

# Why was the election so close?

written by Struggle - La Lucha

November 8, 2020



Striking workers picket Trump International Hotel in 2016. The transformation of Las Vegas into a union town is why Nevada voted against Trump.

While Trump is still trying to steal the election, he lost the popular vote by over four million ballots. Black, Indigenous and Latinx voters were key to Trump's defeat. But why was it so damn close?

For five years, Donald Trump has been on the national stage spreading hate. His

administration killed tens of thousands by its deliberate mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

So why did more than 70 million people vote for this dangerous racist fool?

Trump's election campaign was the reaction to the Black Lives Matter movement that swept the United States. At least 20 million people took to the streets following the police murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

In small towns never reached by the Great Migration of African Americans — like Waupaca, Wis. — people came out to demonstrate against racism. Many of them were white. If the election had been held two months earlier, Trump would have been swamped by millions more votes.

Instead, a stagnant reservoir of people continued to be saturated by the race hate of Fox News and talk radio bigots. Political consciousness always lags behind present conditions and needs.

There's a French saying that the dead grip the living. That doesn't just apply to the 18th century relic called the Electoral College, which was devised by slave masters. The not-so-dead hand of bigotry used to justify the African Holocaust also cast a vote for Trump.

This counterrevolution to Black Lives Matter was allowed to metastasize like a cancer. Biden didn't slow it down when he urged cops to shoot people in their legs instead of their chest or head.

The support of reactionaries, like former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, was eagerly sought by the Democratic Party establishment. Snyder was one of the criminals responsible for the lead poisoning of children in Flint, Mich. How was his endorsement supposed to help win the votes of poor and working people for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris?

## **‘Law and order’ on the ballot**

Trump made the election a referendum on racism. He attacked the Black Lives Matter movement and cheered the assassination by U.S. marshals of anti-fascist activist Michael Reinhoehl. Trump supporters declared the killer of two anti-racists in Kenosha, Wis., to be a hero.

Police across the country mobilized for Trump. Minneapolis; Portland, Ore.; and Kenosha, Wis. — cities where people rebelled against the cops — were demonized by Trump and his cheerleaders at Fox.

White people account for at least three-quarters of the population in Minnesota, Oregon and Wisconsin. Despite Trump’s race-baiting, the White House bleach salesman lost all three states.

The capitalist economic crisis, which was beginning even before the pandemic broke out, also benefited Trump.

Many people think massive unemployment will automatically cause workers to rebel. But it can also demoralize and disorient. Because of widespread housing segregation, the main contact of many white workers with Asian, Black, Indigenous and Latinx people is on the job. Being fired severs that connection.

The thousands of union strongholds that were destroyed by deliberate deindustrialization also helps political reaction. The United Mine Workers’ loss of thousands of members in West Virginia was a big reason for that state’s move to the right.

“Law and order” was first used as a slogan in the 1968 presidential election. Back then, the labor movement was much stronger. It waged a last-minute fight that dialed down the vote in the North for the segregationist George Wallace, who was running for president.

A half-century later, the big losses in union membership because of automation and plant closings made it that much easier for Donald Trump to get to the White House.

The 1992 closing of the Bethlehem Steel works in Johnstown, Pa., threw thousands of union members out of work. It helps explain why 68 percent of the vote there in Cambria County is going for Trump.

On the other hand, the transformation of Las Vegas into a union town is why Nevada voted against Trump.

### **Don't starve, fight!**

It's been over three months since the last federal supplemental unemployment check went to workers. Bans on evictions are scheduled to be lifted with families being thrown on the street.

Meanwhile a thousand people a day are dying of the coronavirus.

Things won't be magically turned around if Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are elected. Working and oppressed people have to mobilize.

The only reason Congress approved the \$600-per-week unemployment checks was because capitalists feared millions of workers being suddenly fired. We have to make them fear us again.

Ninety years ago, when the Great Depression broke out, there was no unemployment compensation or food stamps (now called SNAP benefits).

The Communist Party and Unemployed Councils raised the slogan, "Don't starve, fight!" Millions of people fought for jobs and the right to organize unions.

We have to do the same thing today. Struggle is the only way forward.

Special, special thanks to Black, Indigenous and Latinx voters who made the difference in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nevada and Arizona. They punched Trump in the nose!



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# **Minnesota: 646 arrested at ‘Don’t Let Trump Steal the Election’ march**

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On the night of November 4, over 30 organizations and over 1000 people came together to march against Trump’s attempts to steal the election. As the community marched on to Interstate 94, the authorities moved in, without any warning, and refused to let the crowd leave the freeway. All participants were arrested, including children.

This is the first time in five years — since the murder of Jamar Clark — that the cops

have harassed families and community members on such a mass scale. But, despite the intimidation by police, protesters stayed calm and organized, holding the space with speeches, chants and a marathon dance party.

Many livestreamed the incident and made calls to local politicians to question the glaring First Amendment violations.

The original demands for the march were a call for a People's Mandate to address the triple pandemic of racism, COVID-19 and recession. Primarily, the march focused on protesting Trump's unconstitutional theft of the election, but also recognized that much work needed to be done to secure our rights even if Biden took the presidency.

Many participants in the protest were from the labor movement and had worked hard to defeat Trump and all he stands for. They are teachers, office workers, library staff, health care workers, cleaners and cooks.

In addition to stopping Trump from stealing the elections and the NAARPR demands, protest organizers now demand that all charges against demonstrators are dropped and that the cars impounded be released without fees.

According to a statement from the Twin Cities Coalition 4 Justice 4 Jamar, "We continue to fight for and demand community control of police so that police can no longer infringe on our First Amendment rights as they did today."

Source: [Fight Back! News](#)



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# **After the election: ‘It’s time to occupy the streets’**

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*Talk given at “Demand a People’s Mandate” rally in New York on Nov. 4, organized by the N.Y. Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.*

As expected, Donald Trump declared himself the winner of the presidential election even before many votes have been counted.

If another country held elections under these conditions, especially a country on U.S. imperialism’s hit list, there would be immediate calls from Washington for military intervention, sanctions and to rerun the vote. But because both the Republican and Democratic parties are loyal to the imperialist system, we don’t hear a peep.

### **Jobs, housing and health care**

Millions of workers are unemployed, hungry, facing eviction from their homes, in

danger of losing health care. Women's reproductive rights and queer rights are on the chopping block. The danger of war grows daily.

More than 233,000 people are dead in the U.S. from COVID-19, a disproportionate number of them Black and Brown people. Winter is looming and the virus is spreading uncontrolled throughout the U.S. How many more people — families, co-workers and community members, prisoners and migrant detainees — will die because of Trump's criminal negligence?

We can't rely on the "official" opposition, the Democrats. The people have tried playing by their rules. The Democratic leaders sabotaged the progressive Bernie Sanders campaign again. Here in New York and all over the country, they backtracked on promises to defund the police and make serious reforms to curb racist police violence. They told the people to hold their noses and vote for Joe Biden.

They couldn't meet the challenge of their own rigged electoral system, the months of voter suppression by Trump and his allies, the threats of the fascist gangs, the sabotage of the Postal Service.

### **Biden has no solutions**

Even if Biden does end up in the White House, he has no solutions to offer poor and working people for the crisis we're facing.

The master's tools can't dismantle the master's house.

Now it's our turn. It's time for a different way — the way working people have used for more than a century to win their demands. It's time to occupy the streets. It's time for a people's strike to shut down the country. It's time to teach Trump, Wall Street, the cops and the white supremacists to fear the people.

It's time to organize, to go to every workplace, union, school, church and mosque, with this message. It's time to stop begging for crumbs and take the whole damn pie.

The Minneapolis uprising and nationwide protests against racist police killings showed the power that the people have when they are fed up and ready to fight back. Now we need to build on that experience to create an organized, united, national fightback to overturn the Trump regime, push back the fascist gangs and the police, defend Black lives and win a People's Mandate!

