In the midst of a global pandemic, unprecedented economic collapse, mass unemployment, hunger and desperation, the stock market is booming and the richest of the rich are richer than ever before.

Since March, more than 58 million people in the U.S. have filed for unemployment. The Internal Revenue Service now predicts that the U.S. economy will have almost 40 million fewer jobs in 2021 than they predicted before the pandemic, as a result of the prolonged economic depression. As it becomes widely recognized that the economy is not going to “bounce right back” into full activity — even when coronavirus cases do eventually decline — and that the current depression will continue for a long time, companies are doing anything they can to drive their stock prices higher.

Desperate to maintain their profits, many large corporations are planning massive layoffs and acknowledging that currently furloughed workers are not going to have jobs to come back to. The Wall Street Journal reports that a recent study found, “nearly half of U.S. employers that furloughed or laid off staff because of COVID-19 are considering additional workplace cuts in the next 12 months.” The companies say low-paid workers will be the first to be cut.

Twice as many workers had their pay cut by July 1 as during the Bush-Obama recession that began in 2009, according to the Washington Post. More than 10 million private sector workers have had their wages cut or been forced to work part-time.

Car company Tesla forced all workers to take a 10 percent pay cut from mid-April until July. In the same period, Tesla stock skyrocketed, and CEO Elon Musk’s net worth has now quadrupled from $25 billion to over $100 billion. Business software company Salesforce announced record sales levels one day and layoffs of 1,000 workers the next. The company’s stock rose 26 percent.

Among small businesses, another study found that 50 percent of all small-business employees who were furloughed since March are still without work. Twenty-eight percent are still furloughed; 22 percent have been permanently laid off.

Even in the government’s rigged and severely undercounted unemployment statistics, the number of people who have been unemployed 15-26 weeks is nearly double what it was at the height of the 2009 recession — and exponentially higher than at any other time since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The “stimulus” bills signed by Trump and passed by Democrats have
Ah, the wonders of capitalism. Concrete, specifically the cement in the mix, accounts for about 8 percent of global carbon emissions. Now a Swiss company has developed a concrete mix that reduces carbon by 30 percent and thinks a mix with a 50 percent reduction is imminent. Might cost a little more, but it sure beats having to keep the oil in the ground.

Lot of buck, waiting for the action. Candidate Biden has raised over $10 million from self-described donors who favor action to block climate change, and another $4 million from a single 28-minute Zoom event sponsored by Climate Leaders for Biden. In the meantime, Joe garnered warm praise from Lawrence Dale, a Dallas oil magnate, after the candidate declared he would support the Green New Deal or to ban fracking. Waiting for your plan, man. Or is your finger still in the air to see which way the wind is blowing on this?

Even Greenland is getting warmer. A recent study shows that since 2003 Greenland had a yearly average loss of 259 billion tons of ice. Last year, however, the frozen island lost a record 586 billion tons, more than enough to put 4 feet of water over the entire state of California. Just another memo to the politicians who talk big, but do nothing about climate change.

And some think God directs Trump. In 30 years or less, the grounds of Martha’s Vineyard, a summer playground for the Trump administration, as well as contacts who are interested in joining Socialist Action.

Socialist Action’s New Member Educational Series continues this month with its bi-weekly educational program to educate and integrate a growing wave of new recruits drawn to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.

Socialism is a concept that melds political theory with revolutionary practice, holding revolution as the evolution of world capitalism and of new recruits drawn to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.

Socialism is an educational program that seeks to educate and integrate a growing wave of new recruits drawn to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.

Socialism is a concept that melds political theory with revolutionary practice, holding revolution as the evolution of world capitalism and of new recruits drawn to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.

Socialism is an educational program that seeks to educate and integrate a growing wave of new recruits drawn to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.
The Power of United Front Mass Action

vs. Anarchist Pretensions

Here we reprint key sections of Socialist Action's 2020 Draft Political Resolution now under discussion in the party's ranks as it approaches its December 2-6, 2020 National Convention. The complete text can be found at socialistaction.org. Readers interested in joining Socialist Action should email: socialistaction@lmi.net

So massive and widespread were the anti-racist Black Lives Matter mobilizations that few dared to characterize them as the violent deeds of small groups of looters, anarchists or other marginal elements. To the police and Trump charges of violent antifa [anti-fascist] outside agitators and violent protesters, the broad movement easily retorted that Blacks have been looted for centuries, that the prime source of violence is systemic racism, police brutality and murder and social inequality across the board. The sheer mass character of the mobilizations broke down myths of a society fully capable of rendering justice for all, of a nation where hard work and dedication will raise everyone's status, where racism, sexism, LGTQI+ discrimination and immigrant oppression can be remedied with the passage of a few bills or a change of guard in the Congress and White House. The mass character of today's movement has done more to fundamentally raise political consciousness than a thousand electioneering initiatives.

The past several months of intensive struggle highlight as never in recent memory the inherent power of coordinated mass action wherein those who previously considered themselves non-actors in society came to realize their power — understanding that they were indeed the majority and their minority oppressors were the defenders of a system where the few rule over them. Again, this dramatic example of the power of united front type mass mobilizations lies at the center of our revolutionary socialist tactical and strategic orientation. In this case the unity consisted in the most often Black-led, indeed Black women-led, multi-racial working class mobilizations that in turn fundamentally altered the political and social consciousness of the vast majority, at least for now.

Crisis of leadership

Had these mobilizations taken the form of consciously and democratically planned and organized actions by a politically conscious leadership emerging from and integrated into these mobilizations, the potential for a major break with capitalist politics would have appeared for the first time in the modern era. Yet, no such leadership exists to fundamentally challenge capitalist power. Yet, no such leadership exists to fundamentally challenge capitalist power. The difference between today and yesterday rests in the massive and public exposure of capitalism's inherent and deadly contradictions. It can no longer hide its systemic racist, two words that are today inextricably connected. It can no longer deny a climate crisis that threatens life on earth itself, nor back off from its daily infliction of misery and poverty in all their forms on the great majority.

Up to now, the future of humankind is and will be in the streets as the system itself drives increasing millions to fight for their very lives at a time when real power can be exercised for all to see to advance the life and well being of the most oppressed and exploited and indeed for the 99 percent. That unity, expressed in action in the broad working class, is the heart and soul of our optimism for the future. That unity, expressed in action in the broad working class, is the heart and soul of our optimism for the future.

The most oppressed groups, such as immigrants, Black communities systemically targeted by police, LTBTQI people, and women (especially those who are caretakers), cannot afford to get arrested and are much less likely to participate in violent demonstrations. It can only result in the violent ruling minority's increased capacity to portray itself as the defender of "peace" while characterizing the emerging movement as the source of violence. It is by no means excluded that future united front formations will be based on the coming together of a variety of fighting formations including organizations that coalesce from the present anti-racist struggles and new ones that emerge from victories won by class struggle union fighters who have won their stripes in re-building and democratizing the trade unions and removing the present reactionary bureaucratic misleadership.

