

November 7, 2020 - No. 43

Disputed U.S. Presidential Election



November 4, 2020. March in Portland, Oregon. (Top Quality DF)

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Disputed U.S. Presidential Election

Anarchy and Violence Prevails

- *Kathleen Chandler* -



November 4, 2020. Detroit, Michigan.

On November, 7, the monopoly media finally declared Joe Biden the winner in the U.S. elections for president. But the conflict is far from over. As anticipated, initially no winner was declared. Even now, the rivalry within the ruling factions is so intense -- with potential for open violent conflict -- it is clear the election settled nothing, as yet more disputes continue to unfold. This was evident as soon as Biden was declared the winner. The news agencies announced both Pennsylvania and Nevada for Biden, giving him 290 Electoral College votes against Trump's 214, with 270 necessary to win. Georgia, North Carolina and Alaska still remain.

Biden is expected to give a victory speech the evening of November 7.

Donald Trump responded as expected, refusing to concede and saying the election is still far from over. On November 7 he said, "Joe Biden has not been certified as the winner of any states, let alone any of the highly contested states headed for mandatory recounts, or states where our campaign has valid and legitimate legal challenges that could determine the ultimate victor." This echoed his comments made on election night. "All of the recent Biden-claimed states will be legally challenged by us for Voter Fraud and State Election Fraud," Trump declared.

The Trump campaign is pursuing numerous lawsuits in Pennsylvania, Georgia and Nevada and calling for a recount in Wisconsin -- states where the vote tally is close. As Trump reiterated November 7, "Beginning Monday [November 9] our campaign will start prosecuting our case in court to ensure election laws are fully upheld and the rightful winner is seated."

The indication is that more lawsuits in additional states may be filed, including Michigan and Wisconsin where, like Pennsylvania, mail-in ballots are being accepted after Election Day.

It would appear that the ruling factions backing Biden would still like to secure a decisive win, so as to more readily secure a "peaceful transition." Biden is already indicating this, saying "With the campaign over, it's time to put the anger and the harsh rhetoric behind us and to come together as a nation." He is also trying to say he has a mandate from the people: "I am honoured and humbled by the trust that the American people have placed in me and in Vice President-elect Harris."

The fact is that the vote in his favour represents less than 25 per cent of the voting age population and furthermore, about 80,000,000 eligible voters -- more than Biden's 75,000,000 -- expressed their views by not voting at all.

Generally speaking, certification of the votes by the states is not completed until the end of November. The electors to each state's Electoral College then do not meet and certify the electors until December 14. Lawsuits are to be settled by that time. If not, states can potentially send two sets of electors to Congress and then the House of Representatives would decide. All of this confirms that the election remains disputed and the potential for greater violence against the people hangs in the air as well. Already the National Guard is deployed in several states, including Oregon, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas and police presence has been greatly increased in New York City, Washington, DC and Chicago.

Despite the effort by the Republican and Democratic campaigns and monopoly media to keep everyone focused on election results, continued resistance in various cities and plans for more all indicate that the election has not silenced or stopped the people's demands for equality, justice and accountability. Everywhere people are making clear that these issues will be settled by the people and their fight for the rights of all. The inequality and arbitrary nature of the election, including the counting of votes and discounting of them, has only further affirmed that a new electoral system is needed. The ongoing disputes do nothing to address and solve this necessity.

It also shows, more profoundly than ever, the need for the democratic renewal of the U.S. institutions at every level and of the constitutional arrangements and definitions of rights.

One of the features of this election was the inability of the rulers to predict the outcome. Their unending polls were again wrong. The oligarchs refuse to see that in conditions of anarchy and with the broad disinformation imposed, polls do not reflect the public, its stands and demands. They do not reflect the broad anger with the whole political set up and the drive among the people to have a decision-making process that favours their interests. It is in part because of this blindness that they would pick Biden, an old, white, establishment man, as a standard bearer. How better to show their exhaustion rather than any semblance of the new direction people are demanding? The selection of Kamala Harris, long-time representative of state district attorneys, did not change this.



Joe Biden, like Hillary Clinton in 2016, also counted on African Americans and youth to give him a more decisive win. Clearly, the old calculus of the Democrats that African Americans will vote in large numbers for them no longer applies, which is also true for the youth. The consciousness that Democrats, Biden included, have played a main role in the racist mass incarceration, militarization of police, state-organized racist attacks and genocide, is widespread. So too is the conviction that strengthening the organized resistance is the way forward. It is also the case that promoting that white workers all support Trump was put to rest in part by the vote in Wisconsin, where they are the majority.

