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The wolf is at the door: Mobilize the working class against a stolen election

written by Sharon Black
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[should we prepare?](#)”, President Donald Trump [has declared several times](#) that he won’t leave office if the presidential election is “not fair.” By that he means, if he does not win. It may be the first time that a U.S. president has openly said that he won’t accept the vote, indicating that there will be no peaceful transfer of power.

This is not an idle threat. Trump has his own paramilitary police force, which has been deployed against protesters in test runs from Washington, D.C., to Portland, Ore.; the Department of Homeland Security; the support of the most virulent and reactionary police departments; and a myriad of violently racist, vigilante-type groups.

At the Sept. 29 debate in Cleveland with his Democratic opponent Joe Biden, after the moderator asked if he would condemn white supremacists including the Proud Boys, a violent far-right racist group, [Trump declared](#): “Proud Boys: Stand back and stand by,” acknowledging that he was their leader.

Later in the debate, [Trump refused](#) to say that he would abide by the results of the election and declined to tell his supporters to remain calm or avoid violence. “If I see tens of thousands of ballots, I can’t go along with that,” he said, urging his supporters to go to the polls and “watch very carefully.”

If anyone is fooled into thinking that Trump is remotely anti-war, his 9-minute rant



at the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 22 should set the record straight. It was a full-throttle jingoistic preparation for war against

China, along with Iran, Venezuela and Cuba. Though this is not unusual for Trump, it was a departure from the subterfuge used by most capitalist politicians on the world stage.

“When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time” is a saying made famous by writer and poet Maya Angelou. We should believe Trump.

Growing repression

State attacks on the Black Lives Matter uprising against racism and police terror have escalated.

In Louisville, Ky., Attica Scott, the only Black state representative, and her 19-year-old daughter were arrested Sept. 24 on felony riot charges during protests after the grand jury decision exonerating Breonna Taylor’s killers. Twenty-four others were arrested at the same time, along with 127 more on Sept. 23.

This follows on the heels of draconian charges against Party for Socialism and Liberation and Frontline Party for Revolutionary Action members in Aurora, Colo.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis recently announced a legislative bill, the “Combating Violence, Disorder and Looting and Law Enforcement Protection Act.” It would [drastically intensify criminal charges](#) against protesters. Blocking traffic would become a third-degree felony, but drivers who intentionally plow their vehicles into crowds would not be held liable for injury or death.

Destroying or toppling monuments, such as Confederate statues, would become a second-degree felony.

These recent events make it all the more imperative for the working class to intervene actively in what undoubtedly will be a series of major crises this year and into 2021.

Lessons of 2000 election

The 2000 election pitted Democrats Al Gore and Joe Lieberman against George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. It was stolen by outright suppression of Black and working-class voters in Florida.

After several contentious months of struggle, sometimes in the street, the outcome was resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court, which overturned a Florida Supreme Court decision ordering a recount. Bush was declared the winner. Not even the undemocratic Electoral College, but just nine Supreme Court justices chose the president.

At that time, James Baker was chief legal advisor for Bush's campaign and oversaw the Florida recount operation. Baker was responsible for the strategy to take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court after losing in a deeply corrupt effort on the state level.

Baker later became Bush's secretary of state. John G. Roberts Jr., one of the lawyers on Baker's team, was rewarded by Bush with an appointment to the Supreme Court. Roberts is now the chief justice.

As Struggle-La Lucha's Gary Wilson wrote in "[Donald Trump's Greedy Big Oil Backers Want More](#)":

"‘Former Secretary of State James Baker considered voting for Joe Biden in November but will instead keep backing Donald Trump, a new biography reveals, in the process outlining a key reason for continued Republican support for the scandal-plagued U.S. president,’ [the Guardian reports](#).

"‘Though the ‘myriad ethical scandals surrounding Trump were head-spinning,’ Baker told the authors, ‘it was worth it to get conservative judges, tax cuts and deregulation.’

“Yes, Trump is giving them exactly what they want.”

Democratic Party's role

In 2000, the Democratic Party fought the election theft with one hand tied behind its back. It pulled Jesse Jackson back from organizing demonstrations. Democratic Sen. Joe Lieberman, who later became chair of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security, broke ranks and called for conceding to Bush.

This should serve as a lesson to not count on the Democratic Party to protect the rights of the people. In the final analysis, the Democratic Party could not be relied upon to defend African American voters. In the end, its allegiance was only to Big Capital.

Readers should take note: Following that election and the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. started the endless “War on Terror” and the second Iraq War. At home, the expansion of the repressive apparatus of the state became gargantuan — a tendency that V.I. Lenin described in the pamphlet [“The State and Revolution.”](#)

In 2002, the Homeland Security Act was passed, and in 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was formed. Today, it is the third-largest cabinet department and is coordinated at the White House by the Homeland Security Council. It has 240,000 employees. By law, DHS employees cannot be represented by a union. Brown University professor Peter Andreas described the creation of DHS as the most significant government reorganization since the Cold War.

While there are comparisons being made between 2000 and today, it's important to note that 2020 is much more volatile; capitalism is in deeper decay and decline. The U.S. imperialist system, which is in contraction, finds itself in direct competition with the growth of the Chinese economy.

1876 Election, Black freedom and Reconstruction

The election of 1876 was also thoroughly rigged and essentially overturned the post-Civil War Reconstruction era in a deal that had profound consequences. Samuel J. Tilden had beaten Rutherford B. Hayes both in the popular vote and in the Electoral College. But after much maneuvering, Hayes was declared the winner.