Capitalist Reform vs. Socialist Revolution

We live in unprecedented times where capitalism's simultaneous, deep-seated and multiple crises have already taken a great toll on the broad working class, with no end in sight. Few believe that the election of Democrat Joe Biden to the White House will change anything other than the crude, ugly and racist face and public demeanor of capitalism's accidental president, Donald Trump. Whether under Obama or Trump, however, and now no doubt Biden, the policies adopted aim at serving the interests of the corporate elite, whether it be in imposing massive social spending cuts, ever gifting the billionaire class bailouts in every form, ever increasing war spending and ever threatening catastrophic climate and environmental disaster to the planet.

The sheer mass character of the movement that aim at demonstrating major power to "Dump Trump" as their primary solution to today's multiple capitalist crises. The power of mass action vs. small scale "direct action"

Nevertheless, the example of the power of the mass action united front has not been lost on our revolutionary nucleus and on millions of others. We have been a minority in championing independent united front mass mobilizations, while our reformist and ultra-left opponents counterpose either subordination of the movement to electoral politics, that is, that allow for the physical demonstration of this majority's power as opposed to the anarchist schemes aimed at substituting the tiny few for the power of trillions to fundamentally challenge capitalist power. Our orientation is aimed at educating in action the masses in motion to understand that the capitalist government itself represents the tiny minority, the infamous "one percent" Today, this can only be accomplished with the ongoing organization of massive peaceful mobilizations. Any projected violence-oriented mobilizations today can only result in the mass exclusion of the very forces in society with whom humanity's future rests.

The Power of the united front

Our united front method is fundamentally aimed at engaging millions in action elections to "Dump Trump" as their primary solution to today's multiple capitalist crises.

The most oppressed groups, such as immigrants, Black communities systemically targeted by police, LTBTQI people, and women (especially those who are caretakers), cannot afford to get arrested and are much less likely to participate in violent demonstrations. It can only result in the violent ruling minority's increased capacity to portray itself as the defender of "peace" while characterizing the emerging movement as the source of violence. It is by no means excluded that future united front formations will be based on the coming together of a variety of fighting formations including organizations that coalesce from the present anti-racist struggles and new ones that emerge from victories won by class struggle union fighters who have won their stripes in re-building and democratizing the trade unions and removing the present reactionary bureaucratic misleadership.

Socialist Action September 2020 3
A MEDIDA QUE LA PANDEMIA de COVID-19 se extiende por los Estados Unidos, los inmigrantes continúan siendo los más afectados. COVID-19 se está extendiendo casi sin control a través de los centros de detención, lugares en los que se detienen a inmigrantes. Hasta el 1 de julio, más de 2,700 detenidos habían dado positivo de COVID-19 en los EE. UU. Desde 2017, se opuso a que las familias de inmigrantes se separaran, pero Trump, que ha separado a más de 300,000 familias, en los centros de detención. La administración Trump ha adoptado medidas de seguridad más estrictas en los centros de detención de Institutos de Seguridad en ICE desde 2017, en los que se mantienen a los inmigrantes detenidos para la deportación. 

A principios de junio, un juez federal dictaminó que la administración Trump debía poner a disposición a los niños migrantes de menos de 18 años detenidos en los centros de detención de ICE antes del 27 de julio, donde 346 padres y sus hijos estaban en huelga. Los niños y padres de inmigración estaban presionando para lograr liberaciones a gran escala debido a las preocupaciones de seguridad. Sin embargo, ICE ha adoptado una política de armar a las personas sospechosas de tener COVID-19 en áreas designadas y esperar a ver si mejoran o empeoran. Los reclusos de la instalación de Otay informaron haber pedido ayuda para el Sr. Escobar Mejía muchas veces, pero solo le dieron ibuprofeno para sus síntomas anteriores de miedo. Había vivido en los Estados Unidos durante 40 años. 

A finales de junio, un juez federal dictaminó que la administración Trump debería liberar a los niños migrantes de menos de 18 años que se dejaron en los Estados Unidos Market an Due Process Agreement, una medida para prevenir el abuso o para garantizar que los niños tengan acceso a teléfono, alimentos saludables y atención médica. Los padres y los abuelos de los niños no tienen forma de rastrear dónde están detenidos los niños y monitorizar su bienestar mientras están bajo custodia. A menudo están siendo atendidos por trabajadores sin la formación adecuada en cuidado de niños. “Un proveedor de transporte no debería estar a cargo de cambiar el pañal de un niño de 1 año, darle biberones a los bebés o lidiar con los efectos traumáticos que podrían estar enfrentando. Me preocupa que los niños puedan estar expuestos al abuso, la negligencia, incluido el abuso sexual, y no tendríamos ni idea”, dijo Andrew Lorenzo-Strait, ex subdirector adjunto de gestión de custodia en ICE. 

Mientras tanto, la administración Trump anunció recientemente que ICE realizaría más de 2,000 arrestos durante una operación de 6 semanas en las principales ciudades como Los Ángeles. El trabajador deICE, Carlos Ernesto Escobar Mejía, declaró que de todos los casos relacionados con la comunidad latina, muchos de los cuales estaban atrapados en el sistema carcelario racista, como con la comunidad latina está siendo atendida por ICE. “Una ha dado para uno es una herida para todos! 

**LAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC rages across the U.S., immigrants continue to be hard hit. COVID-19 is spreading rapidly unchecked through detention centers that house immigrants. As of July 1, more than 2,700 detainees had tested positive for COVID-19, a number that is almost certainly low. Although ICE claims to be following federal guidelines for COVID-19 safety, former Homeland Security health adviser and whistleblower Dr. Scott Allen testified to Congress in June, saying that “gaping holes in the testing guidelines and ICE’s failure to significantly reduce population size have made these facilities hotspots for the virus.”**

Many immigrants being held in detention centers (many of which are for-profit), have complained of lack of space to social distance, lack of protective gear, showers, and adequate medical care. Many of these detention centers have abysmal health and safety records. 

But ICE is no stranger to flowing government grants. In a shocking revelation, The New York Times obtained government data showing that hotel detentions overseen by a private security firm have ballooned under an aggressive border closure policy implemented by the Trump administration in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the policy, over 100,000 immigrants, including children and families, have been expelled from the country rather than put into formal deportation proceedings. Instead of deterring migrants, border crossings have surged under the pandemic.

Now unaccompanied migrant children, some as young as 12, have been being detained in major hotel chains in a “shadown detention” system. Because the hotel rooms are outside of the formal detention system, they are not subject to policies designed to prevent abuse or to ensure that migrants have access to phones, healthy food, and medical care. Parents and lawyers have no way of tracking where children are being held and monitored by ICE or for profit. 

Migrant advocates are pushing for widespread releases to prevent COVID-19 infection. 

**By July 1, at least 2,700 ICE detainees had tested positive.**
When capitalism’s twin billionaire par-
ties convene every four years to select their would-be head-of-state, it’s important to get the facts straight.

The Democrats nominated Donald Trump as their presidential candidate; the Republicans nominated Joseph Biden, or was it the other way around?

The Republicans are known as the billion-naire party of war, racism, sexism, poverty, tax cuts for the rich, climate catastrophe, environmental destruction, the COVID-19 pandemic, mass deportation of immigrants and big capital, while the Democrats are the billionaire party of war, racism, sexism, poverty, tax cuts for the rich, climate catastrophe, environmental destruction, the COVID-19 pandemic, mass deportation of immigrants and big capital. The differences are important!

The facts are important! Here some fact checking is in order, lest my “lesser evil” friends charge me with misrepresenta-
tion.

