

Whoever's in the White House, get ready to fight

written by Greg Butterfield
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Anti-eviction protest in Oakland, Calif., Sept. 1.

Nov. 25 — The year 2020 has been exhausting.

At the beginning of this year, a U.S. war of aggression against Iran seemed imminent. President Donald Trump ordered the illegal, provocative and downright racist assassination of Gen. Qasem Soleimani, commander of Iran's Quds Force, responsible for beating back the threat of Islamic State (ISIS) forces in Syria, Iraq and throughout West Asia.

Then came the global pandemic, which killed almost 1.5 million people worldwide by late November. While some countries were able to take swift, organized, community-supported action to stop the spread — [especially socialist countries](#) like China, Vietnam and Cuba — those based on market-driven capitalism, with inadequate, privatized health care, were unable to meet the challenge.

That was the U.S. most of all, with [12.7 million cases reported](#) on Nov. 25 and 260,000 deaths, the worst in the world. Both numbers continue to soar with no end in sight.

Millions of workers are reeling from the unnecessary, preventable deaths of loved ones, especially in the hardest-hit Black, Latinx and Indigenous communities.

Entwined with the pandemic, and looming even before COVID-19 was identified, was the latest global capitalist economic crisis, which has hit the world harder than any boom-and-bust cycle since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Millions were thrown out of work.

Families are scraping by and joining [miles-long lines for food assistance](#) after the U.S. Congress and the White House failed to extend emergency benefits or further cash relief. At the end of 2020, more than [13 million unemployed workers](#) will lose their jobless benefits. [Almost 7 million households](#) are threatened with eviction when emergency protections end on Dec. 31.

For those low-wage workers and health care workers lucky enough to keep their

jobs — the so-called essential workers, also disproportionately oppressed and poor people, including undocumented migrants — every day is a struggle to stay safe from infection.

A study by National Nurses United, the country's largest nurses' union, found that Filipinx workers have been [one-third of the nurses who have died](#), despite being only 4 percent of nurses in the U.S. That's because they are disproportionately on the frontlines in emergency rooms and care centers, and have less access to necessary equipment and health care themselves.

Black Lives uprising

In May, Minneapolis cops murdered George Floyd, a Black man, in broad daylight. The city and the whole country erupted in a mass uprising against racist police violence. Led by Black youth, millions took to the streets against the killer cops and their political enablers from city halls and statehouses to Washington. [The New York Times reported](#) that as many as 26 million people in the U.S. participated in demonstrations over the death of George Floyd.

The multinational uprising, which some have termed the largest protest movement in U.S. history, shook the racist foundations of the capitalist system.

Lacking coordinated national leadership, this heroic movement was unable to sustain its early momentum as the capitalist state brought its forces to bear to suppress it. But valuable lessons were learned and the anger of the people has not gone away.

Each new outrage, like the blatant grand jury manipulation to let off the cops who murdered Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Ky., brings people back into the streets.

And then there was the election. No, let's call it what it really was: the selection, between two wealthy racist white men handpicked by the capitalist ruling class, by

the billionaire oligarchs and landlords, to steer their ship of state.

Having once more sabotaged Bernie Sanders and his campaign driven by idealistic young people just beginning to learn what socialism is (and isn't), the Democratic Party bosses pushed Joe Biden onto the masses — Biden, a paragon of old-school Washington war mongering, systemic racism and mass incarceration, a trusted friend of Wall Street — as their only alternative to Donald Trump's open appeals to white supremacy and fascism.

Despite the Democrats' and Republicans' best efforts, though, the Black Lives rebellion turned the November presidential election into a referendum on Trump's racism. And Trump lost, by 6 million votes and counting.

Now, as we enter the last month of 2020, with Trump in office for eight more weeks, the threat of U.S. war on Iran looms again.

Get ready to fight

After all this — when the media announced on Nov. 7 that Trump had been defeated and Biden had won the necessary Electoral College votes to take office — the masses of workers and oppressed people let out a collective sigh of relief. In many places, people spontaneously came out into the streets to celebrate Trump's defeat.