People vote, or do not vote, for various reasons but it is not the vote that reflects their overall stands and views as to how to solve the problems society faces. That is evident in their overwhelming support for the many demonstrations and strikes organized to defend rights and planned now after the elections.



What the rulers fail to recognize is that their usual methods for predicting, including polls and various old calculations, are as obsolete as their electoral process. People are rejecting the disinformation of the campaigns, which are designed to deform the shape of the body politic, to eliminate its cohesion, to fracture and splinter it rather than unite it in solving the problems of the day. They are instead fighting to take the country in a new direction, which includes an electoral process where the public is informed, their concerns and solutions are on the agenda, and their own candidates selected, and that is structured to provide them equality as members of the polity.

People are also remaining vigilant for more potential violence instigated by the government. Given the intense rivalry to capture the presidency among the ruling factions, and Trump so far refusing to concede, and large numbers of police and National Guard already present in some areas, the threat remains. So too does the possible use of armed racist militias against the people so as to justify use of the military and widespread arrests and detention.

Unions and hundreds of organizations are at the ready to demonstrate and defend rights. Numerous demonstrations took place November 6-7 and more are planned for next week and again in December. Many are also angry and prepared for action, including possible strikes, if the Supreme Court interferes. Together with the organized resistance ongoing since May, people are ready for rejecting use of the military and federal forces against the people and advancing the fight for equality, justice and accountability.

(Photos: We Make Michigan, Tues Toomey HBG, Xinhua)

Supreme Court, Elections and Crisis of U.S. Democracy

- Voice of Revolution -

As the disputed U.S. presidential election continues to unfold, the likelihood of the Supreme Court intervening is coming to the fore. At present at least one of the Pennsylvania lawsuits -- an appeal

by the state Republican Party and now joined by the Trump campaign -- is likely to make it to the Supreme Court. It involves discounting votes received after Election Day. Trump may hope to still win in Pennsylvania, and with a favourable ruling, also win in Wisconsin and Michigan, which extended the vote in a manner similar to Pennsylvania. Whether or not a ruling determines the outcome of the vote, it is likely that the push for the lawsuit is part of the effort of the international financial oligarchy to eliminate any blocks to its seizure of a centralized decision-making power and this includes undermining state authority in elections, including that of the state Supreme Courts.



October 15, 2020. Protest in Washington DC against confirmation of Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court. (C. King)

Initially Pennsylvania's Democratic Party and the state's Secretary of State sued to have the date for accepting mail-in ballots extended three days, from 5:00 pm November 3 to 5:00 pm November 6. These ballots are the main ones still being counted. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled in support of the extension. Republicans appealed and asked the U.S. Supreme Court for an expedited ruling before the elections, which the Court denied. However, it left open the possibility of pursuing the case. Justice Alito wrote that the ruling "does not mean, however, that the state court decision must escape our review." The extended deadline "has national importance, and there is a strong likelihood" that the ruling violates the U.S. Constitution, he added.

While Pennsylvania is currently the only state where Trump is pursuing this case, a number of other states also extended their deadlines, including those with close vote counts: Michigan, where ballots postmarked by November 3 could be received up to two weeks after Election Day; North Carolina, where they could be received within nine days after the election; and Wisconsin, within six days after November 3. These states are also possible arenas for similar lawsuits by Trump whose claim is the one he uttered in a White House speech: "If you count the legal votes, I easily win." And "If you count the illegal votes, they can try to steal the election from us."

What emerges in all of this is that the Supreme Court, not the state-level Supreme Courts and legislatures -- is being put forward as the arbiter and decision-maker of what is and is not legal for elections. Even if a ruling by the Supreme Court does not decide the election itself, it provides a precedent for overruling state Supreme Courts. In doing so it increases the power of the executive office of the presidency to decide election law. This removes it from the power of the states or, at the very least, lessens the state power. This tells us something about the general tendency in the restructuring of the U.S. state machinery. More and more power is being concentrated in the Office of the President for purposes of eliminating structures that stand in the way of the narrow private

interests which have usurped the decision-making power. Authorities at the federal and state levels are contending for everything -- evident in the many conflicts concerning policing, immigration, COVID-19 and elections. The restructuring aims at federal control all down the line.

The complexity for the rulers is that intervention by the Supreme Court in these matters is already being questioned. The consciousness among the people is such that unions and dozens of organizations are standing at the ready to reject the Supreme Court playing a deciding role. More generally the legitimacy of the Court is increasingly in doubt. With the rapid confirmation of Trump's latest addition to the bench, Amy Coney Barrett, the Court is seen as stacked in Trump's favour.