Occupy the streets! Shut it down! Only the people can overthrow Trump and the system that spawned him.



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## **Lil Wayne's support of Trump: a Black communist responds**

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On Oct. 29, New Orleans-born rap icon Lil Wayne announced his support for Donald

Trump's reelection campaign in a Twitter post that included a photo of himself grinning and making a thumbs-up for the camera alongside the president.

Wayne, now 38, has been a fixture in the hip-hop scene since signing to Cash Money Records at the age of 14 and joins the ranks of 50 Cent, Ice Cube and Kanye West as the latest in a string of high-profile Black (and interestingly, male) musicians to associate themselves with the oppressive regime.

The tweet was met with praise from Trump supporters and scorn from those disappointed in the rapper for selling out.

Among the Twitter backlash for Lil Wayne's support of Trump was a series of responses from notable Chicago-based communist and rapper Noname. [One reads:](#) "Until black celebs change their love of capital, they'll always stifle the revolutionary potential of the people. The system (capitalism) that kills working-class black folks is the same system that makes black celebs rich! They'll never denounce capitalism."



# Estados Unidos celebra elecciones en condiciones que condenaría en otros países

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*La siguiente entrevista con Greg Butterfield de Struggle-La Lucha fue realizada en octubre por miembros del Comité Editorial Colectivo, una red de sitios de noticias comunistas en Rusia y Donbass, y publicada en ruso e inglés por la Universidad de los Trabajadores en Moscú.*

**Comité Editorial Colectivo:** ¿La institución de las elecciones sigue funcionando en el “bastión de la democracia” o es solo un gran espectáculo?

**Greg Butterfield:** Lo caracterizaría como un espectáculo grande y costoso, presentado para los pueblos del mundo y especialmente para los trabajadores y la gente común de los Estados Unidos, para crear una fachada de democracia y desinflar la lucha de clases. Lo que existe en los Estados Unidos es esencialmente una dictadura capitalista de partido único con dos facciones en competencia. Julius Nyerere, el líder anticolonial de Tanzania, lo dijo mejor: “Estados Unidos también es un estado de partido único pero, con la típica extravagancia estadounidense, tienen dos”.

Durante varias décadas, los partidos republicano y demócrata han ido asemejándose más, intensificando la explotación económica, la austeridad y la guerra para defender su imperio en declive. Ambos partidos se han movido constantemente hacia la derecha.

Este año es interesante porque este gran y costoso espectáculo electoral no se

realiza según lo planeado. En particular, la administración Trump y el Partido Republicano no están jugando según las reglas aceptadas de la democracia capitalista en los Estados Unidos que en el pasado han permitido que esta actuación se lleve a cabo con éxito y de manera pacífica. Este es un síntoma de la enorme crisis económica y política que se ha apoderado del sistema capitalista junto con la pandemia global.

Trump está incitando al movimiento fascista supremacista blanco en los Estados Unidos, que es su base de apoyo más fuerte, para que amenacen y aterroricen a sus oponentes, especialmente a los negros y otras minorías nacionales. En muchos lugares, los funcionarios estatales y locales, la policía y otras ramas del estado capitalista, que tienen vínculos estrechos y, a menudo, se superponen con las bandas fascistas, están siendo arrastrados a estos esfuerzos de supresión de votantes. Desde finales de septiembre, los partidarios de Trump han estado interrumpiendo la votación por correo y la votación anticipada con tácticas de intimidación. Existe un temor real de que las bandas armadas puedan acudir a las urnas el día de las elecciones en algunos estados, de la misma manera que han salido a amenazar las protestas contra los asesinatos policiales.

Si cualquier país señalado por Washington como “indeseable” celebrara una elección en tales condiciones, los funcionarios estadounidenses y los medios occidentales desatarían un torrente de llamados a un cambio de régimen, sanciones o intervención militar.

Los demócratas no están exentos de culpa, por supuesto. Nuevamente este año, al igual que en 2016, los demócratas hicieron todo lo posible para sabotear la campaña de Bernie Sanders y sus jóvenes partidarios, que en realidad habían logrado hacer del socialismo un tema de conversación popular en Estados Unidos por primera vez en generaciones. No es el tipo de socialismo que los comunistas queremos, pero aun así, fue una apertura significativa para elevar la conciencia de la clase trabajadora.

Ahora se supone que todo el mundo debe respaldar al racista de derecha Joe Biden como la única alternativa viable al racista de derecha Donald Trump. Sanders ha capitulado nuevamente ante los demócratas, pero muchos de los que hicieron campaña por él han rechazado esta mala elección.

**CEB:** ¿Los estadounidenses de a pie creen en la eficacia de las elecciones y en qué medida participan activamente en ellas? Después de todo, ¿el sistema electoral en sí es indirecto, mientras que la elección se fija en solo dos partidos?

**GB:** La participación en las elecciones de la clase trabajadora y la gente pobre siempre ha sido bastante baja en Estados Unidos en comparación con otros países. En las últimas cuatro elecciones presidenciales ha promediado alrededor del 55 por ciento de los votantes elegibles. Eso se debe a que los gobernantes capitalistas nunca han permitido que se desarrolle una verdadera democracia multipartidista en Estados Unidos como existe en la mayoría de los demás países occidentales. Aquí no hay ningún partido socialdemócrata de masas, mucho menos comunista. A la clase trabajadora no se le permite tener ni siquiera un partido electoral reformista que pueda identificar como propio, que levante sus intereses y demandas. Se supone que los trabajadores siempre deben conformarse con el “mal menor”. Esto genera mucha apatía y desinterés en las elecciones y en la vida política en general.

Todo esfuerzo por desarrollar un tercer partido progresista ha sido aplastado por una combinación de factores. Primero, el complicado y costoso proceso de llegar a las urnas en los 50 estados, cada uno de los cuales tiene sus propias reglas, a menudo completamente arbitrarias y ridículas. En segundo lugar, si un partido aparece en la boleta electoral, los demócratas y los republicanos plantearán desafíos legales para que se inicien si creen que esta alternativa puede generar muchos votos. Y finalmente, después de sentirse frustrados por estos desafíos, la maquinaria demócrata es muy hábil cooptando e incorporando a los movimientos progresistas o a los políticos a sus propias filas.

Este sistema ha existido más o menos intacto desde 1876, cuando el “gran compromiso” entre demócratas y republicanos puso fin a la era de la Reconstrucción revolucionaria después de la Guerra Civil estadounidense y reprimió la lucha por la libertad y la igualdad de los negros. Ha funcionado muy bien para los patronos.

A la hora de elegir presidente, como dijiste, no hay elecciones directas. Muchas personas en todo el mundo e incluso aquí no se dan cuenta de esto. El presidente es elegido por el Colegio Electoral, que fue creado por los fundadores de los Estados Unidos para proteger los intereses de los dueños de esclavos del sur. Aunque finalmente se abolió la esclavitud, el Colegio Electoral no lo fue. Sigue existiendo como una válvula de escape para la clase capitalista, para asegurarse de que tengan la última palabra.

El día de las elecciones, aunque la gente piensa que está votando por un candidato presidencial, en realidad está votando por los delegados del Colegio Electoral. El Colegio Electoral se inclina a favor de estados que son más pequeños, más blancos y más de derecha. Esencialmente, es una forma de privar de sus derechos a la clase trabajadora, especialmente a las minorías nacionales, que se concentran en estados con grandes poblaciones. Solo en los últimos 20 años, dos de cada cinco elecciones presidenciales las han ganado candidatos que perdieron el voto popular: George W. Bush en 2000 y Donald Trump en 2016.

