

14th Amendment: a tool Congress should use to oust neo-Klan Reps and Senators

written by Struggle - La Lucha

February 15, 2021

In the aftermath of the ferocious January 6th attack on the Capitol building as well as the vote by most of the Republican House members and many of their Senators to discard the Electoral College result and allow Trump to retain power in a coup d'état, the Democratic leadership quickly drew up an article of impeachment against Donald Trump, chief instigator of this violent "insurrection."

However, President Biden, rather than condemning those Reps that voted before and even after the violent attack to disenfranchise voters in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. has signaled his message of "unity" and "bipartisanship" with those racists. The majority of Republican Senators have already voted that the impeachment of Donald Trump is "unconstitutional" because their delay tactic for opening the trial allowed Trump to leave office unscathed.

This makes Trump's acquittal a foregone conclusion. So Trump and his Congressional minions, who engineered the Capitol attack by falsely proclaiming the election "stolen", smearing Black people and officials in Detroit, Philadelphia, Atlanta and elsewhere as "illegal voters", face no consequences. Only a small fraction of the neo-Klan mob that rampaged through the building, threatening to shoot or kidnap Speaker Pelosi, Congresswomen Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, among others, and even to hang chief Trump minion Vice-President Pence, quite justly face trial.

This does not have to happen, even within the confines of the capitalist legal system, designed to be a brutal police state for the oppressed, while at the same time a “protective bubble” for the billionaire class and its political minions, whose crimes of corruption and exploitation are meant to be rewarded rather than punished.

The 14th Amendment: A tool to fight the Ku Klux Klan

After the Union victory in 1865 in the Civil War, the Black “freedmen” and “Unionists” in the South came under relentless attacks from the newly formed terrorist Ku Klux Klan, made up largely of ex-Confederate soldiers and political leaders. Black political meetings in Memphis and New Orleans were attacked, with dozens killed.

President Andrew Johnson, who blamed this reign of terror on the newly freed slaves themselves, moved to quickly allow the Southern states back into the Union under the control of ex-Confederate officials.

A small but powerful Abolitionist group in Congress, called the “Radical Republicans”, who had already engineered the passage of the 13th Amendment of the Constitution that outlawed slavery, composed the 14th Amendment to deal with this crisis and prevent the slavocracy from taking back power. The text of this amendment has five sections (source - Wikipedia):

Section 1. *All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*

Section 2. *Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according*

to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

Section 3. *No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.*

Section 4. *The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.*

Section 5. *The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.*

Section 1 makes clear that all persons, including Black people, born, or naturalized in the U.S., are citizens, to be treated equally by the law. Section 2 makes it clear that it is unlawful to deny citizens the right to vote (unless, for example, they participated in the Confederate “rebellion”). This was written **before** the 15th Amendment, which gave all men the right to vote in all the states.

Section 3 has the greatest implications for the current situation. It declares that any public official who was “engaged” with the Confederate “insurrection, shall never be permitted to hold public office, unless two-thirds of each house of Congress agrees to it. This excluded not only Confederate officers, but all the Confederate political leaders.

Section 4 declares that all debts incurred by the Confederacy are “illegal and void”. Section 5 states that Congress has the power to enact legislation to enforce this amendment.

This Amendment was used by Congress and the Grant administration to not only smash the first iteration of the Klan, but also to allow the election of hundreds of Black local, state, and federal officials from the South, including Congressmen and Senators, replacing those racist white ex-Confederate officials.

Unfortunately, particularly after the Great Panic of 1873, the reformers within the capitalist class lost their clout, and with the racist “Compromise” of 1876, the northern and southern capitalists came to terms, Union troops were pulled out of the South, and the Southern ruling class was able to impose its horrible Jim Crow regime. But the 14th Amendment is still on the books. And it has been used to advance Civil Rights, women’s rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and more.

The timidity of the Democrats and the right of workers and the oppressed to have justice.