In 2010, the Supreme Court also made the notorious Citizens United ruling that opened the doors for massive funding of elections by the monopolies and oligarchs, using superPACs (Political Action Committees) to provide unlimited funding. From 2010 to 2018, superPACs provided about \$2.9 billion for federal elections, the bulk coming from just a few individual donors. In the 2018 elections, for example, the top 100 donors to superPACs contributed nearly 78 per cent of all superPAC funding. The ruling increased the undemocratic and corrupt character of U.S. elections. It also facilitated the ability of the oligarchs to more readily usurp the power of the U.S. state for their own private narrow interests.

The Supreme Court functions mainly as an arm of the executive, with Supreme Court rulings generally favouring whatever is needed by the executive at any point in time. This is evident in rulings related to slavery, desegregation and elections.

With the rivalries among the factions of the ruling class more intense than ever and their institutions dysfunctional, as these elections reveal them to be, some rulings may reflect the contention between the vying factions within the Executive itself. At the same time, there has been a general weakening of the role of the Court, just as there has been with Congress. Rulings are simply ignored, as Obama did concerning the Guantánamo torture camp and as Trump has largely done concerning immigration, refugees and Muslim bans.

For the 2020 elections, use of the Supreme Court in deciding the election is fraught with danger for the rulers. The anger with government failures over COVID-19 and the broad and unrelenting movement of the people is such that the federal government and its policing agencies are losing the authority to govern and use force against the people. The conditions are calling out for a new arrangement of governance, one which empowers the people to govern and decide. Any Supreme Court interference in the election will only re-emphasize that the existing arrangements are not accountable to the people.

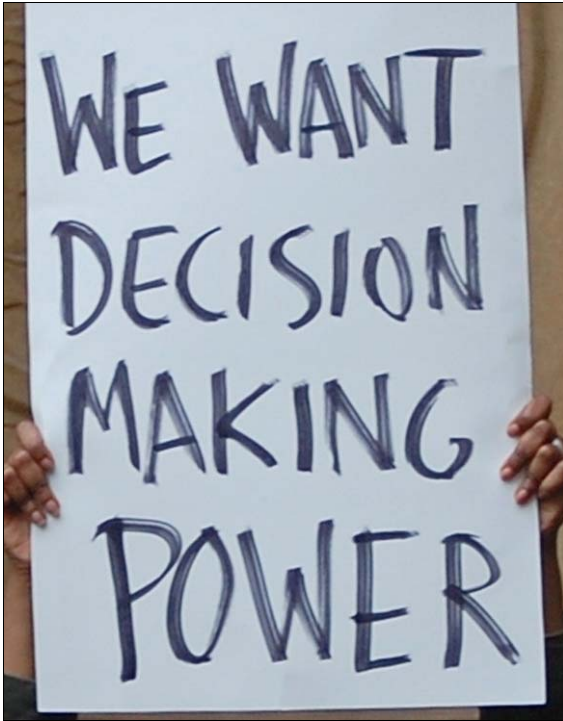


Lawsuits as Means to Restructure U.S. State for Greater Federal Control

Prior to the election, lawsuits brought by Trump forces in Pennsylvania, Nevada, Virginia, New Jersey, Illinois, Montana, Hawaii, Texas and elsewhere challenged state and county authorities attempting to expand access to mail-in ballots and time for receiving them. They argued that mail voting would increase the incidence of voter fraud. Virginia, Nevada and Vermont have been settled but the rest are pending. While there are almost no examples of ineligible voters voting, there is ample evidence of the fraud of election officials arbitrarily discounting mail-in ballots, saying signatures on ballot envelopes do not match the voter's registration card, or that no signature is present, etc. It is also the case that these lawsuits are directed at state authorities. Court rulings

against the states, especially if they go to the Supreme Court, could significantly strengthen federal control over election laws and regulations.

Since the election, Trump has filed several lawsuits. In Nevada the claim is that non-residents voted. In Georgia it is claimed that absentee ballots received after the 7 pm deadline on Election Day were not separated and held for several days as required but instead were counted. Both of these were dismissed by local judges. However, Republicans in Nevada have filed a lawsuit claiming, without evidence, irregularities concerning the counting of votes and ineligible people voting. That suit is still pending.



In Michigan, the Trump campaign is asking for counting to stop until it has "meaningful access" to observe ballots being counted and "to review those ballots which were opened and counted while we did not have meaningful access." Detroit is one of the places named. The suit specifically targets the Michigan Secretary of State claiming her actions "have undermined the right of all Michigan voters -- including the voters bringing this action -- to participate in fair and lawful elections." It is more likely that the suit is in part a means for the campaign to challenge mail-in ballots based on signatures and to discount votes, not count them. A local Michigan judge dismissed the lawsuit November 5. The Trump campaign has not said whether they will appeal.