Pero en la última década ha habido un cambio genuino en el número de personas que rechazan este juego. Este sentimiento alimentó las campañas de Bernie Sanders en 2016 y 2020, con muchos partidarios exigiendo que Sanders se separe de los demócratas y se postule de forma independiente, o incluso que forme un nuevo partido progresista. Y considerando el alto nivel de presión en la sociedad para votar por “cualquiera menos Trump” (es decir, por Joe Biden), es significativo que muchas personas se mantengan firmes y rechacen la falsa elección.

**CEB:** ¿Quién nombra a los candidatos, de quién son sus representantes y hay alguno

entre ellos a quien los comunistas deban apoyar?

**GB:** Cada estado tiene su propio sistema para seleccionar delegados a las convenciones nacionales de los dos partidos capitalistas grandes. En teoría, el candidato que tenga más delegados en la convención se convertirá en el nominado del partido. Pero en la práctica, la decisión siempre la toman de arriba hacia abajo los líderes del partido y sus patrocinadores. Las elecciones primarias estatales y los votos de los delegados en las convenciones de los partidos se manipulan de muchas formas, fuera de la vista de los votantes. No es nominado como candidato nacional de los demócratas o republicanos sin demostrar su lealtad a la clase capitalista y sin el apoyo de una parte importante de los capitalistas. Y ciertamente no se puede competir seriamente en una elección presidencial que cuesta millones o incluso miles de millones de dólares sin su apoyo.

A veces es posible que los candidatos progresistas o incluso revolucionarios compitan a nivel local y estatal, aunque se enfrentan a grandes desafíos y hostigamiento. En Nueva York, tenemos a un ex Pantera Negra y activista revolucionario, Charles Barron, quien es miembro de la Asamblea del Estado de Nueva York. Los votantes de su distrito en la comunidad negra de Brooklyn le son muy leales. Es un ejemplo de alguien que trata la arena electoral en la forma prescrita por Lenin, actuando como una “tribuna del pueblo” sin inducirlos a pensar que votar resolverá todos sus problemas. Pero tiene que luchar para ser escuchado y a menudo es objeto de burlas racistas por parte de los medios corporativos.

En la carrera presidencial, hay dos alternativas progresistas en la boleta electoral en algunos estados: el Partido por el Socialismo y la Liberación y el Partido Verde. Algunos comunistas y socialistas fuera de sus propios miembros votarán por estos candidatos como un voto de protesta. Esperamos que en el futuro sea posible construir un frente unido para montar una campaña electoral de izquierda a mayor escala.

**CEB:** ¿Cómo afectaron las protestas de primavera-verano a la carrera electoral? ¿Afectaron la retórica y los programas de los candidatos?

**GB:** El levantamiento masivo y las protestas contra el terror policial racista han tenido un efecto enorme en la carrera presidencial y otras campañas electorales. Por primera vez, los candidatos de ambos partidos capitalistas han tenido que enfrentarse a preguntas sobre la brutalidad policial, el control comunitario, el racismo sistémico y su posición sobre los grupos supremacistas blancos en los debates oficiales. Esto ciertamente no hubiera sucedido sin las poderosas protestas en todo el país que unieron a millones de trabajadores y jóvenes negros, marrones y blancos contra los abusos policiales.

Es irónico que el candidato presidencial demócrata Joe Biden y la candidata a la vicepresidencia Kamala Harris se vean obligados a hacerse pasar por candidatos simpatizantes del movimiento Black Lives Matter. Ambos políticos conservadores de carrera ayudaron a crear y hacer cumplir las políticas que llevaron a la militarización de la policía y al encarcelamiento masivo de negros. Solo pueden salirse con la suya con esta mascarada debido al temor causado por los llamamientos abiertos de Trump a la supremacía blanca violenta y a una mayor represión estatal. Pero muchas personas, especialmente las que participaron en el levantamiento de masas de este verano, no se dejan engañar por ellas. Creo que eso es cierto incluso en el caso de muchas personas que se taparán la nariz y votarán por los demócratas por miedo a Trump.

Nuestro mensaje a la clase trabajadora es que, si bien Trump es un enemigo peligroso, Biden y Harris no tienen soluciones a la crisis del terrorismo policial en las comunidades negras y marrones. La única forma de acabar con el terror policial es que la gente se quede en las calles, que continúe organizando y construyendo el movimiento en nuestros lugares de trabajo, escuelas y comunidades, y creando nuestros propios cuerpos de autodefensa en el espíritu del Partido Panteras Negras.

**CEB:** ¿Las elecciones de este año se llevarán a cabo pacíficamente o es posible una turbulencia masiva?

**GB:** Nos estamos preparando para la posibilidad de violencia en las urnas y luego por parte de grupos fascistas y el estado, y para protestas masivas si Trump intenta permanecer en el cargo incluso si pierde la votación.

Trump ha dicho muchas veces que puede rechazar los resultados de las elecciones si no le gusta el resultado. Trump ha puesto en duda la legitimidad de votar por correo a pesar de la pandemia y ha intentado manipular el funcionamiento interno del servicio postal para retrasar los votos por correo en estados clave. Los republicanos están presentando demandas en muchos estados para intentar descartar las boletas electorales por correo. La Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos está dominada por una mayoría de extrema derecha que podría tener la última palabra en estos casos.

No hay duda de que las masas populares, y la clase trabajadora en particular, quieren que Trump salga. Están hartas de sus llamados al racismo y la represión de las personas que protestan por la justicia racial. Están agotadas por su negativa a tomar medidas serias para detener la pandemia de COVID-19, que ha matado a más personas en Estados Unidos que en cualquier otro lugar. Y están sufriendo por su negativa a hacer que los ricos paguen impuestos mientras millones quedan desempleados y desamparados por la crisis económica. Sin mencionar sus amenazas de anular los derechos reproductivos de las mujeres y tantos otros logros obtenidos por las luchas de los trabajadores.

Actualmente, existe una tremenda tensión en la sociedad estadounidense. Todos están nerviosos esperando a ver qué sucederá. Los medios de comunicación han advertido que puede haber una demora en la determinación de los resultados de las elecciones, debido a la gran cantidad de boletas electorales por correo y los desafíos legales en su contra. Si ese es el caso, la olla puede hervir.

Con el gran ejemplo del levantamiento liderado por negros contra los asesinatos policiales a principios de este año, ciertamente existe la posibilidad de protestas masivas si la gente siente que las elecciones le han sido robadas. Al mismo tiempo, las bandas fascistas leales a Trump pueden arremeter con violencia incluso si Trump está claramente derrotado.

Nuestra posición es que la clase trabajadora y su vanguardia no pueden quedarse al margen en esta situación. No apoyamos a los demócratas ni llamamos a los trabajadores a votar por ellos, como han hecho algunos de la izquierda. Pero los comunistas tenemos la responsabilidad de defender los derechos democráticos de la clase trabajadora, especialmente los miembros más oprimidos de nuestra clase, el pueblo negro y otras minorías nacionales, cuyo derecho al voto ha sido negado con tanta frecuencia. Tampoco podemos negar el peligro urgente de los llamados de Trump para volver a las violentas bandas fascistas y agencias policiales en contra del pueblo.

Nos estamos uniendo con otros grupos revolucionarios y progresistas en torno a un llamado para “Ocupar las calles si se roban las elecciones de noviembre”. Esta coalición y muchos otros grupos ya están planeando protestas que comenzarán el día después de las elecciones, el 4 de noviembre.

Si resulta que Trump está claramente derrotado y él lo admite, llamaremos a la gente a protestar por las exigencias de los trabajadores a Biden, ya que sabemos que los demócratas no tienen una solución a la crisis capitalista y tampoco tienen la intención de aliviar la represión.

Quien sea que finalmente se siente en la Casa Blanca el próximo año, estamos convencidos de que la lucha de clases puede, debe y seguirá creciendo.

**CEB:** ¿Hay alguna diferencia entre los candidatos sobre la guerra y la paz, y cómo afectará la victoria de uno u otro al futuro de la política exterior de Estados Unidos y

Washington?