War

Both parties nearly unanimously ap-proved the 2019-2020 war budget of $1 trillion annually, counting the unmen-tioned extra money for the CIA’s covert wars. To be more precise, the Democrats upped Trump’s original war budget request by some $40 billion which the Rep-ublicans graciously accepted. Trump’s war party continued in slightly different forms all seven U.S. wars, most of them initiated by Barack Obama. Yet Obama declared he was a man of peace and was accordingly given the Nobel Peace Prize. Trump has declared that he is a man of peace and will bring some troops home. Maybe he too will win the Nobel Prize. Obama maintained the largest nuclear weapons arsenal in the world. Trump, a “fucking moron,” according to his former Secretary of State and former ExxonMo-bil chief Rex Tillerson, proposed to a pri-vate National Security Council meeting that the U.S. increase its tactical nuclear weapons capacity “one hundred fold.” Trump proposed to the Congress a sixth arm of the U.S. military, the Space Force, to weaponize outer space. By a vote of 377-48 the Democratic Party-controlled House of Representatives approved the bill creating the Space Force, passing it on to the Senate. Trump signed this largest bi-partisan war budget to date.

Electorat College

The Republicans stole the 2016 elec-
tion through the anti-democratic Elector-
al College system, wherein the Southern states of the old segregationist slavocracy can garner enough delegates for a candidate to win the presidency without winning the majority of all votes cast in the nation.

The Democrats, on the other hand, held sway in Congress for 60 years through their control of the former slaveocracy Dixicrat states. In presidential election, they Democrats ran a Northern “liberal” for president and a Southern racist bigot in the V.P. spot to “balance the ticket.” When the overtly racist Southern Dem-
ocrats jumped ship to the Republicans in the 1960s, the Democrats looked to the heroes of the “Old South” to win elections: Jimmy Carter, Al Gore Jr. — son of Al Gore Sr., a historic Tennessee racist big-ot — and Bill Clinton, whose Southern roots were touted to win the white racist Southern vote.

Complicated? Yes, but the end result is that both parties maneuver to govern in the interests of the billionaire elite. The Democrats are the party of these billionaire elites while the Republicans are the party of these billionaire elites. My fact-checking here is more explicit. According to Forbes Magazine, Biden’s billionaire supporters total 131 while Trump’s total a mere 99.

Climate crisis/Global warming

Trump is the candidate of the oil mon-
oplies while Biden is the candidate of the oil monopolies. Trump, the Republi-
can, is a climate crisis denier. He with-drew from the UN’s COP25 in Madrid, Spain. With regard to the U.S. imperialist war against Syria he bragged, “We got the oil.” Obama-Biden were the world’s greatestackers. They granted the oil monopolies unprecedented rights for offshore drilling. They drilled the Arc-tic Circle. They killed 500,000 people in Syria to control the oil. They supported the fascist-led coup in Ukraine to secure fracking and pipeline rights in Eastern Ukraine.

Immigration

Trump is a racist bigot, demanding a wall to keep immigrants out while ban-
ing Muslim immigrants. Obama-Biden deported three million immigrants, more than any president in U.S. history before or since.

Criminal Justice

Trump and his Republicans are openly racist bigots. Obama, Biden and Clinton orchestrated “criminal justice” legisla-
tion that created the present-day near slave labor prison-industrial complex wherein the U.S. ranks first in the world in the number and percentage of its people in jail – the majority Black, Latinx and Native American.

“Economic stimulus packages”

During 2008-9 recession Obama’s Democrats, allied with the Republicans, engineered the largest corporate bailout and corporate economic stimulus package in U.S. history. During 2020 reces-
sion, Trump’s Republicans, joined at the hip with the Democrats, engineered the largest corporate bailout and corporate economic stimulus package in U.S. his-
tory. Again, the differences are important!

Unemployment

Using the U.S. Department of Labor’s “Labor Force Participation Rate,” under the Obama-Biden Democrats, the percent-age of eligible workers without jobs stood at 35 percent. Under Trump’s Repub-
licans, the figure today stands at 39 percent. Under both parties, today’s “em-
ployed” are increasingly part-time, low wage, “gig” or “casual” workers with few benefits or positive future prospects.

Personality

Here the Democrats have a distinct ad-
vantage; Trump is an openly racist, sex-
ist, anti-abortion, homophobic, warmon-
gering, science-denying bigot. While Obama-Biden-Clinton were cloistered racist, sexist, anti-abortion, homopho-

tic, science-denying bigots. My “lesser evil” friends might take issue with these last categorical assertions. I would respond that any serious fact checker will find that the rights of the oppressed, the rights of women, including the right to abortion, have been substan-
tially diminished regardless of which bil-

louise party is in office. The same with warmongering and climate catastrophe, with the Democrats, a Cheshire cat grin always in place, beguiling unwary ob-
servers.

Break with the twin parties of capital!

In capitalism’s election-time charade, and especially during the DNC and RNC orchestrated online wholes, we see the drive to impose a Potemkin Village world, a “Truman Show” reality, a happy world of compliant citizens accepting the status quo without question. This charade is running on empty. The COVID-19 pandemic and the mass mobilizations of the nation’s most oppressed — often multi-racial mobilizations of youth — have exposed the horror of systemic U.S. racism brutality for all to see. The DNC media hacksters for four days posed themselves as the instant caring cure to remedy centuries of monstrous slavery and across-the-board capitalist racism and social oppression. The Republicans too had their cure, showcasing Trump’s family entourage and for a few minutes his one Black administration official, while blaming “violence” on “outside agitators” on the far left, socialists and antifa. Both parties lied with impunity to advance their wing of their predatory system into the White House.

That rapacious capitalism has no solu-
tions to the multiple crises confronting humanity is testified to by the unprece-
dented millions in the streets crying out for justice, affirming Black Lives Matter, while denouncing capitalism’s systemic racism and its myriad inherent evils. The central task confronting socialists today is how best to win the confidence of and unify this newly-radicalizing generation toward a fundamental break with the twin racist-imperialist capitalist parties. For the first time in a long, long while, the fighting forces to do so are in motion. They have appeared in the streets in un-
precedented number – estimated at 15-26 million – and won the hearts and minds of tens of millions more. They carry with them the potential to achieve wondrous victories that can be coalesced in new and independent forms of struggle aimed at a direct challenge to capitalist rule, including the organization of a mass, in-
dependent Black political party and the rebirth of a fighting labor movement free from its current stifling bureaucracy and advancing on the class struggle road.

Join us! Join Socialist Action! Vote Jeff Mackler for President in 2020!
Capitalists Plunder Working Class America

(continued from page 1)

already given away trillions to major corporations and tens of billions in tax cuts to the richest Americans. Even two-thirds of the original set of supposedly “small-business”-focused Paycheck Protection Program loans went to large corporations, such as Ritz Carlton, while gifting billions in fees to the banks that distributed the loans.

While millions of low-wage workers, “many of whom work in service jobs in hard-hit industries such as hospitality, travel and retail...have lost jobs, been furloughed or seen their hours cut,” writes the Wall Street Journal, “the livelihoods of white-collar professionals...have remained largely intact.”

The super-rich are getting richer than ever

On August 18 — a day when 1,349 people died of COVID-19 and tens of millions were unemployed — the S&P 500 stock index hit an all-time record high with the tech-focused Nasdaq 100 index already well into record territory. Financial newspapers announced a new “bull market,” predicting that stock prices would only go higher.