It is clear that the Democratic Party leadership will acquiesce to the acquittal of Trump, and the Biden spirit of “bipartisanship” will prevail with the racist, Trumpist Republican Senators and Congressmen who acted to overturn the votes of 81 million people, in support of a violent fascist neo-Klan insurrection openly designed to do just that.

Why is that? It is because they are too afraid to offend the section of the billionaire class that supports Trump, as well as the other members of that class that opposes Trump because he has created massive disorder in the midst of the pandemic, yet want to keep the growing fascists militias in their “back pocket” in the face of the powerful Black Lives Matter movement that is challenging the power of their racist murderous police.

But there is a pathway for the workers and oppressed to decapitate the leadership of this right-wing turn. Whatever the outcome of the impeachment trial, we can demand Congress enact legislation under Section 5 of the 14th Amendment that:

- Declares the violent attack on January 6th an insurrection with the proclaimed purpose to disenfranchise voters in several key states.
- Using Section 2 to declare unlawful Trump and the Congressional Trumpists attempt to disenfranchise the voters in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin
- Using Section 3 to declare that Trump can never hold public office again, and
- Using that same section, to declare that all Representatives and Senators who voted to overturn the electoral college results after the insurrection were in fact declaring that they were engaged in that insurrection, and thus must be removed from their seats and never be permitted to hold public office again.

There can be no compromise, no “bipartisanship”, with any of these Trumpists, since

as the Amendment says, they violated their oath to the Constitution and defacto supported this white supremacist insurrection, the most serious since the Civil War. Such legislation would only require a majority vote in each house. Even the threat of passage could have a profound effect.

These neo-Klan militias and their representatives in Congress are a threat to all working people, particularly at a time when nearly 450,000 people have lost their lives to the Covid-19 disease, millions have lost their jobs, millions are threatened with foreclosures and evictions, all while 660 billionaires are stashing trillions in their vaults from their Wall Street stock speculations.

We have a right to use every tool at our disposal, even legal demands, to defeat these threats to our welfare and that of our families.

Source: [Fighting Words](#)



Call In to Drop Charges Against

Protesters at University of Southern Florida

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 15, 2021

CALL-IN TO
**DROP THE
CHARGES
USF!**



Call in to demand that USF **drop the charges** on the 5 protesters arrested on 2/9! Demand that USF **defend free speech!**



Call on Tuesday 2/16 and
Thursday 2/18



President's Office: (813) 974-2791

Sample Script:

"Hello, I am calling to demand that USF respect progressive free speech and drop charges against the five protesters arrested this Tuesday. I am also calling to demand USF lifts the sanctions against the Students for a Democratic Society for exercising their right to free speech. USF must **respect the right to protest and freedom of speech.**"



Tampa, Fla: Protesting is Not a Crime - Rally to Kill DeSantis's Anti-Protest Bill, Feb. 21

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 15, 2021

Protesting Is Not a Crime: Rally to Kill DeSantis's Anti- Protest Bill!

Ron DeSantis has introduced new legislation that would legalize running over protesters, make it a felony to march on the street, and would revoke state funding for any city that decreases its police budget. This is a clear attack on free speech and the movement towards police accountability.

Kill the bill before it kills us!