**GB:** Cuando se trata de política internacional, hay menos diferencias entre los candidatos que en cualquier otro lugar. Trump y Biden representan el imperialismo, las sanciones y la guerra. Ambos son campeones de la dominación estadounidense sobre otros países, con solo ligeras diferencias de énfasis y tácticas.

Biden representa una continuación de la era Clinton-Obama, con su especial énfasis en la expansión y subversión de la OTAN dirigida a la Federación de Rusia y otros países postsoviéticos. Ciertamente, no hemos olvidado el papel que Biden desempeñó como ejecutor de Washington en Ucrania después del golpe de Maidan, o cómo alentó la privatización y la austeridad y el uso de bandas fascistas militarizadas contra la gente de Donbass.

El apoyo de Trump en la clase dominante proviene especialmente de los oligarcas del petróleo y el gas, lo que explica su enfoque especial en demonizar a Irán, robar petróleo sirio e intentar múltiples golpes de Estado contra Venezuela.

Ambos candidatos coinciden en mantener una postura bélica contra Cuba, Venezuela, China y la República Popular Democrática de Corea. Ambos son enemigos jurados del pueblo palestino. La mayoría de los comentarios sobre política exterior de Biden van dirigidos a superar a Trump en el anticomunismo y la beligerancia.

**CEB:** ¿Cuán populares son las ideas comunistas en los Estados Unidos hoy? ¿Qué grupos simpatizan más con estas ideas (indígenas, negros, latinos, asiáticos, etc.)?

**GB:** El interés en el socialismo como alternativa a la explotación capitalista ha crecido enormemente en los Estados Unidos. Yo fecharía el comienzo de este cambio en el movimiento Occupy Wall Street en 2011. En ese momento, muchos jóvenes pudieron probar por primera vez la protesta masiva y perspectiva de clase. Algunos

de los organizadores más enérgicos de la actualidad se iniciaron en el movimiento Occupy. La lucha Black Lives Matter, que despegó por primera vez en 2014 y resurgió este año, y las campañas de Bernie Sanders en 2016 y 2020, profundizaron esa conciencia entre una nueva generación.

Las ideas comunistas siempre han tenido la audiencia más comprensiva de los sectores más oprimidos de la clase trabajadora, incluidos los trabajadores negros, latinos, asiáticos, árabes, indígenas y blancos pobres, así como las mujeres y las personas LGBTQ2S. Pero hoy en día hay una capa pequeña pero mensurable de jóvenes entre estos trabajadores que están abrazando más plenamente el comunismo.

Ahora mismo no hay mucha cohesión ideológica u organizativa entre ellos. Gran parte del sentimiento procomunista se limita a los debates en las redes sociales. Pero a diferencia de la década de 1990 y principios de la de 2000, ahora hay un mar en el que los comunistas pueden nadar. Nuestro desafío en el próximo período es consolidar el creciente sentimiento pro comunista y pro socialista y darle forma organizativa. Y dependiendo de lo que ocurra en las próximas semanas y meses, este trabajo puede tener que realizarse en condiciones semi-legales o en algunos casos incluso clandestinas.

**CEB:** Las protestas en los Estados Unidos se han convertido en una ocasión habitual. ¿Influyen en la conciencia de los ciudadanos la idea de que es imposible cambiar la situación de la forma “democrática” aprobada? Mientras que el camino de la “lucha militante” de las masas organizadas parece ser mucho más efectivo.

**GB:** Las personas que se unieron al levantamiento militante contra los asesinatos policiales de este año vieron cómo sus acciones en las calles sembraron el miedo en el corazón de sus enemigos y obligaron al Estado a hacer concesiones, aunque muchas de ellas ya están siendo revertidas. El verano pasado, una encuesta mostró que el incendio de la estación de policía de Minneapolis tuvo más apoyo que

cualquiera de los candidatos presidenciales.

La única razón del gran “espectáculo” electoral es empujar a la gente hacia la idea de que pueden obtener lo que quieren siguiendo las reglas del sistema manipulado. Pero mucha gente ahora está consciente de que éste, está totalmente quebrado. Trump, con su comportamiento maniaco y egoísta y su indiferencia ante el sufrimiento de la gente, ha arrancado la máscara del capitalismo. Los patronos no quieren hacer concesiones al pueblo; solo quieren quitarles más y más para proteger sus ganancias.

Los comunistas en los Estados Unidos tenemos días difíciles por delante. Pero si podemos perseverar y comenzar a encontrar formas de unirnos nosotros mismos y a nuestra clase contra nuestro enemigo común, también tendremos grandes oportunidades por delante.



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## U.S. holds elections in conditions it

# would condemn in other countries

written by Struggle - La Lucha

November 8, 2020

*The following interview with Struggle-La Lucha's Greg Butterfield was conducted in October by members of the Collective Editorial Board, a network of communist news sites in Russia and Donbass, and published in Russian and English by the Workers' University in Moscow.*

**Collective Editorial Board:** Is the institution of elections still working in the "stronghold of democracy," or it is just a big show?

**Greg Butterfield:** I would characterize it as a big, expensive show, put on for the people of the world and especially for the workers and common people of the United States, to create the façade of democracy and deflate the class struggle. What exists in the United States is essentially a one-party capitalist dictatorship with two competing factions. Julius Nyerere, the Tanzanian anti-colonial leader, said it best: "The United States is also a one-party state but, with typical American extravagance, they have two of them."

For several decades, the Republican and Democratic parties have drawn closer together, intensifying economic exploitation, austerity and war to defend their declining empire. Both parties have moved steadily to the right.

This year is interesting because this big, expensive election show is not being performed as planned. In particular, the Trump administration and the Republican Party are not playing by the accepted rules of capitalist democracy in the U.S. that in the past have allowed this performance to be staged successfully and peacefully. This is a symptom of the enormous economic and political crisis that has engulfed the capitalist system in tandem with the global pandemic.

Trump is inciting the fascist, white supremacist movement in the U.S., which is his strongest base of support, to threaten and terrorize his opponents, especially Black people and other national minorities. In many places, state and local officials, the police and other arms of the capitalist state, who have close ties to and often overlap with the fascist gangs, are being pulled into these voter suppression efforts. Since late September, Trump supporters have been disrupting mail-in voting and early voting with intimidation tactics. There is a real fear that the armed gangs may come out to the polls on election day in some states, the same way they have come out to threaten the protests against police killings.

If any country targeted by Washington as “undesirable” held an election under such conditions, U.S. officials and the Western media would unleash a torrent of calls for regime change, sanctions or military intervention.

The Democrats are not exempt from blame, of course. Again this year, as in 2016, the Democrats did everything in their power to sabotage the Bernie Sanders campaign and his youthful supporters, who had actually succeeded in making socialism a topic of popular conversation in the U.S. for the first time in generations. Not the kind of socialism we communists mean, but still, it was a significant opening for raising working-class consciousness.

Now everyone is supposed to back right-wing, racist Joe Biden as the only viable alternative to right-wing, racist Donald Trump. Sanders has capitulated to the Democrats again, but many of those who campaigned for him have rejected this bad choice.

**CEB:** Do ordinary Americans believe in the effectiveness of the elections, and how actively do they participate in them? After all, the election system itself is indirect, while the choice is fixed on just two parties?

**GB:** Participation in the elections by working-class and poor people has always been

pretty low in the U.S. compared with other countries. In the last four presidential elections it has averaged around 55 percent of eligible voters. That's because the capitalist rulers have never allowed a real multiparty democracy to develop in the U.S. as it exists in most other Western countries. There is no mass social-democratic party here, much less a communist one. The working class is not allowed to have even a reformist electoral party that it can identify as its own, that raises its interests and demands. The workers are always supposed to settle for the "lesser evil." This creates a lot of apathy and disinterest in elections, and in political life generally.

