

Before the attack on the U.S. Capitol: Trump's Wisconsin coup attempt

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Protests in Kenosha, Wis., where Jacob Blake was shot at seven times by policeman

Rusten Sheskey on Aug. 23.

After a fascist mob was allowed to take over the U.S. Capitol, Trump's attempts to overturn the election can't be dismissed as a clown show. It should have been obvious weeks before.

Wisconsin showed how serious it was. Trump lost the state by just 20,682 votes, a little more than six-tenths of a percentage point. It was still a significant victory against racism.

Trump's campaign was nonstop racism. It [spent millions on racist Facebook ads](#) attacking the Black Lives Matter movement.

The ads targeted both Minnesota and Wisconsin, where two of the biggest anti-racist rebellions took place. Minneapolis exploded after the police torture murder of George Floyd on May 25.

Demonstrations began in Kenosha, Wis., after Jacob Blake had been shot at seven times by policeman Rusten Sheskey on Aug. 23. The unarmed Black father was shot while getting into his own car. Some of Blake's children were in the back seat.

Kenosha County District Attorney Michael Graveley outrageously announced on Jan. 5 that no charges would be brought against Sheskey, who left Jacob Blake paralysed.

Trump himself came to Kenosha. He didn't visit Blake's family or offer condolences. The White House klansman spewed hate at a racist pep rally instead.

Trump's supporters defended Kyle Rittenhouse, who killed two anti-racist activists in



Kenosha. YouTube ads ran claiming “lawless criminals terrorize Kenosha.”

Trump lost Wisconsin, but he didn’t give up. The Trump campaign spent \$3 million on a recount only to see its margin of defeat increased.

Despite this recount, Wisconsin’s state Supreme Court voted on Dec. 14 by just a 4-3 margin to uphold the election results.

Three of the justices wanted to throw out hundreds of thousands of votes in Milwaukee and Dane counties. (Dane County includes the state capital of Madison.)

More than three-quarters of the state’s Black population live in these two counties.

The deciding vote was cast by a right-winger, Brian Hagedorn. He’s such a bigot that he [founded an anti-LGBTQ2S private elementary school](#), the Augustine Academy in Waukesha.

Hagedorn wasn’t seeking redemption. The judge’s decision was on behalf of the national ruling class, most of whom think it’s politically dangerous to throw out so many votes.

They feared millions of people taking to the streets as over 20 million people did during the Black Lives Matter demonstrations.

That prospect didn’t prevent three state Supreme Court justices from wanting to

overturn the election results and declare that Black votes don't matter.

Racism and union busting

Behind the three judges who were willing to risk another people's uprising were a series of Badger State billionaires.

Among them are Richard Uihlein and Elizabeth Uihlein, who together own the nonunion Uline business supply outfit. They [gave nearly \\$40 million](#) to racist candidates in the 2018 elections.

Liz Uihlein claimed [“the media is overblowing COVID-19”](#) in a March 13 email. Eight months later, [both the Uihleins contracted the coronavirus](#).

Then there's [the Kohler family's \\$8.3 billion](#) toilet-making fortune. It took over 60 years for Kohler workers to get a union.

An 1897 strike was smashed. So was [the 1934 strike](#) in the family's company town of Kohler — just west of Sheboygan — where two workers were killed.

Only after a strike starting in 1954 and lasting more than six years was Kohler forced to sign a union contract with [Local 833](#) of the United Auto Workers. Two members of the Kohler strikebreaking family were Wisconsin governors.

Milwaukee was the last big manufacturing city in the U.S. that the Great Migration of African Americans came to. By 1970, many of Milwaukee's factories were dependent on Black labor.

Among them was A.O. Smith, which manufactured a quarter of the auto frames used by General Motors. The 360-acre facility was known as “the plant” in the local Black community because so many African Americans were employed there.

Capitalism's need for Black workers didn't prevent Milwaukee from being the most

segregated city in the United States. Every year, Vel Phillips, the first Black member and first woman member of Milwaukee's City Council, would introduce a fair housing ordinance.

It would be voted down unanimously. Father Jim Groppi led nightly "open housing" marches in 1966 and 1967, some of which were violently attacked by racists.

The local fair housing law was only passed after Milwaukee's Black rebellion in 1967, in which four people were killed.

Destroying jobs and filling prisons

The big Allen-Bradley plant on the city's South Side refused for years to hire Black or Latinx workers. That's the reason super racist Lester Maddox came to campaign there when he ran for president in 1976.

Maddox had closed his Atlanta chicken shack so he wouldn't have to serve Black people. The fascist handed out ax handles to his white customers to attack Black people.

The Bradleys sold their electrical controls company to Rockwell International in 1985. Much of the proceeds went to the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, which now has over \$800 million in assets.

All of it is used to promote hate. Among its recipients is Charles Murray, co-author of "The Bell Curve," which claimed there were differences in intelligence between Blacks and whites.

This is Hitler stuff and Murray got a \$250,000 prize [from the Bradley Foundation](#) for it in 2016. Harry Bradley was [a founding member](#) of the John Birch Society, whose headquarters are located in Appleton, Wis.

Between 1977 and 1992, 55,000 factory jobs were destroyed in Milwaukee County according to the [Census of Manufactures](#). Most of them were union jobs.

But there was an increase of 66,000 manufacturing jobs in the rest of the state, which is overwhelmingly white. Big capital wanted to get away from Black workers and unions.

Instead of Black workers getting jobs in the big plants, they were being railroaded to big prisons.

The 53206 ZIP code touches the now-closed A.O. Smith plant where over 7,000 workers used to be employed. Sixty-two percent of the Black adult men there [are either incarcerated or have been in prison](#).

In 2010, [slightly more than one in 25 Black people](#) in Wisconsin were locked up. Billionaire families like the Uihleins and the Bradleys have increased the prison population by eight times since the early 1960s.

This is the viciousness that was rejected by poor and working people in Wisconsin.