This feeling is completely understandable.

The tension ramped up again as Trump denied the results. To this day, Trump has refused to concede defeat. He and his backers in the ruling class, the capitalist state, and fascist gangs like the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers and Wolverine Watchmen, have not stopped plotting to overturn his electoral defeat.

Until Trump is out of the White House, we must remain on guard and ready to mobilize against a coup attempt. If Trump's four years in power have taught

anything, it is that the “venerable institutions” in which the Democratic establishment and corporate media urge the people to put their trust will not protect us.

But even if Trump departs and Biden takes the oath of office peacefully on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, 2021, the fight is not over. Far from it.

Just look at who Biden is lining up [as his Cabinet appointees](#) and other high positions in his administration. Most are carryovers from the Obama administration or other representatives of the right-wing Democratic leadership.

Biden’s former chief of staff, Bruce Reed, an advocate of austerity and cuts to Social Security, is his likely pick for the Office of Management and Budget. Antony Blinken, a warmonger on Iraq, Libya, Syria and Ukraine, is Biden’s choice for secretary of state. To head the Department of Homeland Security is Alejandro Mayorkas, an anti-communist Cuban American whose family fled the socialist revolution. And so on.

Biden is expected to nominate several women and people of color to positions that have been exclusively held by white men. Representation is important. Those who discount or ridicule it are not doing themselves any favors; it will not gain them an audience with the workers.

But if those being appointed to these positions are loyalists of the system that oppresses women, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ2S people and all workers, then the value of that representation is limited.

Biden has also suggested that he may appoint “mainstream” Republicans, in the same spirit that his campaign solicited and trumpeted the support of war criminal George W. Bush and racist former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder.

A return to 2016 won’t save us

The Democratic establishment epitomized by President-elect Joe Biden wants to turn the clock back to the “good old days” before Trump’s election in November 2016.

Good days for them and their backers on Wall Street and the military-industrial complex, perhaps. For the workers and oppressed? Not so much.

What was the period of U.S. history before Trump turned up the flame of bigotry and repression? It was the period that gave rise to Trump and the resurgence of white supremacist, fascist movements.

It was the police murder of Mike Brown in Ferguson, Mo.; the birth of the phrase “Deporter In Chief”; the violent, coordinated crushing of the Occupy Wall Street movement; the declaration of Bolivarian Venezuela as a “special threat to U.S. national security.”

It was the pinnacle of mass incarceration of young Black and Brown men and women, built on policies that Sen. Joe Biden [had an intimate part in crafting](#). It was Biden himself overseeing the construction of a regime in Ukraine based on the power of [neo-fascist, white supremacist movements](#) to serve U.S. military, political and corporate interests.

Anyone hoping for the incoming Democratic administration to enact a massive retooling of the country to be more equitable is in for a big disappointment. The will for a New Deal or a Green New Deal doesn’t exist within the capitalist class.

The global decline of U.S. imperialist power and the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, as described 150 years ago by Karl Marx, undercut any liberal hopes. That’s why the best that the system can offer the workers is Biden and a return to pre-2016 misery. That’s why the return of Trump (or someone similar) in 2024 will hang over the next four years.

Will Biden [enact the national shutdown](#) needed to bring the virus under control?

Will Biden rein in the police, [much less defund them](#)?

Will Biden fight for [Medicare for All](#)?

Will Biden stop wars and sanctions?

Will Biden stop the war on immigrants?

Will Biden defeat the white supremacist gangs threatening our communities?

Will Biden put workers before Wall Street?

Trump's electoral defeat was a victory. It was a battle, and an important one. But the class war continues.

Under Trump or Biden, the job of socialists and communists, of all class-conscious workers, is to organize and fight for the rights of the workers and oppressed. Let's use this historic moment to help our class shed its illusions and build a militant movement against the whole rotten capitalist system, for a socialist future.