Every effort to develop a progressive third party has been smashed by a combination of factors. First, the complicated, expensive process of getting on the ballot in all 50 states, which each have their own rules, often completely arbitrary and ridiculous. Second, if a party does get on the ballot, the Democrats and Republicans will mount legal challenges to get them kicked off if they feel this alternative may draw a lot of votes. And finally, after they are frustrated by these challenges, the Democratic machine is very skilled at co-opting progressive movements or politicians into its own ranks.

This system has existed more or less intact since 1876, when the "great compromise" between the Democrats and Republicans ended the era of revolutionary Reconstruction after the U.S. Civil War and repressed the struggle for Black freedom and equality. It has worked very well for the bosses.

When it comes to choosing the president, as you said, there are no direct elections. Many people around the world and even here don't realize this. The president is chosen by the Electoral College, which was set up by the founders of the U.S. to protect the interests of the Southern slave owners. Although slavery was eventually abolished, the Electoral College was not. It continues to exist as a safety valve for the capitalist class, to make sure they have the final say.

On election day, although people think they are casting their vote for a presidential candidate, they are actually voting for delegates to the Electoral College. The Electoral College is weighted in favor of states that are smaller, whiter and more right-wing. Essentially, it is a way to disenfranchise the working class, especially national minorities, who are concentrated in states with large populations. In just the last 20 years, two out of five presidential elections have been won by candidates who lost the popular vote: George W. Bush in 2000 and Donald Trump in 2016.

But in the past decade there has been a genuine change in the number of people who reject this game. This sentiment fueled the Bernie Sanders campaigns in 2016 and 2020, with many supporters demanding that Sanders break from the Democrats and run independently, or even form a new progressive party. And considering the high level of pressure in society to vote for “anybody but Trump” (that is, for Joe Biden), it’s significant that many people are sticking to their guns and rejecting the false choice.

**CEB:** Who nominates the candidates, whose representatives are they, and are there any among them whom communists need to support?

**GB:** Each state has its own system for selecting delegates to the national conventions of the two big capitalist parties. In theory, whichever candidate has the most delegates at the convention will become the party’s nominee. But in practice, the decision is always made from the top down by the leaders of the party and their funders. The state primary elections and delegates’ votes at the party conventions are manipulated in many ways, out of sight of the voters. You don’t get nominated as the national candidate of the Democrats or Republicans without proving your loyalty to the capitalist class and without the support of a significant section of the capitalists. And you certainly can’t compete seriously in a presidential election that costs millions or even billions of dollars without their support.

It is sometimes possible for progressive or even revolutionary candidates to compete

at the local and state level, though they face great challenges and red-baiting. In New York, we have a former Black Panther and revolutionary activist, Charles Barron, who is a member of the New York State Assembly. The voters in his district in Brooklyn's Black community are very loyal to him. He is an example of someone who treats the electoral arena in the way Lenin prescribed, acting as a "tribune of the people" without misleading them into thinking that voting will solve all their problems. But he has to struggle to be heard and is often subject to racist hazing by the corporate media.

In the presidential race, there are two progressive alternatives on the ballot in some states: the Party for Socialism and Liberation and the Green Party. Some communists and socialists outside their own members will vote for these candidates as a protest vote. We hope that in the future it will be possible to build a united front to mount a larger-scale leftist electoral campaign.

**CEB:** How did the spring-summer protests affect the election race? Did they affect the rhetoric and programs of the candidates?

**GB:** The mass uprising and protests against racist police terror have had an enormous effect on the presidential race and other electoral campaigns. For the first time, the candidates of both capitalist parties have had to face questions about police brutality, community control, systemic racism and their position on white supremacist groups at official debates. This certainly would not have happened without the powerful protests across the country that united millions of Black, Brown and white workers and youth against police abuses.

It's ironic that Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris are forced to pose as the candidates sympathetic to the Black Lives Matter movement. Both of these conservative career politicians helped to create and enforce the policies that led to the militarization of the police and mass incarceration of Black people. They can only get away with this masquerade because

of the fear caused by Trump's open appeals to violent white supremacy and for more state repression. But many people, especially those who participated in the mass uprising this summer, are not fooled by them. I think that's true even of many people who will "hold their nose" and vote for the Democrats out of fear of Trump.

Our message to the working class is that, while Trump is a dangerous enemy, Biden and Harris have no solutions to the crisis of police terrorism in Black and Brown communities. The only way to end police terror is for the people to stay in the streets, to continue organizing and building the movement in our workplaces, schools and communities, and to create our own bodies of self-defense in the spirit of the Black Panther Party.

**CEB:** Will this year's elections be held peacefully, or is mass turbulence possible?

**GB:** We are preparing for the possibility of violence at the polls and afterward by fascist groups and the state, and for mass protests if Trump tries to stay in office even if he loses the vote.

Trump has said many times that he may reject the election results if he doesn't like the outcome. Trump has cast doubt on the legitimacy of voting by mail despite the pandemic and has attempted to manipulate the inner workings of the postal service to delay mail votes in key states. The Republicans are filing lawsuits in many states to try to throw out mail ballots. The U.S. Supreme Court is dominated by a far-right majority that could have the final say in these cases.

There is no doubt that the masses of the people, and the working class in particular, want Trump out. They are fed up with his appeals to racism and repression of people protesting for racial justice. They are exhausted by his refusal to take serious measures to stem the COVID-19 pandemic, which has killed more people in the U.S. than anywhere else. And they are hurting from his refusing to make the rich pay taxes while millions are left unemployed and destitute by the economic crisis. Not to

mention his threats to overturn women's reproductive rights and so many other gains won by the workers' struggles.

There's tremendous tension in U.S. society today. Everyone is on edge waiting to see what will happen. The media have cautioned that there may be a delay in determining the election results, because of the large number of mail-in ballots and the legal challenges against them. If that's the case, the pot may boil over.

With the great example of the Black-led uprising against police killings earlier this year, there is certainly the possibility of mass protests if the people feel that the election has been stolen from them. At the same time, the fascist gangs loyal to Trump may lash out with violence even if Trump is clearly beaten.

Our position is that the working class and its vanguard can't stand aside in this situation. We don't support the Democrats or call on workers to vote for them, as some on the left have done. But communists have a responsibility to defend the democratic rights of the working class, especially the most oppressed members of our class, the Black people and other national minorities, whose right to vote has so often been denied. Nor can we deny the urgent danger of Trump's appeals to turn violent fascist gangs and police agencies against the people.

We are uniting with other revolutionary and progressive groups around a call to ["Occupy the streets if the November election is stolen."](#) This coalition and many other groups are already planning for protests starting on the day after the elections, Nov. 4.

If it turns out that Trump is clearly defeated and he concedes, we will call people out to protest for the workers' demands on Biden, since we know the Democrats have no solution to the capitalist crisis and no intention of easing the repression either.

Whoever ultimately sits in the White House next year, we are convinced that the

class struggle can, must and will continue to grow.

**CEB:** Is there any difference at all between the candidates on war and peace, and how will the victory of one or the other affect the future of the United States and Washington's foreign policy?

**GB:** When it comes to international policy, there is less difference between the candidates than anywhere else. Trump and Biden both represent imperialism, sanctions and war. Both are champions of U.S. domination over other countries, with only slight differences of emphasis and tactics.

Biden represents a continuation of the Clinton-Obama era, with its special emphasis on NATO expansion and subversion aimed at the Russian Federation and other post-Soviet countries. We certainly haven't forgotten the role Biden played as Washington's enforcer in Ukraine after the Maidan coup, or how he encouraged privatization and austerity and the use of militarized fascist gangs against the people of Donbass.

Trump's support in the ruling class comes especially from the oil and gas oligarchs, which accounts for his special focus on demonizing Iran, stealing Syrian oil and attempting multiple coups against Venezuela.