The runaway success of the stock market in the present context has come as a shock to many people. Barely two weeks before stocks reached an all-time high, the United States announced the largest 3-month fall in the economy since the Great Depression. Even calling it the largest doesn’t quite capture the magnitude. The 9.5 percent contraction from April to June was four times larger than the previous largest drop since World War II.

Economies around the world are in freefall. The GDP of the OECD countries, the world’s largest economies, fell almost 10 percent in the same period — also four times greater than in the 2009 global collapse — and global GDP is expected to decrease by 5 percent this year, a historic amount. Yet the stock market blithely rushes along, as the mega-rich try to squeeze the last drops they can out of it, ahead of the abyss.

Bloomberg News reports that the 500 richest people in the world have increased their wealth by $871 billion so far this year, “the surge in wealth is especially concentrated in the upper ranks of the billionaires index.” During the week of August 24-28 alone, the world’s $500 billionaires increased their wealth by $209 billion. The world’s 10 richest billionaires now collectively have more than $1 trillion.

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, the richest person in the world by a wide margin, now boasts personal wealth of $204.6 billion, as of August 26. His riches largely come from Amazon stock, which has risen 80 percent so far this year. Bezos’s wealth has nearly doubled during the pandemic, as the tech-focused Nasdaq 100 index has already well into record territory.

“Capital” by Viktor Demi (1919)

People pick up food at a food pantry in Brooklyn, NY. (Photo: Angela Weiss/AFP/Getty Images)

$1 trillion in just 21 weeks.

The secret to Apple’s incredible success? It has engaged in the largest stock buybacks in history, re-purchasing $360 billion of its own stock since 2012, according to the New York Times. This self-enrichment tactic inflates the value of a company’s stock by buying it back from shareholders, thus giving money directly to the shareholders by the tens and hundreds of billions and enriching them further by decreasing the number of remaining shares available for investors to buy — driving up the share price.

Apple has spent $141 billion on buybacks in the past two years alone, after Trump’s 2017 tax cuts enabled the company to return to the U.S. tax-free $252 billion in profits. Apple had held the money in tax havens for years, explicitly refusing to pay taxes and claiming that, if returned to the U.S., the money would be used to “create” tens of thousands of jobs — but that they wouldn’t do it if they had to pay taxes. Trump’s 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act removed the repatriation tax on the same false premise, and, once returned, the money was used for its intended purpose all along and given straight to the company’s millionaire and billionaire shareholders. One of those billionaires is the company’s CEO Tim Cook — though his wealth of $1 billion is rather pitiful by ruling class standards. Other tech monopolies like Microsoft and Google have also seen enormous increases. Both Amazon and Microsoft are on pace to join Apple at the $2 trillion level later this year. The only other publicly traded company in the world that comes close is Saudi ARAMCO, the Saudi Arabian state oil and gas company. By comparison, the total stock of Walmart, by far the world’s largest company by revenue — i.e., actual products made and sold — is worth $370 billion.

Giving the lie to this wild stock rally, corporate profits fell almost 25 percent through the first half of 2020, despite consumer spending — the overwhelming majority of the U.S. economy — being propped up by the $600 unemployment supplement, near-zero interest rates, and to a lesser extent the $1200 stimulus checks. The unemployment supplement effectively replaced the lost wages of unemployed workers, enabling them to continue making ends meet, while low interest rates have fueled a spending bonanza for the wealthy who have been largely unscathed by the economic depression.

These overheated and entirely fictitious stock market gains are the reason that CEOs, leading shareholders and corporate executives have dumped more than $50 billion in stock since May. CNN notes that these “insiders,” as they are known, “are干更” more information about the true health of their companies than average investors. And if they were confident in the market rally, insiders would be selling off their holdings now. With the unemployment supplement ending and no future stimulus checks announced, spending by the rich alone will not be enough to maintain the façade covering an economy in the midst of an historic collapse.

Working class suffers while the rich splurge

“The recession is over for the rich, but the working class is far from recovered,” wrote the Washington Post on August 18. Less than half — 42 percent — of jobs lost during the pandemic have returned, with workers in low-wage jobs being the least likely to be back working. People of color and women have fared worst. Women make up two thirds of those employed in the 40 lowest-paid jobs, with women of color making up the majority of low-paid workers.

“Black men and women have recovered about 20 percent of the jobs they lost in the pandemic,” reports the Post in its white male reports that have recovered 40 and 45 percent of their lost jobs, respectively. Between February and May 2020, 11 million jobs held by women have disappeared. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that “one in five working-age adults is unemployed because COVID-19 spent their child-care arrangements,” with women three times more likely than men to have to leave their jobs — and up to five times more likely to decrease their work hours — to take care of children. The losses in the workplace that women are facing today will be felt for decades.

40-50 million people in the U.S. are at risk of eviction in the coming months, as temporary eviction protections end. In a recent U.S. Census Bureau survey, “overheated and entirely fictitious stock market gains are the reason that CEOs, leading shareholders and corporate executives have dumped more than $50 billion in stock since May. CNN notes that these ‘insiders,’ as they are known, are giving more information about the true health of their companies than average investors. And if they were confident in the market rally, insiders would be selling off their holdings now. With the unemployment supplement ending and no future stimulus checks announced, spending by the rich alone will not be enough to maintain the façade covering an economy in the midst of an historic collapse.

Working class suffers while the rich splurge

“The recession is over for the rich, but the working class is far from recovered,” wrote the Washington Post on August 18. Less than half — 42 percent — of jobs lost during the pandemic have returned, with workers in low-wage jobs being the least likely to be back working. People of color and women have fared worst. Women make up two thirds of those employed in the 40 lowest-paid jobs, with women of color making up the majority of low-paid workers.

“Black men and women have recovered about 20 percent of the jobs they lost in the pandemic,” reports the Post in its white male reports that have recovered 40 and 45 percent of their lost jobs, respectively. Between February and May 2020, 11 million jobs held by women have disappeared. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that “one in five working-age adults is unemployed because COVID-19 spent their child-care arrangements,” with women three times more likely than men to have to leave their jobs — and up to five times more likely to decrease their work hours — to take care of children. The losses in the workplace that women are facing today will be felt for decades.
to eat.” The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that 27 million people in the U.S. have lost their health insurance during the pandemic.

While tens of millions of working-class people struggle, starve, and are constantly threatened and harassed by their landlords, record low interest rates are fueling huge spending sprees for the wealthy. Mortgage interest rates are at the lowest in U.S. history, leading to record levels of home purchases by those who have no financial worries. Car sales, too, are benefiting from low interest rates. “Sales of new cars have had their best July ever,” reports the Post. Needless to say, these cars are not part of the miles-long lines at drive-up food banks.

Though tens of millions of new jobless, retail sales have returned to pre-pandemic levels, with massive gains going to big box stores such as Target, Walmart, and Home Depot, which are seeing their largest sales in history. Meanwhile 100,000 small businesses closed permanently by mid-May and estimates are that thousands more will not survive the pandemic and the burgeoning economic depression, putting additional millions of workers out of work.