Sunday, Feb 21st @ 3PM
Lykes Gaslight Park, Tampa



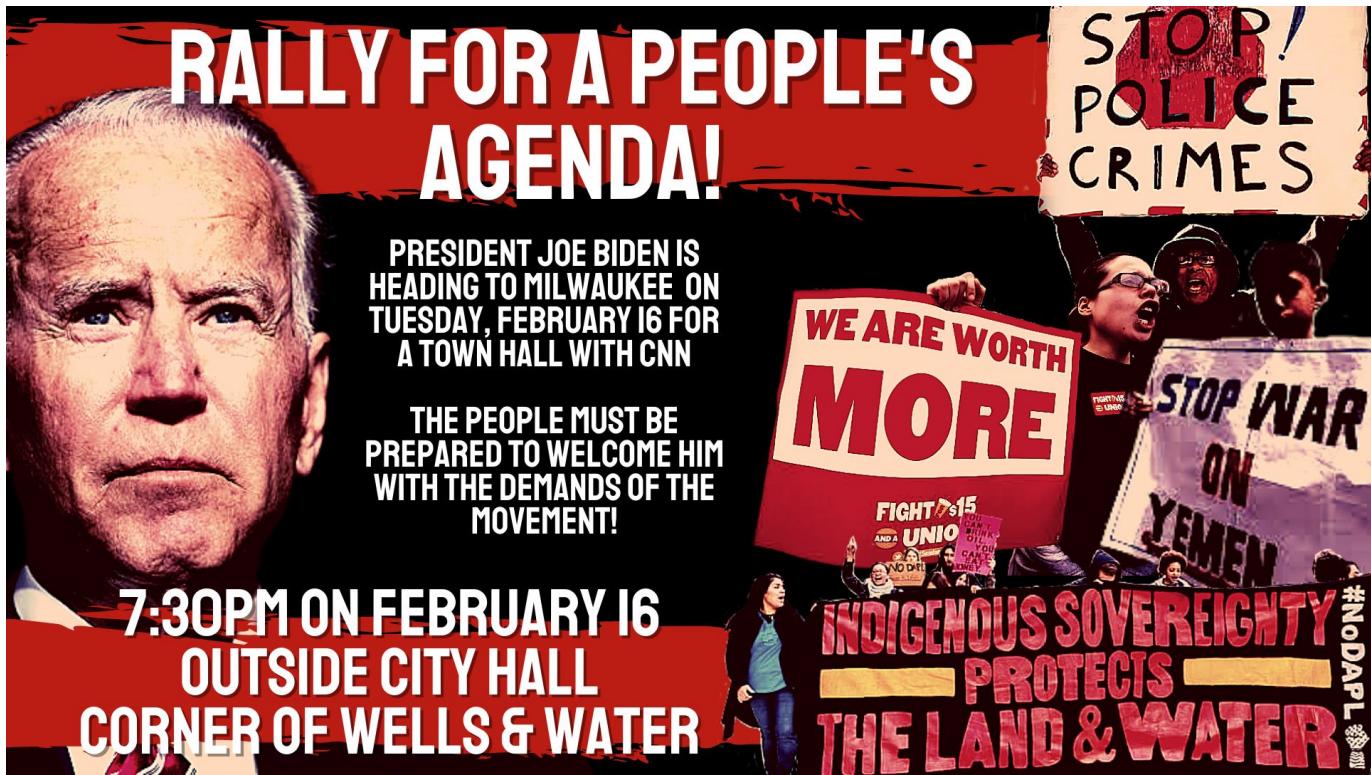
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2021 AT 3 PM

Protesting is Not a Crime: Rally to Kill DeSantis's Anti-Protest Bill!
Lykes Gaslight Square Park



Milwaukee: Rally for a People's Agenda, Feb. 16

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February 15, 2021



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

Rally for a People's Agenda
Milwaukee City Hall

Joe Biden is visiting Milwaukee for a town hall conversation with CNN. This will be one of Biden's first trips outside of Washington, DC since his inauguration. The people must be prepared to meet him with their demands!

Those demands include:

- 1) Relief for the People
- 2) End Police Crimes & Down with White Supremacy
- 3) Defend Indigenous Sovereignty & Protect the Earth
- 4) End the Wars & No More Sanctions
- 5) Legalization for All & Abolish ICE

We will be meeting at 6:30pm outside of City Hall, directly across the street from the Pabst Theater in downtown Milwaukee. We hope to see you there! All power to the people!