Both candidates agree on maintaining a war-like posture against Cuba, Venezuela, China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Both are sworn enemies of the Palestinian people. Most of Biden's foreign policy comments have aimed at out-doing Trump at anti-communism and belligerence.

**CEB:** How popular are communist ideas in the United States today? Which groups are more sympathetic to these ideas (Indigenous, Blacks, Latinx, Asians, etc.)?

**GB:** Interest in socialism as an alternative to capitalist exploitation has grown tremendously in the U.S. I would date the beginning of this change to the Occupy

Wall Street movement in 2011. At that time, many young people got their first taste of mass protest and a class perspective. Some of the most energetic organizers today got their start in the Occupy movement. The Black Lives Matter struggle, which first took off in 2014 and reemerged this year, and the Bernie Sanders campaigns in 2016 and 2020, deep-end that consciousness among a new generation.

Communist ideas have always had the most sympathetic hearing from the most oppressed sectors of the working class, including Black, Latinx, Asian, Arab, Indigneous and poor white workers, as well as women and the LGBTQ2S people. But today there is a small but measurable layer of young people from among these workers who are more fully embracing communism.

Right now there is not much ideological or organizational cohesion among them. Much of the pro-communist sentiment is confined to social media debates. But unlike the 1990s and early 2000s, there is now a sea for communists to swim in. Our challenge in the next period is to consolidate the growing pro-communist and pro-socialist sentiment and give it organizational form. And depending on what happens in the coming weeks and months, this work may have to be carried out under semilegal or in some cases even underground conditions.

**CEB:** Protests in the United States have become a regular occasion. Do they influence citizens' awareness of the idea that it is impossible to change the situation in the approved "democratic" way? While the path of "militant struggle" of the organized masses seems to be much more effective.

**GB:** People who joined in the militant uprising against police killings this year saw how their actions in the streets sowed fear in the hearts of their enemies and forced the state to make concessions, although many of those are already being stolen back. Last summer, a poll showed that the burning of the Minneapolis police station had more support than either of the presidential candidates!

The whole reason for the big election “show” is to push people back toward the idea that they can get what they want by following the rules of the rigged system. But so many people are now aware that it is totally bankrupt. Trump, with his maniacal and egotistical behavior and indifference to people’s suffering, has torn the mask off capitalism. The bosses don’t want to grant concessions to the people; they only want to take more and more from them to protect their profits.

Communists in the U.S. have difficult days ahead of us. But if we can persevere, and start finding ways to unite ourselves and our class against our common foe, there are great opportunities ahead as well.

[Russian version](#)

Source: [Workers’ University](#)



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## Why is Trump wrecking the census?

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
November 8, 2020

The 2020 U.S. census failed to count millions of people despite the best efforts of

Census Bureau employees. Black, Indigenous and Latinx people — and poor people in general — were most likely to be missed. Deliberate sabotage by the Trump regime is to blame.

Schools and cities will be cheated out of federal funds. Some states, including Rhode Island, may be unfairly deprived of seats in the House of Representatives.

Since the initial census in 1790, this is the first one that has been carried out while a pandemic was raging. There were Indigenous people living on reservations that census takers weren't able to reach.

Six percent of people in northwestern Louisiana haven't been counted. Jackson, Miss., Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba estimates that the Black-majority city loses \$1,000 in funding for every person not counted.

Obviously the census needed more time. [Mayor Lumumba thinks](#) that just another two weeks would have been enough to complete the job.

The Trump administration refused, and on Oct. 13 a [majority of the U.S. Supreme Court](#) agreed to terminate the census. Justice Sonia Sotomayor disagreed. She said that “the harms associated with an inaccurate census are avoidable and intolerable.”

For more than a year, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross — whose department oversees the census — tried to include [questions about citizenship and immigration status](#). This attempt to intimidate millions of workers from filling out the census was stopped by the courts.

Ross was trying to duplicate what Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani did in his 1993 New York City mayoral campaign. Giuliani had Roosevelt Avenue in heavily immigrant populated Jackson Heights, Queens, plastered with posters, warning of penalties for “vote fraud.” The effort was meant to frighten immigrant voters from going to the

polls.

Now, Ross is trying to stop undocumented immigrants from being counted for purposes of congressional apportionment. If Ross is successful, California, New Jersey and Texas may each [lose a congressional seat](#).

That's illegal even according to a constitution which was originally [written by slave owners and rich merchants](#). It's typical behavior for [vulture capitalist Wilbur Ross](#), who cheated thousands of retired Bethlehem Steel workers out of their medical benefits.

### **Statistics and the class struggle**

The capitalist government can count turnips but not homeless people. According to Table 38 of the [2012 census of agriculture](#), there were 4,285 acres of turnips in the United States.

But the only reference to homeless people in the 2012 Statistical Abstract of the United States was in Table 575, which gives the number of beds in homeless shelters.

Speculators betting on food prices at Chicago's Board of Trade need to know about crops so they can make a killing from poor harvests and hungry people. They don't want to find out how many homeless children there are.

Such information is embarrassing and considered dangerous to their class rule. The response of capitalists to growing poverty is to suppress news of it.

The 131st edition of the Statistical Abstract that came out in 2012 was the last one published. Government bookstores in federal buildings were shut down. Even if all the same statistics and information are available online, it's still a retreat from the people's right to know.

The coronavirus tragedy is the latest example of this war on truth. [Trump made the fantastic claim](#) that hospitals were inflating the figure of COVID-19 deaths to be larger than they really were.

A big reason for the much higher rates of COVID-19 cases in Black and Latinx communities is overcrowded housing. High rents cause this housing crisis. Many families have to double up because a sister or brother was evicted.

The government labels these doubled-up families as “related subfamilies.” Their estimated number grew almost fourfold from 1980 to 2010, from 1.15 million to 4.3 million families. (Table 59 in the 2012 Statistical Abstract)

That’s over 20 million people living in cramped conditions. The number must have increased in the past decade because of the economic crisis. But the latest figures are ten years old.

### **Disguising poverty**

Workers at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, like those at the Census Bureau, want to do the best job. But the unemployment figures usually cited in the media greatly undercount the actual number of jobless workers.

That’s because if someone works just one hour a week, they’re not officially unemployed. While the BLS also gives figures for those working part time who want full-time jobs, the media give these statistics second billing.

The millions who are not actively looking for work because of health or family reasons are not included in the most cited unemployment rate. Neither are the over two million people in prison, most of whom work for pennies an hour.

Despite these limitations, President Richard Nixon thought the BLS unemployment figures during a recession in 1971 were suspiciously high. [Nixon blamed “a Jewish](#)

[Cabal](#)“ within the BLS and demanded the firing of Jewish employees.

This grotesque bigotry didn’t stop Nixon from shoveling billions to the apartheid state occupying Palestine.

In the late 1890s, V.I. Lenin — the future leader of the Bolshevik Revolution — wrote “The Development of Capitalism in Russia” while in Siberian exile. He wrote about the difficulty of getting accurate statistics.

The labor and people’s movements can’t depend on the capitalists to reveal the truth either. We need to gather our own honest statistics on rising rents, homelessness, unemployment, inflation and poverty.



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## **Facebook illegally shuts down support for protest ‘If Trump steals**

# election'

written by Struggle - La Lucha

November 8, 2020

*Statement from the People's Power Assembly*

On the evening of Oct. 28, 2020, 14 organizers who are affiliated with the Baltimore March and Car Caravan scheduled for Nov. 4 had their Facebook pages shut down. All were administrators or editors on various Facebook pages that endorsed the action, including the Peoples Power Assembly, Youth Against War & Racism, the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper.

This action effectively locked down all of these pages, denying thousands of members their constitutional rights. The Peoples Power Assembly page, which has over 11,000 followers, was shut down, along with several other pages affiliated with the event. Some of the targeted groups, including Struggle-La Lucha and Women In Struggle, are national in scope.