As the small businesses close, the Walmarts and Targets move in to take their place. This is part of the process by which capitalism translates catastrophe into “opportunity,” accelerating its tendency towards monopoly and consolidating the marketplace into fewer and fewer hands in a desperate search for higher profits.

Fed prints shovel fulls of money for the rich

The Federal Reserve Bank has been concentrating huge amounts of money and pouring it over the rich. In the last economic collapse, under George W. Bush and Barack Obama, the total amount came to over $29 trillion. No doubt the final accounting this time around will leave that number far behind.

The August 18 New York Times, noting the ever-widening economic gap between capitalists and workers, says that the Federal Reserve has no plans to return to the levels of austerity it imposed at any time soon. “The Fed has started new programs to buy Treasury bonds and other financial instruments, and is financing those programs by essentially creating new money,” writes The Times.

At the beginning of the crisis, the Fed instantly bought $3 trillion of the Treasury and corporate bonds, largely to keep the financial system from seizing up. It did this by buying bonds for the Treasury and corporate bonds, largely to keep the financial system from seizing up. It did this by buying bonds for the Treasuries, and is financing those programs by essentially creating new money.” writes The Times.

Fed prints shovel fulls of money for the rich

The Federal Reserve Bank has been concentrating huge amounts of money and pouring it over the rich. In the last economic collapse, under George W. Bush and Barack Obama, the total amount came to over $29 trillion. No doubt the final accounting this time around will leave that number far behind.

The August 18 New York Times, noting the ever-widening economic gap between capitalists and workers, says that the Federal Reserve has no plans to return to the levels of austerity it imposed at any time soon. “The Fed has started new programs to buy Treasury bonds and other financial instruments, and is financing those programs by essentially creating new money,” writes The Times.

At the beginning of the crisis, the Fed instantly bought $3 trillion of the Treasury and corporate bonds, largely to keep the financial system from seizing up. It did this by buying bonds for the Treasury and corporate bonds, largely to keep the financial system from seizing up. It did this by buying bonds for the Treasuries, and is financing those programs by essentially creating new money.” writes The Times.

In this way, the natural profit-driven mechanics of capitalism ensure that larger companies crowd out the smaller ones, agglomerating to themselves ever greater shares of the marketplace.

Monopoly capitalism consolidates its gains

The stock market has rebounded after the shortest “bear market” in history — “a marked display of what analysts describe, by turns, as optimism, hubris or sheer speculative greed,” says The New York Times. Maintaining these stock surges, however, “is heavily reliant on federal spending, easy monetary policy and continued signs of progress in the hunt for virus vaccines.” The reader may note, such things as lower unemployment, more social spending, higher wages, and lower coronavirus case numbers and deaths in the short-term — not to mention even actual corporate revenue and profits — are not among the concerns of the stock market.

While stock indexes may be at record highs, the gains are far from universal, even among major companies. “Almost all the gains in major stock market indexes this year are attributable to the surging share prices of a few giant technology companies, foremost among them Apple, Amazon and Microsoft,” reports The New York Times.

“A weak economy can actually be quite good for Wall Street,” explains The Times, “if it means that the Fed keeps the river of freshly created money — flowing into financial markets.” The Times notes that this is why studies show “little connection” between economic growth and the stock market.

On August 27, Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell announced that the central bank would be keeping interest rates near zero for the long-term, even if it causes inflation to rise, all but staying outright the government’s intention to try to drive the stock market up as high as it possibly can.

Michael Hartnett, chief investment strategist at Bank of America Global Research, quoted in The New York Times, calls this the “nihilistic” bull market of 2020. “The performance of the market in the face of such dire expectations for growth, he wrote, is just the latest example of investors betting that low growth will prompt the Fed to continue pushing money into the financial system, ultimately bolstering stocks. In other words, stocks are going up not because of economic optimism, but because the future looks fairly grim.”

It’s much worse than 2009

Many economists, including Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell, predict that this downturn will last a very long time — and for good reason. It took the U.S. economy nearly 10 years to add the number of jobs that have been wiped out so far this year. The share of the population that has a job is at its lowest level since the 1960s — and far lower than at any point during the Great Recession.

Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs predicts that the U.S. economy will contract by 4.6% this year — nearly double the 2.5% contraction in 2009, the worst year of the Great Recession.

With states’ tax revenue plummeting while workers are out of work for far longer than they were during the Great Depression, state governments are now seeking to re-balance their budgets not by raising taxes on the rich — “heaven forbid!” — who have received 95% of income gains since the Great Recession of ten years ago, but by massive austerity suffered by the poor, disproportionately women and people of color.

Already, 2.8 million state and local government workers have lost their jobs since February — over four times more than the 750,000 jobs cut during five years in the Bush-Obama recession. There are estimates that the jobs of 2.8 million more state and local government workers could be cut.

These massive cuts to jobs for state and local government workers come on top of already enormous cuts in public employment. Before the pandemic, twenty-one states and Washington D.C. still had fewer government jobs than in July 2008. Those jobs are especially likely to be held by women and people of color — and are much more likely than average to be unionized. Public sector unionization is currently at 37 percent, compared with 7 percent in the private sector.

California Democratic governor Gavin Newsom imposed a 40 percent pay cut on all state employees and suspended planned pay raises. Newsom, who is a multi-millionaire, pledged that his own pay would also be cut 10 percent, but the Sacramento Bee found two months later that he had not taken any cut at all and kept receiving his full $17,000 per month salary.

Democratic governor of New York Andrew Cuomo is planning similar massive austerity. Cuomo and state Democrats are cutting billions from Medicaid during a pandemic, alongside massive cuts to public education. Cuomo, who briefly became a media darling for his daily COVID-19 press conferences that took the pandemic much more seriously than Trump, refuses to raise taxes on rich New Yorkers. New York City is home to 92 billionaires.

What more can we say about a diseased system where the worst of times for the vast majority become the best of times for the corporate elite? Capitalism, alternately administered by one of its twin parties of war and plunder, cannot be reformed. It must be abolished at the hands of the vast majority who suffer its inherent evils.

Today, the first signs of progress in the hunt for virus vaccines are fueling huge spending sprees for the wealthy. Mortgage interest rates are at the lowest in U.S. history, leading to record levels of home purchases by those who have no financial worries. Car sales, too, are benefiting from low interest rates. “Sales of new cars have had their best July ever,” reports the Post. Needless to say, these cars are not part of the miles-long lines at drive-up food banks.

Though tens of millions of new jobless, retail sales have returned to pre-pandemic levels, with massive gains going to big box stores such as Target, Walmart, and Home Depot, which are seeing their largest sales in history. Meanwhile 100,000 small businesses closed permanently by mid-May and estimates are that thousands more will not survive the pandemic and the burgeoning economic depression, putting additional millions of workers out of work.

As the small businesses close, the Walmarts and Targets move in to take their place. This is part of the process by which capitalism translates catastrophe into “opportunity,” accelerating its tendency towards monopoly and consolidating the marketplace into fewer and fewer hands in a desperate search for higher profits.

Fed prints shovel fulls of money for the rich

The Federal Reserve Bank has been concentrating huge amounts of money and pouring it over the rich. In the last economic collapse, under George W. Bush and Barack Obama, the total amount came to over $29 trillion. No doubt the final accounting this time around will leave that number far behind.