In Pennsylvania, one Trump lawsuit involves an effort to keep ballots received after Election Day from being counted, a case likely to go to the U.S. Supreme Court. A second challenges the counting

of mailed and absentee votes in Philadelphia.

For Philadelphia, Trump's observers want to be close enough to see the writing on the outside of the ballots, which is where signatures are. A ruling by the Court of Common Pleas for Philadelphia County allowed for observers to be closer, but also emphasized observers "are directed only to observe and not to audit ballots." Trump's lawyers have appealed that case to Pennsylvania's Commonwealth Court. This then is a means for creating the basis, in future elections, for the campaigns themselves, not local county officials, to have control over auditing ballots -- potentially getting them thrown out, or counted, depending on what serves the campaign.

It is likely that some of these cases, and perhaps additional ones Trump files as the dispute continues, could go to the U.S. Supreme Court. Part of what is occurring then is an effort to have election law determined by the federal government, in this case the Supreme Court.

Currently, for elections, usually the Supreme Court of each state has the final say on election law and usually the federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, lets stand their decisions. This is because the Constitution gives states, not the federal government, the power to decide how elections are run. This power was part of the compromise that secured the forming of the Union at that time, despite the strength of the colonies to be independent republics of their own. Overall the existing structure still keeps power in the hands of the states when it comes to elections.

There have been various times when the federal government has intervened, such as with the *Voting Rights Act*. As well, the *Help America Vote Act* (HAVA) after the 2000 Bush-Gore election

took steps to concentrate power for elections, giving state Secretaries of State control over voter rolls and regulations which before that was mainly at the county level. These current efforts take this further, by now potentially removing this power from the state Secretaries of State and concentrating it more in federal hands. A ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court, for example, against Pennsylvania extending the deadline for receiving ballots, would serve this. It would provide a mechanism to put far greater power at the level of the federal government to say various state election laws and regulations are unconstitutional -- something that could then be applied to other states.

It has been a major feature of the Trump administration to break the bonds of the Constitution and provide conditions for the ruling oligarchs to restructure all previous arrangements to directly seize hold of the political power and eliminate any arrangements that stand in their way. State-controlled elections, especially in conditions where the outcome cannot be predicted, have become such an obstacle.

However, the rulers are perhaps underestimating the broad sentiment among the people that the Supreme Court is now stacked in favour of Trump. The rapid confirmation of Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court was seen as undemocratic. So unlike the Bush-Gore election, when the Supreme Court deciding the election outcome was accepted, that is not likely to be the case now. Among the people, the court is losing its legitimacy, as is generally the case for government at all levels.

A danger to the people is to see such restructuring that favours the rulers as something that favours the people. For elections it would no doubt be justified in the name of eliminating the various inequalities stemming from different state laws and regulations, eliminating the Electoral College and so forth.

The change needed is not greater federal control. It is greater control by the people themselves, their empowerment to decide health care, education, jobs, elections -- all matters of concern. The problem is developing a structure that ensures all are equal members of the polity, with equal rights and duties.

(Photo: V. Pickering)



Equality and Casting and Counting Votes

The various rules for voting and counting in the U.S., different in every state, coupled with possible Supreme Court intervention, means the entire electoral process is rife with anarchy and arbitrary actions. This includes the fact that large numbers of eligible voters are not registered and thus not able to vote. This is commonly due to various obstacles preventing registration, especially targeting African Americans and students. About 3 million prisoners cannot vote. Many immigrants -- despite having lived in the U.S. for decades and being an integral part of the working class -- have been deprived of citizenship and cannot vote.

It is estimated that the current population of voting age (18 and over) is 257,605,088 while those considered eligible to vote number about 239,247,182, a difference of about 18,000,000 (estimates from the Elections Project). Turnout this year is estimated at 159,000,000 or about 66 per cent. Taking the estimated number of eligible voters, that means about 80,000,000 are not counted -- more than the 74,500,000 votes Biden has so far received. If voting age population is used it is closer to 100,000,000 excluded. While there is great promotion that turnout this year was higher than usual, which is the case, it hides the fact that the Biden win now projected is based on the

votes of approximately 28 per cent of the voting age population.

While most other countries have a system where the federal government is responsible for enrolling all those eligible, the U.S. does not. Many countries also require the winner to secure 50 per cent of the eligible vote. The U.S. does not. Some also provide a means to count votes of those who reject the candidates, such as submitting a "spoiled" ballot. The U.S. does not. A ballot line in every state saying "none of the above" likely would have secured an actual



majority in this election as many did not want to vote for either candidate. The turn out more likely represents not so much support for the candidates but rather a reflection of people's desire to have a say in governance -- a drive that will continue to have expression and be decisive in future developments as the broad movement for rights continues to advance.