Prior to this lockout, the Peoples Power Assembly's main phone was barraged with harassing calls from Trump supporters and from the Department of Homeland Security connected to the Baltimore Federal Courthouse.

It is important to note that the PPA in Baltimore has led protests of thousands of people since last spring, demanding justice against racism and police terror. There can be no mistake that these actions are an effort to silence that movement.

Sharon Black, an organizer with the Peoples Power Assembly, stated: "We take these attacks very seriously. They are a violation of our constitutional rights and a blatant attempt to shut down organizing for the Nov. 4 march and car caravan in opposition to the possibility of Trump stealing the upcoming election.

“It is also an attempt to silence a ‘People’s Mandate,’ which calls for jobs or income now; stimulus for workers, not billionaires; an end to racism and police terror; community control now; health care for all; no evictions, foreclosures or utility shutoffs; safe work conditions and hazard pay; no wars or sanctions; and feed the people not the Pentagon.

“This unconstitutional and undemocratic attack on our movement is a threat to activists and the general community everywhere. We are monitoring this closely to see if these attacks become more widespread as we get closer to the election.

“At present we will mobilize mass support both locally and nationally against these illegal attacks and also seek legal remedies.

“Our movement is united and strong. We will not be deterred or defeated.”

The Peoples Power Assembly is calling a press conference on Friday, Oct. 30, at 12 noon outside of our offices in front of 2011 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, rain or shine.

***IF TRUMP STEALS THE ELECTION***

**OCCUPY THE  
STREETS**



**MARCH & CAR CARAVAN  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4 AT 3 PM**

***REGARDLESS OF TUESDAY'S OUTCOME  
COME OUT TO DEMAND A PEOPLE'S MANDATE:***

*We need jobs or income now, stimulus for workers not billionaires; an end to racism & police terror, community control now; Health care for all; No evictions, foreclosures, or utility shut offs; Safe work conditions & hazard pay; No war or sanctions, feed the people, not the Pentagon*

**3 PM GATHER @ 20TH & CHARLES STREET  
5 PM RALLY @ MCKELDIN SQUARE & FEDERAL BLDG**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 410-218-4835  
[www.PeoplesPowerAssembly.org](http://www.PeoplesPowerAssembly.org)**



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# **Elections: What's the economy got to do with it? And what we can do about it**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
November 8, 2020



Oct. 28 — In the final days of campaigning before the 2020 elections, every form of media is saturated with advertising for the Democratic and Republican candidates in local, state and national elections.

The focus is mainly on the presidential campaigns. The far-right Trump campaign is openly racist and white supremacist, with Trump's call-out to the neofascist Proud Boys to "stand by." The campaign's slogan is, in the words of the New York Post endorsement of Trump, "Make America Great Again, Again."

In a news segment on NBC covering the Minneapolis uprising after the police murder of George Floyd, a protester responded so correctly to this slogan, opining: "America was never great." Trump's slogan is what might be called a "dog whistle,"

that is, coded language to say, “Make America White Again.”

Joe Biden is running as “the nice guy” against Trump’s threatening authoritarianism. A senior Trump campaign adviser joked that watching Biden feels like “watching an episode of ‘Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.’”

Trump and his campaign are so far right that the conservative, pro-business, pro-war politics of the Democratic candidate have been mostly obscured. Yet Biden is more conservative than Barack Obama; that’s why he was picked to be Obama’s vice president. Biden, who said in the first debate, “I am the Democratic Party,” is already moving the party further right at a time when Bernie Sanders’ “Medicare for All” was most popular in the Democratic primaries.

Biden is the anti-socialist, no matter what Trump says. Biden’s record in the Senate is closely tied to the racist Dixiecrats, and while he says he has moderated that somewhat, it’s this legacy that shapes the Biden Plan. (See the Jackson, Miss., Free Press, [“Joe Biden and the Dixiecrats Who Helped His Career.”](#))

The U.S. electoral system is rigged so that only a Democrat or a Republican can be president. You have no other choice. In this election, the Republican is utterly repulsive to most, the Democrat not so much, but not popular, especially with the young generation.

### **Biden and the fascist danger**

The progressives, socialists and communists calling for a vote for Biden claim that Trump represents fascism while Biden with all his flaws represents bourgeois democracy.

Would a Biden victory push back any fascist threat? The danger of fascism historically grows out of an economic collapse of capitalism. The capitalists have responded to the current crisis by laying off workers and driving down wages.

Unemployment has reached Great Depression levels. The fascist dictators, Hitler, Mussolini and Franco, all came out of the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the working class was organized in major communist and socialist labor unions and parties and fighting for jobs, housing and food.

A Biden administration will not be able to reverse the long-run decay of U.S. capitalism, any more than Trump was able to do. Trump promised to reverse deindustrialization and bring back jobs in the basic industries of the past. But the past is past. There could be a short-term economic upswing, no matter who becomes president, as the current pandemic recession fades. No pandemic lasts forever. And this upswing in the economy may be temporarily boosted if the administration follows Roosevelt-era Keynesian economic stimulus policies. That's the promise of the Green New Deal and MMT (Modern Monetary Theory).

However, a post-COVID economic upswing, even one boosted by MMT stimulation policies, is not the same thing as a major upswing of U.S. capitalism. It would not reverse the long-term general downturn of U.S. capitalism. A Biden administration that fails to reverse capitalism's decline would set the stage for the return of an even more reactionary GOP. This is what happened in the 1980s. Out of the Jimmy Carter "stagflation" years rose the right-wing Reagan regime.

It is a vicious circle of the two-party capitalist system, where the only solution offered is to vote for a candidate that is seen as the "lesser evil."

In Germany in 1932, workers were urged to vote for the "lesser evil" Gen. Paul von Hindenburg, who was said to be loyal to the country's constitution. The slogan "Beat Hitler" meant vote for Hindenburg.

Hindenburg won, but the capitalist economic collapse continued to deepen. More than six million workers were jobless. In 1933, Hindenburg turned over the government to Hitler. As one observer put it, "The people voted for the Lesser Evil

and got both.”

## **Trump boasts of assassination**

President Trump has refused to commit to a peaceful transfer of power should he lose in the Electoral College. This is without precedent in U.S. history.

When Trump was asked by Chris Wallace of Fox News in the first presidential “debate” to condemn white supremacy, he refused to do so. In recent weeks, Trump has made a point of publicly supporting both police and fascists who shoot and even kill Black Lives Matter protesters and their supporters in the streets.

When Wallace asked whether Trump would condemn violence by the fascist Proud Boys, Trump told the fascists to “stand back and stand by.” The GOP has also announced that it will have an army of “poll watchers,” including both off-duty police officers and U.S. special forces, no doubt sprinkled with many fascists, to intimidate and block voters.

Trump has boasted about [the assassination he authorized](#) of an anti-fascist Black Lives Matter supporter in Portland, Ore. Such extrajudicial killings, execution without a trial, are illegal under international law and an expansion of the police-state repression of the popular movement defending Black lives from police terror.

Trump says that as long as mail-in and other “illegal” votes are not counted, there is no way he can lose. Trump makes a completely false claim that the popular vote win by Hillary Clinton in 2016 was because those votes were counted. So Trump has indicated that he will not recognize a “fake” election result that shows him losing to Biden.

## **Preparing a coup**

Trump has set the stage to again pull off the Electoral College trick to claim victory,

winning the Electoral College vote while losing the popular vote. Or to have the Supreme Court select him as victor, as happened in 2000 in the Bush-Gore contest, when George W. Bush lost the popular vote in the country and in Florida, but the court ordered Florida's Electoral College vote to go to Bush, giving him the office of president.

Amy Coney Barrett, the new judge muscled onto the Supreme Court by Trump and the Senate, is tied to the Bush Supreme Court coup. That makes her the third Supreme Court justice who was part of the gang of lawyers working for Bush in Florida to steal the election in 2000. Along with Barrett were now-Chief Justice John Roberts and Brett Kavanaugh.