The August 18 New York Times, noting the ever-widening economic gap between capitalists and workers, says that the Federal Reserve has no plans to return to the levels of austerity it imposed at any time soon. “The Fed has started new programs to buy Treasury bonds and other financial instruments, and is financing those programs by essentially creating new money,” writes The Times.

At the beginning of the crisis, the Fed instantly bought $3 trillion of the Treasury and corporate bonds, largely to keep the financial system from seizing up. It did this by buying bonds for the Treasury and corporate bonds, largely to keep the financial system from seizing up. It did this by buying bonds for the Treasuries, and is financing those programs by essentially creating new money.” writes The Times.

In this way, the natural profit-driven mechanics of capitalism ensure that larger companies crowd out the smaller ones, agglomerating to themselves ever greater shares of the marketplace.

Monopoly capitalism consolidates its gains

The stock market has rebounded after the shortest “bear market” in history — “a marked display of what analysts describe, by turns, as optimism, hubris or sheer speculative greed,” says The New York Times. Maintaining these stock surges, however, “is heavily reliant on federal spending, easy monetary policy and continued signs of progress in the hunt for virus vaccines.” The reader may note, such things as lower unemployment, more social spending, higher wages, and lower coronavirus case numbers and deaths in the short-term — not to mention even actual corporate revenue and profits — are not among the concerns of the stock market.

While stock indexes may be at record highs, the gains are far from universal, even among major companies. “Almost all the gains in major stock market indexes this year are attributable to the surging share prices of a few giant technology companies, foremost among them Apple, Amazon and Microsoft,” reports The New York Times.

“A weak economy can actually be quite good for Wall Street,” explains The Times, “if it means that the Fed keeps the river of freshly created money — flowing into financial markets.” The Times notes that this is why studies show “little connection” between economic growth and the stock market.

On August 27, Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell, predict that this downturn will last a very long time — and for good reason. It took the U.S. economy nearly 10 years to add the number of jobs that have been wiped out so far this year. The share of the population that has a job is at its lowest level since the 1960s — and far lower than at any point during the Great Recession.

Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs predicts that the U.S. economy will contract by 4.6% this year — nearly double the 2.5% contraction in 2009, the worst year of the Great Recession.
The New Democratic Party remains the only mass labour-based political party in Canada. The NDP is the only party with affiliated unions. All the other parties are simply capitalist parties, which – whatever else they advocate – defend the capitalist system of exploitation, oppression, war and pandemic – a system that puts private profit before human needs, even ahead of human survival. Represented by the NDP – before human needs, even ahead of human needs – are the banks, the financiers, and the corporations that control the NDP.

The British Columbia NDP Gov’t: Three Years Later

BY GARY PORTER

The government of British Columbia Premier John Horgan is three years old. Gains enacted by the NDP government have skyrocketed, and are much higher for many who most need them. Why are they not free?

Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples remains an important cross-government priority, Horgan says. He lists a number of improvements desired, but with no dollar amount budgeted. The government says it will implement the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Meanwhile the government blatantly and callously violates the rights of the Wet’suwet’en by building the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline from the fracking areas of north-east BC, to the planned compressors in Kitimat, on the Pacific shore.

Fracking, by the way, is a dangerous way to look for methane, a greenhouse gas 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Fracking produces four times as many earthquakes as predicted. Quakes are hitting fault lines and strengthening the stability, even the viability of the Site C Dam. The result is more billions of dollars that is unnecessary.

CleanBC, the name given to the province’s climate management program, assigns a clear priority to profit, to private business and private technology, and to a continued concentration on hydrocarbons, forestry and extractive industries.

The next BC Election

Sometime in the next 15 months, there will be an election in BC. The NDP Socialist Caucus has long advocated that the party run on a program for real change, a Workers Agenda, towards socialism. For example:

1. Defund, disarm and disband the bulk of the vast police armies. Provide the social and health services with qualified professionals.
2. Nationalize the wood industry under workers’ control to provide for mass, high quality, publicly-owned, easily affordable housing for all.
3. Make life truly affordable with free pharma care, dental and visual care, and all medical services. Provide free, expanded public transit, free post-secondary education and cancel all student debt.
4. Eliminate the gig economy by outlawing fake contractor jobs, enforcing standard benefits, vacations and sick leave, union rights and decent pay for all workers in BC.
5. Cancel the grossly polluting Site C, and LNG Canada projects. These are technically unsound, global-warming disasters. Build a publicly-owned, worker-controlled green energy grid in BC.
6. Implement UNDRIP immediately. Get the cops off unceded Indigenous land. No more pipelines, roads, railways, transmission lines or anything else without prior fully-informed agreement by Indigenous peoples. Fund healthcare, education, and housing.
7. Nationalize the mines and their bankers under workers’ control. Operate them in a safe, ecologically sound way, if possible, or shut them down.
The growing instability of capitalist economy, where a minority government seeks to appease the billionaire class who was tainted by WE, and replaced him in Finance with his 'star' Deputy Prime Minister Chrysts Fair. She is infamous for heading up the Lima Group of states seeking to overthrow the democratically elected government of Venezuela.

It is no accident that Trudeau’s prorogation of Parliament deprived the new leader of the Conservative Party, Erin O’Toole, of a gilded platform, albeit for a month. O’Toole, MP for Durham, just east of Toronto, won the preferential ballot election in the wee hours of August 24. The count was plagued by technical glitches. He was able to defeat co-founders of the modern Conservative Party, Peter McKay, a so-called Red Tory MP from Nova Scotia, thanks to the second and third preference votes of anti-gay, anti-choice bigots who had backed new- comer Leslyn Lewis and MP Derek Sloan. How far the Tories, under “True Blue” O’Toole, will tack to the right, to retain the good will of ‘social conservat-ives’, remains to be seen in a party freshly divided.

O’Toole’s campaign pledges to let the provinces set limits to greenhouse gas emissions, to make picketing at a railway, a sea port, or to inhibit business ac- tivity at any entrance a criminal offense, and to privatize CBC television, show clearly enough where he is going.

Meanwhile, the Canada-U.S. border remains closed to ‘non-essential’ trans-port. Migration is at a virtual halt. U.S. President Trump imposed steep tariffs on Canada-sourced aluminum, and Freeland responded with countervailing tolls, the combination of which hurts workers and consumers on both sides of the border.

The question is: Will the AFL and opposition parties to Bill 32 crafters claim to be “creating simpler and more flexible rules for general holiday pay, group terminations, and pay of final earnings upon termina-tion”. Whom do you suppose that pro-vide insurance coverage? Is it for the working class, or for the corporate owners who would love the ability to lay-off or fire a worker at whim, and rehire at a lower wage? It is absolutely not for the worker who is scrambling to make ends meet. The Alberta government has declared war on the working class. The only reason for workers is to fight back with escalating protest actions, including a general strike in Alberta. If the UCP govern-ment succeeds, other provinces may try to impose similar draconian meas-ures. Every worker in Canada is threat-ened if this law is allowed to stand. Gil McGowan, President of the Alberta Federation of Labor (AFL), puts it this way: “Many people remember the fa-mous Alger Hiss, ‘The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly’. Well, if Bill 32 was a movie it would be called ‘The Bad, the Even Worse, and the Unconstitutional’.”


