trump poured out his racist bile on these congresspeople, whom he claimed “originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe ... telling the people of the United States, the greatest and most powerful Nation on earth, how our government is to be run.”

He said the four women should “go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came.”

Trump followed up at a July 17 [campaign rally in Greenville, N.C.](#) — which like most Trump events took on an overtly white supremacist character. There, the president egged on his supporters, who responded with chants of “Send her back!” aimed at Omar. Trump later [praised the crowd](#) as “incredible patriots.”

In fact, all but one of these duly elected members of the House of Representatives were born in the U.S.

Ayanna Pressley is African American, born in Ohio and raised in Chicago. She is

descended from Africans who were brought here in chains generations before Trump's family arrived.

Rashida Tlaib was born in Detroit to Palestinian parents who were denied the right to live in their homeland by the racist Israeli occupation, an occupation backed by the U.S. government. She is the eldest of 14 siblings, and her father was an assembly line worker at Ford.

Ocasio-Cortez was born in the Bronx to parents from Puerto Rico, a nation colonized and oppressed by the U.S. but whose residents are U.S. citizens.

Ilhan Omar, the only one born outside the U.S., is from Somalia, a country that suffered genocide and occupation, first by Britain and Italy, and more recently by the U.S. She came to the U.S. as a refugee at age 12. Her mother died when she was young and her father worked in Minneapolis as a taxi driver and postal worker.

They were all elected by oppressed, working-class communities and have raised issues of concern to those communities, demands that go beyond what the U.S. ruling class and its political servants find acceptable at this time — like rights for Palestinian children, a \$20 minimum wage and an end to concentration camps at the border.

And that is why they are under attack.

Attacked by Trump — and Democrats, too

Of course, none of this matters to Trump, his neofascist supporters in government and law enforcement, or their white supremacist base, many of whom speak openly not only of deporting but also of murdering migrants, Muslim people, Black and Brown people, women, LGBTQ2S people, anti-fascists and others.

It was only two years ago that these same forces invaded the city of Charlottesville,

Va., many with weapons in hand. Shielded by hundreds of heavily armored cops, they threatened both local residents and thousands of anti-fascists who came to challenge them. And they murdered Heather Heyer.

But it's not just Trump or the Republicans who are responsible for creating this dangerous situation. Leading congressional Democrats like [House Speaker Nancy Pelosi](#) and [Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer](#), with the backing of the Democratic National Committee, paved the way for Trump with their own racist attacks on The Squad.

Listen to Pelosi's words directed at them just days before Trump's rant, quoted in the New York Times: "All these people have their public whatever and their Twitter world. But they didn't have any following. They're four people and that's how many votes they got."

"These people." Sound familiar?

After earlier backing Trump's racist "border security" bill, on July 12 [Pelosi's House Democratic majority joined Republicans](#) in voting down a measure introduced by Ocasio-Cortez to put limits on repressive measures at the border.

That's because, for all their bluster about being "The Resistance," the Democratic leadership has no fundamental differences with Trump when it comes to terrorizing migrants and refugees, waging imperialist wars or exploiting workers everywhere.

In fact, Trump said his racist tweetstorm was intended to [support his friend Pelosi](#) against The Squad.

The issue is racism

Together, Trump and his Democratic collaborators have put a target on the back of each of these women — and through them, on the backs of all oppressed people.

Racism is the issue. Misogyny, Islamophobia and anti-migrant bigotry are the issues. Trump's appeal to his fascist base with code words and slogans that ramp them up for acts of terror against oppressed workers, women and migrants is the issue.

Many of the Democrats who are making hay out of Trump's overt racist appeals today baited the hook for him yesterday, and continue to attack The Squad even now. They want to divert the growing fightback against deportations and concentration camps into passive support for their 2020 election campaigns. They cannot be trusted to defend these congresspeople, even though they belong to the same party.

In the face of potentially deadly threats from the White House, Squad members have continued to speak out. Omar, Pressely, Tlaib and Ocasio-Cortez held a [joint press conference](#) July 15, where they announced, "We will not be silenced." They pointed out that Trump's provocations put millions of people's lives in danger.

On July 17, [Omar introduced a bill](#), co-sponsored by Tlaib, to protect the right to boycott — a countermeasure against bipartisan calls to ban the Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions movement.

Omar's defense of Palestinian human rights led to a new round of charges of "anti-Semitism" by her fellow Democrats and liberal media outlets like National Public Radio, who loyally defend Israel—that wholly-owned U.S. military base in the Middle



East—no matter its horrendous crimes.

It's up to us

Every worker, including every white worker, has a stake in this struggle. Trump, the Republicans and the Democrats are all engaged in the oldest and deadliest form of ideological war on the working class: divide and conquer.

Trump's racist, anti-migrant rhetoric aims to convince white workers that they have more in common with the bosses who exploit them than with their fellow workers who are Black, Latinx, Asian, Arab or Indigenous, or who happen to have been born somewhere else.

To counter this poison, we have to build unity and solidarity in action.

Like the anti-war, immigrants' rights, labor and community activists who turned out by the hundreds at the [Minneapolis airport to greet Omar](#) with chants of "Welcome home! Welcome home!"

Like the neighbors in Hermitage, Tenn.—Black, white, Latinx, Indigenous—who [formed a human chain](#) to prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents from arresting a targeted man and child.

Like Union del Barrio, which is patrolling the streets of San Diego to warn the community of ICE raids and working with allies to [build Resistance Committees](#) in Los Angeles.

Only we—the workers and oppressed—can be relied upon to defend The Squad and ourselves.