Rule by the Electoral College and the Supreme Court is an assault on basic democratic rights and voting rights. Bourgeois democracy promises one person, one vote.

Democratic rights are under assault, and not just in the 2020 election. There has been a systematic wave of arrests of young Black Lives Matter activists across the U.S. Many protesters have been hit with severe charges and are facing possible sentences of years in prison or even life sentences.

In a direct attack on the right to protest, Attorney General William Barr said that sedition charges should be used against anti-racist protesters. Sedition means conspiracy and intent to overthrow the U.S. government and can result in 20 years in prison.

Defense of those arrested is being organized and needs to be widened. (See [“Defend activists and organizers under attack! Defend Black lives!”](#) and the [webinar](#) featuring activists fighting state repression across the U.S.)

**Not a democracy**

The U.S., by design, [was not founded as a democracy](#). Democratic rights had to be fought for. The right to vote for all was not won until 1965 with the Voting Rights Act establishing one person, one vote. The Voting Rights Act was then gutted by the Supreme Court in a 2013 ruling that enabled the return of voter suppression.

The U.S. Constitution was written by and for slaveholders. In the words of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the Constitution and its many undemocratic features legalized slavery. At the time, there was no bourgeois democracy anywhere in the world and there were no plans for democracy.

Trump is counting on the slaveholders' Constitution for his claim to the presidency.

Trump's current election strategy includes extensive voter suppression to ensure his reelection in the Electoral College. The Electoral College is an undemocratic institution that was created to ensure the dominance of the slaveholders in the U.S. and continues to do something like that today.

The socialist movement is based, in part, on the fight for basic rights, from the right to vote to the right to protest.

When Victor Berger of the Socialist Party was elected to Congress from Milwaukee in 1910, a key demand was to abolish the Electoral College and the Senate. The anti-democratic Senate is based on the same slaveholders' formula used to create the Electoral College.

In addition, the Socialists called for the abolition of the executive presidency altogether and its replacement by a system where the House of Representatives — the undemocratic Senate having been abolished — would select the head of government, a prime minister, by majority vote.

In a variety of forms, that continues to be a demand coming from supporters of democratic rights. In 2018, John Dingell, the longest-serving member in the history

of Congress, wrote, ["I served in Congress longer than anyone. Here's how to fix it. Abolish the Senate and publicly fund elections."](#)

There have been many proposals to abolish the Senate, the Electoral College and the Supreme Court — all anti-democratic institutions — over the years.

An Electoral College and/or a Supreme Court mandated victory for Trump is not acceptable in any way. The [call for a people's general strike](#) in response is essential.

From the call: "We must act to protect people's rights! Every vote counts, and we will not accept a stolen election, no matter what form it takes, whether it's stolen through a Supreme Court decision, the undemocratic Electoral College or violence by the far-right forces backing Trump.

"If the election is stolen, from Nov. 3, 2020, through Jan. 20, 2021, it will be time for us to be in the streets in such large numbers that the system cannot run."



# The Michigan conspiracy isn't a joke

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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Thirteen fascists were [arrested on Oct. 8](#) for plotting to kidnap and kill Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. There were [also plans to assassinate](#) Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam. Both governors are Democrats.

Most of the initial media coverage of those arrested has portrayed them as bumbling losers. That's despite their use of encrypted communications and plans to use an 800,000 volt taser. Poor and working people should consider the Michigan plot as extremely dangerous.

These fascists are precisely the social material that's used by the wealthy and powerful to terrorize people. Seven of them belong to the Wolverine Watchmen, an armed vigilante group.

Michigan's Barry County [Sheriff Dar Leaf](#) claimed these fascists were merely planning to make a "felony arrest" of Gov. Whitmer. Leaf appeared with some of them at a Grand Rapids rally protesting the public health measures needed to combat the coronavirus. He knows two of the indicted conspirators, Michael and William Null.

Cops and fascists work hand in hand. On Oct. 15, [Newport News, Va., police](#) provided armed members of the ultraright Boogaloo movement with a sound system and chocolate milk.

After a Black father, Jacob Blake, was shot seven times in front of some of his children by Kenosha, Wis., Officer Rusten Sheskey, racist armed vigilantes came to

town. They were welcomed by police and the county sheriff to threaten Black Lives Matter demonstrators. Kyle Rittenhouse killed two anti-racists, seriously wounded another and was allowed to escape Kenosha.

Trump helped incite vigilante violence by tweeting “Liberate Michigan!” on April 17, two days after armed right-wingers converged on Michigan’s state Capitol in Lansing. They wanted the COVID-19 safety shutdown stopped immediately no matter how many Black and Brown people would die in Detroit.

Trump also tweeted “Liberate Virginia!” and “Liberate Wisconsin!” The Wolverine Watchmen planned to take Gov. Whitmer to Wisconsin to be killed.

The Trump supporters were just foot soldiers for the billionaire class who considered the public health measures to be profit-killers. Unlike Black Lives Matter protesters, none of those who were carrying long guns in Lansing were fired upon by the police with rubber bullets or tear gas.

Lifting these restrictions led to [a massive increase](#) in COVID-19 infections in the Upper Midwest. In Wisconsin’s Menominee County, home to the Menominee Nation, one out of every 22 people has caught the coronavirus, twice the U.S. rate.

### **Shock troops for the ruling class**

To paraphrase the political prisoner Jamil Al-Amin, once known as H. Rap Brown, using thugs to attack a people’s movement is as American as apple pie.

Thousands of Black people were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan during the overthrow of Reconstruction state governments in the 1870s.

Hundreds of Black people were murdered by mobs in East St. Louis, Ill., in 1917 and Tulsa, Okla., in 1921. During 1919, white racist mobs in Chicago and other cities were allowed to kill Black people. Police only intervened after Black people fought

back.

In 1961, Anniston, Ala. police gave Ku Klux Klan members 15 minutes to try to kill Freedom Riders who were traveling together in defiance of segregation laws. Their Greyhound bus was set on fire.

Klansman Byron De La Beckwith assassinated Mississippi NAACP Field Secretary Medgar Evers in 1963. [Beckwith was acquitted](#) after Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett came to court to shake hands with him in front of the all-white jury. It was only in 1994 that Beckwith was convicted on federal charges for killing Medgar Evers.

The labor movement has also been a victim of mob violence.

Industrial Workers of the World organizer Frank Little was lynched by vigilantes in 1917 for leading a strike of copper miners in Butte, Mont. IWW member Wesley Everett was murdered by a mob in Centralia, Wash., in 1919.

The Black Legion, which despite its name was a split-off from the Ku Klux Klan, [killed union organizers in Michigan](#). It's widely thought that Rev. Earl Little, the father of Malcolm X, was murdered by these terrorists.

United Auto Workers president Walter Reuther led a drive against communists in the union and later fought the League Of Revolutionary Black Workers. That didn't prevent him from being [nearly killed at his Detroit home](#) in a 1948 assassination attempt. Local police and the FBI didn't want to find who did it.

In 1937, Reuther and other UAW organizers were viciously beaten by Henry Ford's private police outside the Rouge complex in Dearborn, Mich. No one was ever prosecuted for the assaults.

Ford used thousands of his cops to terrorize workers. Only the UAW's victory at Ford in 1941 stopped these goons from attacking employees.

We can't depend on the capitalist government to even count our votes. It's foolish to think the police will protect us from their fascist buddies, like the Wolverine Watchmen.

Greensboro, N.C., police and agents from the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms allowed Klansmen and Nazis to murder five anti-racist protesters on Nov. 4, 1979. Four of the martyrs were members of the Communist Workers Party.

In the 1960s, the Deacons for Defense and Justice defended civil rights organizers against Klan violence. Today's people's movement needs to defend itself as well.