Los Angeles: Noche de Defensa y Resistencia - Melting ICE, Feb. 17

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 15, 2021

MELTING ICE

WE INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE
IN THIS DISCUSSION VIA ZOOM

WEDNESDAY
FEB. 17 2021
6PM

UNION DEL BARRIO'S
COMMUNITY PATROLS



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021 AT 6 PM

Noche de Defensa y Resistencia: Melting ICE Union Del Barrio's Community Patrols
Online Event

Union del Barrio understands that deportations will not stop because Trump is no longer president. We will continue utilizing our community patrols as a tool for fighting back against ICE raids in our San Diego communities. Our patrols have successfully documented and in some cases, halted ICE raids altogether. We will be sharing our thoughts and insight on our community patrols and giving info on how folks can get involved in protecting our people from Migra/police terrorism.

On [Facebook](#)

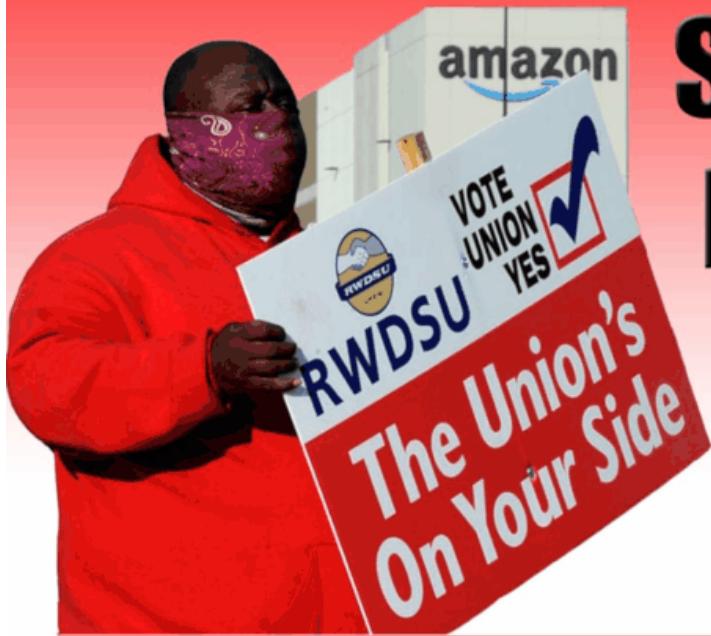


Brooklyn: Support Alabama Amazon Union Rally, Feb. 20

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 15, 2021

SUPPORT ALABAMA AMAZON UNION

National Support Rallies



6000 (mainly Black) Amazon workers in Alabama are fighting to unionize against Billionaire Jeff Bezos' anti-union, anti worker's right company.

Their victory can change the conditions for 100,000's of workers.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2021 @ 1PM

Assemble at East New York Amazon Facility

2300 Linden Blvd. @ Essex Street (B20 bus)

Our Brothers and Sisters Need Our Support... Join Us

To Endorse & Info (718) 398-1766 / D12m.com

Called by December 12th Movement & Support Alabama Amazon Workers Coalition

Brooklyn, NYC: Support Alabama Amazon Union

Saturday, February 20 - 1:00 p.m.

Assemble at East New York Amazon Facility, 2300 Linden Blvd. at Essex St., Brooklyn

Six thousand (mainly Black) Amazon workers in Alabama are fighting to unionize against billionaire Jeff Bezos' anti-union, anti-workers' rights company. Their victory can change the conditions for hundreds of thousands of workers.

Called by December 12th Movement

To endorse & info: (718) 398-1766 / D12m.com



ICAP presents: Sports in Cuba under the U.S. blockade, Feb. 17

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 15, 2021



WEDNESDAY AT 9 AM EST - 10:30 AM EST

ICAP presents: Sports in Cuba under the U.S. blockade
Online Event

Learn about the effect of the U.S. blockade on sports in Cuba. Sports is a right guaranteed by the Cuban Constitution. Hear about it direct from Cuba.