The concept of ‘confidence’ in the minority Liberal government sought by the labour bu-reaucracy is far too low in a situation where the vast majority face utter ca-lamity. Revolutionary socialists advance the most realistic alternative to capitalist cont-igency and ruin – the fight for a Workers’ Government based on socialist policies.
Trump Threatens Elections in Bid to Retain Power

Since taking office, DeJoy has instituted cost-cutting measures that have disrupted the ability of the Postal Service to deliver mail on schedule and to fulfill its mission. Under pressure for these measures, DeJoy said that he would “suspend” further layoffs and income-sharing agreements. Overtime is necessary to plug these holes. So the lack of overtime further slows the mail.

Trump’s argument about “the most rigged election in history” centers on the unfounded charge that mail-in ballots will be corrupted in states with Democratic governors, while in states with Republican governors, the results of mail-in ballots will be corrupted honestly, he says. It is true that it will take longer to count mail-in ballots than it would to count ballots cast in-person at voting sites. Expectations are that many more will use mail-in voting than in previous elections to avoid exposure to the virus. So the counting will not be over on the evening of the November 3 election. Trump insists that the winner must be known that evening, setting the stage for him to reject the outcome if he is losing.

Even before the COVID crisis, the Postal Service was in deep financial crisis because of onerous laws put in place by both the Democrats and Republicans that forced the Service to put in escrow money to guarantee retirement funds for 75 years. In addition to the millions that have been quarantined since March, an estimated 1.2 million workers have been quarantined since March, over 2,500 sick,” American Postal Workers’ Union President Mark Dimondstein said. Overtime is necessary to plug these holes. So the lack of overtime further slows the mail.

Under pressure for these measures, DeJoy said that he would “suspend” further “cost-cutting” measures until after the election, though he has not reversed the removal of postal boxes or the effective ban on overtime, merely “suspend” continued cuts to the Postal Service. Trump’s immediate goal is to undermine the trust in voting mail-in, there is a longer-range goal. Mark Dimondstein said, “On June 28, the Office of Management and Budget of the White House put out, in writing, a proposal to break up the Postal Service and sell it to private corporates, for private profit. ‘Whether people get postal service at all will then depend on who they are, where they live, and how much it will cost.’

In addition to sabotaging the Postal Service, the second way the Trump forces will influence the election is voter suppression. The heart of the 1965 Voting Rights Act was struck down in 2013 by the Supreme Court Republican majority in a five to four decision, written by Chief Justice John Roberts. What was struck down was the provisions that states that had a history of suppressing Black voters in the Jim Crow era had to have federal approval before enacting any new voting rights laws. Since then, Republican-controlled states in the Jim Crow South and elsewhere have enacted many restrictions upheld by the Supreme Court aimed at Black voters, using various subterfuges reminiscent of Jim Crow laws and arbitrary rulings.

Since April, the Court has issued four more rulings in cases from Alabama, Florida, Texas and Wisconsin that restricted mail-in votes, affecting Black and Latino voters disproportionately. In April, the Court majority ruled that a federal judge should not have extend- ed the deadline for some mail-in voting in the light of the coronavirus pandemic. In July, the Court blocked a trial judge’s order that would have made it easier to use mail-in ballots in an Alabama prima- ry election. In another case, the Court declined to reinstate a trial judge’s ruling that would have allowed all Texas voters who had tested positive for COVID-19 to submit their ballots by mail given the health cri- sis.

In 2018, voters in Florida extended the right to vote for felons after they serve their sentences (Florida had previously denied them the right to vote for the rest of their lives). The Republican controlled government then passed a law that said that such ex-felons had to first pay back earlier court fines and fees with interest before they could vote, which effectively denied them the right to vote.

The Supreme Court ruled that Florida could do that. Since Blacks and Latinos are the large majority of those imprison- ed under the program of mass incarcer- ation in the United States, they are the most affected.

If it turns out that in spite of Trump’s efforts to suppress minority votes and sabotage of mail-in voting, he is declared the loser it remains to be seen how or if he will carry out his threats not to accept that outcome, and what that will mean.

But it is certain that we can face grave danger from the Democratic party, which saber weak it already is in the United States. •

SA 2020 Presidential Candidate Jeff Mackler: No to Trump’s Coup Threat!

Socialist Action is in no way indifferent to Trump’s threat to cancel the 2020 election or to ignore its results on election day should he lose, or attempts to undermine the right to vote by defund- ing the Post Office to make the prompt counting of ballots difficult or using the U.S. Supreme Court rulings to approve racist gerrymandering of districts and other undemocratic measures aimed at reducing the vote of Black and Latinx people. While we have always exposed the reactionary nature of bourgeois elections and all their anti-democratic aspects, we are far from the point of ceding this institution to would-be ty- rants like Trump.

In the same vein, we have absolutely zero confidence in the courts to uphold democratic processes, not to mention confidence in the Democrats, including their war carriers in the labor move- ment, to challenge in the streets any coup-like attempt to steal the elections. While we can say that the Supreme Court itself, despite its present 5-4 tilt to the Republicans, usually upholds the general interests of the ruling class as opposed to any minority current like Black and Latinx people. Nevertheless, we have to remember that today the ruling class has no need for a coup, that there is broad agreement among the ruling class that Trump must go, that he is an embarrassment, if not an obstacle to their general objectives, it is quite another thing to turn a deaf ear to Trump’s threats. That would be a serious error to say the least.

Should Trump continue to threaten the election or its results, we must stand in the political forefront against such a move without in any manner indicating political support to Biden and the Dem- ocrats. Indeed, should there be anything resembling an electoral coup, we can fully expect outraged millions to take to the streets, perhaps in numbers ex-

Put him one vote more than a majority in the College, although Gore won the popular vote.

The reader can unwind the violations of democratic vote inherent in the U.S. system in this mess.

The stormy once-in-a-lifetime Florida recount battle that polarized the nation in 2000 and left the Supreme Court to de- cide the presidency may soon look like a high school student council election compared to what could be coming af- ter this November’s election,” the article began.

Imagine not just another Florida, but a dozen Floridas. Not just one set of lawsuits but a vast array of them. And instead of two restricted candidates staying out of court and leaving the fight to surrogates, a sitting president of the United States unleashing ALL CAPS twitter blasts from the Oval Office while seeking ways to use the power of his of- fice to intervene.

“There was no less than those...” (continued from page 1) -

Trump's coup-like attempt to steal the elections. This is nothing less than Donald Trump and his political cronies trying to steal the election by blocking or delaying vote-by-mail. Trump has sued states to try and block vote-by-mail. That won’t work. But he’s going to try and stop the mail from being delivered. This is outra- geous.”

One of the cost-cutting measures DeJoy implemented has been the banning of overtime. “Here we are in a COVID world. Forty thousand postal workers have been quarantined since March, over 2,500 sick,” American Postal Work- ers Union President Mark Dimondstein said. Overtime is necessary to plug these holes. So the lack of overtime further slows the mail.

Under pressure for these measures, DeJoy said that he would “suspend” further “cost-cutting” measures until after the election, though he has not reversed the removal of postal boxes or the effective ban on overtime, merely “suspend” continued cuts to the Postal Service. Trump’s immediate goal is to undermine the trust in voting mail-in, there is a longer-range goal. Mark Dimondstein said, “On June 28, the Office of Management and Budget of the White House put out, in writing, a proposal to break up the Postal Service and sell it to private corpora- tions, for private profit. ‘Whether people get postal service at all will then depend on who they are, where they live, and how much it will cost.’