Marxist leader Vince Copeland explained it best in his book “Market Elections”: “The story of the 1876 switch of votes is not only one of corruption at the polls but of a betrayal of colossal proportions. It was directed first of all against the Black people, second against the white majority of the North who had sacrificed so much in the Civil War, and third against the poor whites of the South, who were now slowly turned into lynch-mad servants of the very class that oppressed them most.

“A deal had been struck with South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana on behalf of the Southern ruling class that Reconstruction would be ended and the then-revolutionary Union troops would be withdrawn from their occupation of the South.

“On the other hand, it really was true that these states — and nearly all the Southern states — had rigged the elections, particularly against the Black voters. But if the Republicans had initiated a drive to reverse this, it would have meant a continuation of Reconstruction, something they themselves did not want.”

Why raise 1876? Because it illustrates how utterly undemocratic capitalist elections are, and it shows the determining factor behind this betrayal: the alliance between Northern capital and Southern landowners, which was based on capitalist economic developments.

It has another significance for us today. Today’s anti-racist, Black Lives Matter, anti-police-terror movement is a continuation of the fight that was stopped short by the counterrevolution against Reconstruction — literally the most democratic period for the U.S.

The betrayal of 1876 underscores how important it is to preserve, defend and expand what is taking place in the streets today. In ways that may be unrecognized by many of those joining the spontaneous struggle taking place now, this unfinished revolution for Black freedom is being resurrected today.

What is basically at stake in the struggle today is whether this movement will be crushed by the reactionary and fascist forces headed by Trump, or if it will grow in a way that can implement far deeper changes that go to the heart of the capitalist system. Of course, there is much more to it than that; ultimately, this reaction is aimed at the entire working class.

Capitalist crisis and imperialist war

The U.S. ruling class would certainly prefer a peaceful transition after the election. This signals to the world and to the population as a whole that their system is stable.

But that may not be possible in 2021. Capitalism as a system is in deep contraction, and the impending crisis within the ruling structures of the capitalist state is larger than it has ever been.

Imperialist war is growing ever closer; it's imperative that the working class view this election from an international perspective. What does this election and its aftermath mean for the world's people, especially those countries struggling for some semblance of independence?

Trump's anti-China rant at the United Nations may appear unglued. But the reality is that he is giving the Pentagon's position. War is the natural outgrowth of imperialism and the conflict of capitalism with its competitors. The "pivot to the East" strategy was already on the drawing board before Trump came to office.

Regardless of the election outcome, the danger of imperialist war — whether proxy

wars, deepening sanctions and blockades, or direct interventions — will intensify and threaten to compound pandemics and the climate crisis.

Prepare for working-class intervention

It is very hard to predict exactly where all of this is going. Does Trump have the strength to carry out and conduct a coup? How will the Supreme Court react? What role will the military play? All of this is important. But the most important factor is to recognize that the danger is real.

The working class and revolutionary socialists cannot sit on the sidelines and wait to see what bourgeois forces are going to do. It is dangerous to do so.

The historic role played by right-wing terrorists during capitalist crises is to suppress mass working-class movements and the working class itself.

In “The Klan and Government: Foes or Allies?” Sam Marcy wrote: “The growth of fascism everywhere has been securely tied to big business; that is its lifeline. ... Even in the so-called best of times the capitalist government not only tolerates terrorist organizations like the Klan, but once the class struggle of the workers and oppressed people takes on the character of a genuine mass upsurge, the capitalist government is more likely than ever to encourage and promote the likes of the Klan and other mediums of repression.

“It is impossible to conduct a consistent anti-fascist policy unless one takes into account the key and decisive factor in overwhelming and destroying the fascist menace; it is the working class, the oppressed people and their allies.”

In our previous article, we wrote, “Prepare for November: Call for a general strike of the people.

“There should be no passive acceptance of a stolen election, regardless of how it

unfolds. Any such circumstance must be considered illegitimate. The stakes are too high. The working class must prepare as much as possible to intervene on its own behalf. We can't wait for the Democrats — particularly if they are inclined to lay down and wait for another four years — nor concede and stand on the sidelines.

“Instead, we should prepare for a general strike of the people. Whether employed or unemployed, students or youth, organized or unorganized — the goal is to shut the system down through massive action. For those who are able, plan to march on Washington, D.C., and occupy the capital until Trump leaves. We need to appeal to the unions and to the community directly.

“If Biden prevails, it does not mean the struggle is off.

“He will be presiding over a capitalist crisis and has no answers whatsoever for our class. Our message must be to energetically push the movement forward to demand: End police terror and white supremacy! Health care for all! Cancel rents and mortgage foreclosures! Jobs or guaranteed income for all! Hazard pay and workers' rights! No to wars and sanctions!”

There are any number of good ideas on how to mobilize; all should be implemented as vigorously as possible.

The future of humanity depends on what we do at this critical juncture. Capitalism is literally at a dead end and can do very little to solve the major crises impacting the globe, whether it's the pandemic, catastrophic climate change, fires in California, or health care, housing, food and jobs for the people.

As a system, capitalism is so tied to the exploitation of Black and Brown people and immigrants that it finds itself unable to respond to even the most modest demand to respect Black bodies.

Socialism is the answer. At this juncture, the wolf is at the door and it will take unity

and boldness to stop it.