On [Facebook](#)



Baltimore: Support Amazon workers' right to a union, Feb. 20

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 15, 2021



SOLIDARITY
with
BAmazon
WORKERS!

RESPECT Bessemer Alabama Amazon Workers Right to A Union

Car Caravan to Amazon

Sat. Feb. 20 - 3 pm

Gather @ 20th & N. Charles

Socially Distanced Picket & March
For info call or text: 410-218-4835



Baltimore & MD
Amazon Workers
for Justice
"An injury to one,
is an injury to all"



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2021 AT 3 PM EST

Support Amazon workers right to a union

20th & N. Charles (parking lot across from Harriet Tubman Solidarity Center)

Bessemer, Alabama Amazon workers are courageously fighting for a union - in the face of dirty tactics by Amazon bosses.

Please come out and support these workers and tell Bezo's NO we won't stop until these mostly Black women have a voice.

We will car caravan to both the Broening Highway site and then onto the Bethlehem steel area warehouses. Here we will hold a social distancing picket line.

See letter from former Amazon workers:

<https://peoplespowerassembly.org/2021/02/08/open-letter-to-jeff-bezos-the-alabama-amazon-workers/>



Solidarity with hunger strike of Greek political prisoner Dimitris Koufontinas!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

February 15, 2021

The Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper in the U.S. send solidarity and support to Greek political prisoner Dimitris Koufontinas. Since 2002, Koufontinas has been imprisoned for his role in the Revolutionary Organization 17 November. For over 40 years, Koufontinas and his comrades have struggled for workers' liberation and socialism in Greece.

During his time in prison, Koufontinas has waged four hunger strikes in the hopes of improving horrific prison conditions. Greek authorities are attempting to move Koufontinas to a "hard prison" as retribution for his politics. This "hard prison" will no doubt include solitary confinement and torture. In response to this draconian measure, Dimitris is again on hunger strike.

The struggle of Dimitrus Koufontinas against capitalist greed and for the working class is our struggle as well. The SUP and Struggle-La Lucha stand in unflinching solidarity and send revolutionary love to Dimitris in his ongoing fight against political repression.

February 12, 2021

Friday, February 12, 2021: International day of solidarity with the hunger strike of Dimitris Koufontinas

Call by the Solidarity Assembly with Dimitris Koufontinas

At the end of last December, the Greek government approved a reform of the national penitentiary system that, in addition to other measures that worsen prison conditions, establishes that those convicted of terrorism cannot access “rural prisons,” more “open” institutions to which long-term prisoners have access. The approval of this law has led to the immediate transfer of political prisoner Dimitris Koufontinas from the rural prison of Kassevitia.

Dimitris is a comrade convicted for participating in the Revolutionary Organization 17 November (17N), in prison since 2002. The new set of laws stipulates that inmates in rural prisons are reclassified and then transferred to the last prison they were in. In Dimitris’s case it should have been the Athenian prison of Korydallos. However, the prison administration decided to transfer him, manipulating the transfer papers, to Domokos prison. Although there are no differentiated circuits in Greece, in recent years, the prison administration has turned Domokos into a “hard” prison.

Such a punitive transfer is aimed at striking a comrade who has always struggled: as a free man, in courtrooms, in prison. Since his capture he has participated in

numerous protests and has been on four hunger strikes. This repressive maneuver is not only aimed at annihilating Dimitris Koufontinas, but also forms part of the Greek state's repressive project: crushing the most radical and combative parts of society to avoid the possibility of future conflicts.

Faced with the transfer, Dimitris Koufontinas decided to strive once again, using his body as a weapon of last resort. [Since January 8, he has begun a hunger strike](#), which will continue indefinitely until he is transferred to Korydallos prison. As the strike continues, [the comrade is in a critical and precarious condition](#) in Lamia hospital: according to the doctors he could collapse at any moment.