In addition to sabotaging the Postal Service, the second way the Trump forces will influence the election is voter sup- pression. The heart of the 1965 Voting Rights Act was struck down in 2013 by the Supreme Court Republican majority in a five to four decision, written by Chief Justice John Roberts. What was struck down was the provisions that states that
Teachers Resist “Back To School” Orders

By Steve R. Johnson

Under increasing pressure from state and federal authorities, school teachers across the United States are embroiled in a life and death struggle over the terms and conditions of re-opening the nation’s schools for the 2020-2021 year.

The national teacher unions, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA), support schools reopening but on condition that strict measures are in place to ensure the safety of teachers, school workers and children – not to mention the more vulnerable parents and relatives with whom students are in daily contact upon returning home. NEA president-elect Becky Pringle and AFT President Randi Weingarten have warned of the potentially deadly consequences of any initiative to prematurely return to school that ignores the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teachers pose conditions for safe return to work

The teacher unions stress the necessity of daily COVID-19 testing, social distancing in classrooms, lunchrooms, hallways and school yards, qualitative improvements of damaged or inadequate school ventilation systems and a myriad of other factors that any sane society would implement in the face of an unprecedented pandemic that has infected six million in the U.S. and killed 180,000. Teachers are well aware that in some 80 percent of today’s COVID-19 infections the person is largely asymptomatic.

The costs associated with any realistic and safe return to classrooms, including major physical repair or replacement of obsolete systems, are enormous. Needless to say, no state or federal funds are envisioned on the part of leading “back to school” advocates, to pay these costs.

School teachers and unions resist

A growing number of teachers and teacher unions oppose any generalized school re-openings outright and instead have been able to negotiate online instruction for a majority of teachers. Such agreements have been reached in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago. In other cities, the status of school openings is mixed. Some schools, usually in areas with the lowest infection rates, are open five days a week with direct instruction. Others are open a few days for direct instruction coupled with online instruction for the remainder of the week.

Although schools are controlled by states and local jurisdictions and funded by a variety of property and related local taxes, the federal government does allocate some modest funds, usually in the range of five percent, of the total school budgets. Nevertheless, federal officials have put intense pressure on schools to reopen. Many schools were closed from mid-March until the end of the school year in May-June. President Trump’s insistence on school re-opening has been based on spurious “scientific” arguments, chief among them that students and young people more generally, populations where the great majority who have been infected with the COVID-19 virus are asymptomatic, cannot spread the disease. Recent reports have not only demonstrated that asymptomatic people cannot only spread the disease but that asymptomatic coronavirus-infected youth often harbor levels of the virus in their nasal passages that are up to 100 times more concentrated than in the general population.

Homeland Security presses for return to work

An August 18 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) statement declared that teachers were “critical infrastructure workers,” and that even if they had been exposed to the coronavirus but showed no symptoms, they were deemed able to return to classrooms without submitting to the otherwise required 14-day quarantine period recommended by public health agencies. Although the DHS declaration is not a federal directive, it is feared that school districts might use it to establish rules requiring teachers who have been in contact with coronavirus-infected people to nevertheless immediately return to school.

Return to work and the second wave

The results of school reopenings internationally are telling. In Israel, schools reopened in May, after a national quarantine lasting for a majority of teachers. Such negotiations resulted in the UFT’s insistence on serious provision and use of face masks, implementation of proper social distancing regulations, provisions for a nurse in all schools and installation of proper ventilations systems. Details of the agreement remain undisclosed, including the number or percentage of teachers and students who will return to school as compared to those who will remain home to receive online instruction.

It appears that the UFT’s defiance of de Blasio’s threats, either with the count-er-threat of a “sick out” or a strike, has for the moment gained some time to implement the UFT’s insistence on serious safety provisions, assuming and all such provisions exist in reality. It is also clear that a broad range of UFT members, perhaps a majority, are of the opinion that any generalized school re-opening involving 1.3 million students and some 60,000 teachers is a recipe for disaster. This has already been the case with regard to several major college and university re-openings, where the number and percentage of students who subsequently tested positive was so alarming that school officials had no choice but to close down.

Such closures have been the norm across the country with regard to re-opening efforts of public facilities and businesses ordered by governors in all 50 states. These re-openings led to a tripling of COVID-19 infections and a generalized return to higher levels of hospitalizations and deaths. The IHME today estimates that if the total U.S. deaths by the end of the year will be at 410,000, a stunning figure that attests to the base corruption of a social system that subordinates human life itself to capitalist profits.
The openings of grade and middle schools, high schools, and colleges all have one thing in common — they are the betting chips in a massive gamble by the ruling class. Like in poker, sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. In this case, however, the 1% will be betting with our lives, not theirs.

As of this writing, kids and younger adults are flocking back to their schools. With proper respect for standards to guide school districts, however, each community is on its own to decide what is safe and what it not. Some districts, for instance, are planning to open schools in phases, providing remote learning for those who are not ready or not able to return to traditional in-person learning. Others are planning to delay re-opening indefinitely, with some schools only in remote learning or to delay re-opening indefinitely.

Kenosha, Wisconsin is shot 7 times by cops while running away. Jacob Blake of Atlanta, whose “crime” is sleeping in a fast food parking lot, is gunned down by cops during a traffic stop. Breonna Taylor of Louisville is shot in her own home by a group of police breaking down her door, mistakenly. Rayshard Brooks of Atlanta, whose “crime” is sleeping in a fast food parking lot, is gunned down by cops while running away. George Floyd of Minneapolis is detained and killed by cops over an alleged passing of a bogus $20 bill. Breonna Taylor of Louisville is shot in her own home by a group of police breaking down her door, mistakenly. Rayshard Brooks of Atlanta, whose “crime” is sleeping in a fast food parking lot, is gunned down by cops while running away. Jacob Blake of Kenosha, Wisconsin is shot 7 times by cops in front of his own children, entering his car, and is paralyzed from the waist down. The stirrded list is lengthy and constitutes the proof.

In each and every instance of police murder brought to public attention through someone’s cell phone video, it is a case of death by being Black. These deadly racist attacks against Black people are part and parcel of life for African Americans and constitute the proof. In each and every instance of police murder brought to public attention through someone’s cell phone video, it is a case of death by being Black. These deadly racist attacks against Black people are part and parcel of life for African Americans and constitute the proof.

Black people (and other oppressed minorities) are inferior to Whites. If someone “breaks the law” — capitalist law, often unjust — they are to be “brought to justice.” In the minds of cops, if a Black person is alleged to have committed a crime, they are guilty. Or if a Black is even in the vicinity when the law is broken, they are police suspects, de facto, because they are Black. Contrary to police denials, this the reality.

We realize that, as in poker, sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. In this case, however, the 1% will be betting with our lives, not theirs. In each and every instance of police murder brought to public attention through someone’s cell phone video, it is a case of death by being Black. These deadly racist attacks against Black people are part and parcel of life for African Americans and constitute the proof.

In each and every instance of police murder brought to public attention through someone’s cell phone video, it is a case of death by being Black. These deadly racist attacks against Black people are part and parcel of life for African Americans and constitute the proof.