During the strike there were many initiatives and solidarity actions throughout Greece and beyond: protests, demos, wall writings, banners, actions against multiple objectives (politicians, banks, post offices, etc.). But time is running out and now we think extra efforts are needed.

Dimitris's struggle is also the struggle of each of us. The creation and expansion of international ties is as crucial as ever, so we are calling for an INTERNATIONAL day of solidarity and action on FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12 to support Dimitris Koufontinas.

THE DEMANDS OF THE HUNGER STRIKE MUST BE IMMEDIATELY ACCEPTED
INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY IS OUR WEAPON

Athens, February 7, 2021

Source: [Anti-Imperialist Front](#)



Why Amazon is fighting so hard to stop warehouse workers from unionizing

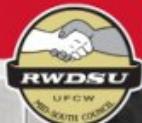
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BAmazonUnion

AMAZON UNION NOW!

When workers come together to form a union, they win dignity and respect at work. We, the worker-driven organizing committee at Amazon in Bessemer, Alabama are fighting for just that. Together we can win a real seat at the table with Amazon, make our working conditions safer, fight for needed benefits and ensure good jobs in our community.



**Are you interested in joining our BAmazon Union?
Text WATCH to (646) 600-5355 today to learn more.**

Signing a Union Authorization Card is the first step towards forming a union that will bring us dignity and respect at work. Text SIGN to (646) 600-9921 to sign one now.

Want to learn more?

Visit our website to learn more about how you can join us and support changes to our workplace. Or watch a video now...

Snap to learn more about our union!

**WATCH
A VIDEO**



@BAMAZONUNION

#BAMAZONUNION

WWW.BAMAZONUNION.ORG

Thousands of warehouse workers at an Amazon plant in Bessemer, Alabama, are at the center of a potentially game-changing union vote taking place right now. On February 8, the warehouse workers were sent ballots by mail to decide over the next seven weeks if they want to join the [Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union](#) (RWDSU). Just getting to this point was a major victory considering the aggressive union busting by the world's largest retailer and the fact that employees are working during a pandemic. If workers vote affirmatively, they would have the first unionized Amazon workplace in the United States.

Stuart Appelbaum, the president of the RWDSU, described to me in an [interview](#) the shocking details of what he calls "the most aggressive anti-union effort I've ever seen," aimed at the 5,800-strong workforce. "They are doing everything they possibly can," he said. The company has been "bombarding people with propaganda throughout the warehouse. There are signs and banners and posters everywhere, even in the bathroom stalls."

According to Appelbaum, the company is also texting its workers throughout the course of the day urging a "no" vote and pulling people into "captive-audience" meetings. Unsurprisingly, Amazon is resorting to the most commonly told lie about unions: that it will cost workers more money to be in a union than not. One [poster](#) pasted on the wall of the warehouse claims, "you already know the union would charge you almost \$500 a year in dues." But Alabama is a "right-to-work" state where workers cannot be compelled to join a union if they are hired into a union shop, nor can they be required to pay dues.

Complementing its heavy-handed in-person union-busting efforts is a [slick](#) website that the company created, [DoItWithoutDues.com](#), where photos of happy workers giving thumbs-up signs create a veneer of contentment at the company. On its site, Amazon innocently offers its version of "facts" about a union that include scare-mongering reminders of how joining a union would give no guarantee of job security

or better wages and benefits—with no mention of how Amazon certainly does not guarantee those things either.

On the [company's own list](#) of “Global Human Rights Principles,” Amazon states, “We respect freedom of association and our employees’ right to join, form, or not to join a labor union or other lawful organization of their own selection, without fear of reprisal, intimidation, or harassment.”

But in a page out of [Donald Trump](#) and the Republicans’ playbook, the [company tried to insist](#) that even in the middle of a deadly pandemic, the union vote must be “conducted manually, in-person, making it easy for associates to verify and cast their vote in close proximity to their workplace.” The National Labor Relations Board rejected Amazon’s appeal for a one-day physical election.

Ballots were mailed out to workers on February 8, and the union and its advocates are shrewdly using the seven-week-long voting period to campaign and encourage workers to vote “yes.” But Amazon is also continuing its efforts at countering the RWDSU. Organizers in Bessemer had taken to engaging the workers while they stopped at a red light upon leaving the Amazon warehouse. But the company, according to Appelbaum, “had the city change the traffic light so our organizers wouldn’t be able to speak to them.” (A statement from Bessemer city [denies](#) the claim.)

So aggressive are Amazon’s anti-union tactics that 50 members of Congress sent the company a warning [letter](#) saying, “We ask that you stop these strong-arm tactics immediately and allow your employees freely to exercise their right to organize a union.” Even the company’s own investors are so shocked by the tactics that more than 70 of them signed on to [a letter](#) urging Amazon to remain “neutral” in the vote.

The path to this union vote was paved by staggeringly high inequality that worsened during the pandemic as workers were stripped of their insultingly low [hazard-bonus](#)

of \$2 an hour while the company [reaped massive gains](#) over the past year. CEO and soon-to-be “[Executive Chair](#)” of Amazon, Jeff Bezos is the world’s second-richest man. He is now worth a mind-boggling [\\$188 billion](#) and saw his wealth increase by \$75 billion, over the past year alone—the same time period that about [20,000 of his workers](#) tested positive for the coronavirus.

Bezos’ announcement that he was moving into a new role at the company came on the same day that the Federal Trade Commission announced Amazon had stolen nearly [\\$62 million in tips](#) from drivers working for its “Flex” program. Appelbaum speculated that “what Bezos was trying to do was to create a distraction just like Trump would do,” and that “instead of focusing on the \$62 million they stole from their drivers, people would talk about the fact that Bezos was getting a new title.”

Appelbaum sees the historic union vote in Bessemer as more than just a labor struggle. “Eighty-five percent of the people who work at the facility are African American. We see this being as much a civil rights struggle as a labor struggle,” he said. Indeed, conditions at the warehouse are so shocking that they sound like a modern-day, technologically enabled incarnation of slavery. “People were being dehumanized and mistreated by Amazon,” said the union president. He explained, “people get their assignments from a robot, they’re disciplined by an app on their phone, and they’re fired by text message. Every motion they make is being surveilled.”

Union advocates are countering Amazon’s combative anti-union efforts with their own information war. In addition to organizers talking to the warehouse workers in Bessemer every chance they get, an informational website [Bamazonunion.org](#) shares data from various studies about the dangerous working conditions in Amazon facilities. The site reminds workers that unions are able to win contracts where workers can only be fired for “just cause” and not on the whim of managers; that complaints against the company can be filed via formal grievances; and that wages

and benefits are negotiated collectively.

As a proud union member of [SAG-AFTRA](#), my colleagues and I at KPFK Pacifica Radio have benefited regularly from such protections even against a small nonprofit public radio station struggling to make ends meet. When faced with a ruthless for-profit corporation that has built its empire on the backs of a nonunionized workforce, Amazon's workers are on the front lines of those who most need the protections a union can provide.

"This election is the most important union election in many, many years because it's not just about this one Amazon facility in Alabama," said Appelbaum. "This election is really about the future of work, what the world is going to look like going forward. Amazon is transforming industry after industry, and they're also transforming the nature of work," he said. Indeed, the level to which Amazon has fought against unionization at just one warehouse in Alabama is an indication of how important it is to the company that its workers remain powerless.

This article was produced by [Economy for All](#), a project of the Independent Media Institute.

Sonali Kolhatkar is the founder, host and executive producer of "[Rising Up With Sonali](#)," a television and radio show that airs on Free Speech TV and Pacifica stations. She is a writing fellow for the [Economy for All](#) project at the Independent Media Institute.