Arbitrary Elimination of Votes

In addition to the numerous mechanisms the obsolete U.S. system uses to make it more difficult to vote, whether a vote is counted is also arbitrary, with few established standards. There is no equal membership in the polity and certainly no equal casting and counting of votes. So while there is currently an appearance that Biden wants votes counted and Trump wants to stop the counting, the reality is that neither campaign has been concerned that, with the far larger numbers of mail-in ballots this election, larger numbers of votes have likely been discarded on arbitrary grounds. As various lawsuits brought to counter this emphasize, lack of standards "forces election officials to make subjective, arbitrary and standardless determinations as to whether to count a voter's ballot."

Before the election in both Michigan and Pennsylvania, for example, groups from among the people concerned about mail-in votes being excluded brought lawsuits demanding a uniform standard for accepting them. These states, and others, commonly require that the voter sign the envelope provided for the mail-in ballot and that signature is then verified by election officials, commonly using the voter's registration card. However, there is no standard for saying the signatures do not match, nor training of officials for making comparisons. Ballots may also be rejected because the person forgot to sign the envelope. Or in some states did not have it witnessed as required. Or it was not received in time. And many states have no means for these voters to secure redress or even be notified.

In Michigan, the lawsuit said lack of uniform standards concerning signatures allowed election officials throughout the state to employ arbitrary and diverging criteria. The state's Secretary of State issued guidelines that did not eliminate the practice of signature verification, but did implement a statewide standard designed to reduce false rejections. These included that if the signature had "any redeeming qualities" the ballot should be considered valid and only if the signature differs "in multiple, significant and obvious respects," should the ballot be discarded. The guidance also strengthened the mandate that election officials notify voters of rejected ballots and provide cure procedures. But it did not require that such remedies be timely enough for the election involved.

Similarly, in Pennsylvania, the lawsuit said the state failed to require any handwriting training or to provide any standards or guidelines that would aid election officials in their signature analysis. Again, the state's Secretary of State issued guidance, prohibiting all of the state's county boards of elections from rejecting returned absentee or mail ballots "based solely on signature analysis." The state Supreme Court upheld the guidance saying the "county boards of elections are prohibited from rejecting absentee or mail-in ballots based on signature comparison conducted by county

election officials or employees, or as the result of third-party challenges based on signature analysis and comparisons."

It is possible that Trump will challenge both of these decisions.

Lawsuits in many other states have also challenged the lack of notification and timely redress so voters can correct the problems and still have their vote counted. These include actions in Maine, New Jersey, North Carolina, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arizona and North Dakota.

These battles are all indications that voters want a fair and equal basis for participation, which does not exist, while the candidates are acting in a self-serving manner to best meet their own needs. Neither are calling for, nor have called for, the minimal reforms required to ensure all those eligible can vote and that there are standards for equality in voting and running for office. The people are demanding this and far more -- including a set-up where it is the people who decide the candidates, the agenda, a public process that informs and unifies and where the people themselves are empowered to govern and decide.

(Photo: E. Newman)

Readers' Views

Chaotic Elections Process Fails to Address All-Sided Crisis in U.S.



November 2, 2020. Vigil in Buffalo, New York, organized by National Nurses United to honour health care workers who have died of COVID-19 and to fight for their rights and those of their patients. (NNU)

At this point (as of the morning of November 4), the U.S. elections are being turned into theatre of the absurd as Donald Trump is claiming victory even though millions of ballots are yet to be counted. This chaotic situation facing the people of the U.S. could not have turned out any other way because during the lead-up to the elections every aspect of the elections process was in dispute between the two parties which dominate elections in the U.S. on behalf of the ruling elite. The ongoing accusations of fraud, cheating and lies during the run-up to Election Day exposed that the antagonistic divisions among the ruling elite are so deep that even the elections process, which they have always controlled, is in such severe crisis that it can no longer be used to determine which of the two dominant parties will rule for the next four years.

With 134.5 million votes counted, Biden has 258 Electoral College votes with 50 per cent of the popular vote, while Trump stands at 213 Electoral Votes with 48.4 per cent of the popular vote (270 Electoral College votes are needed to win the presidential race). These numbers are based on the vote in states where one of the candidates has either been declared the winner or is leading. Votes are still being counted in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Georgia, Arizona and Nevada.

It is important to remember that these elections are taking place at a time when the U.S. is facing serious dangers due to the increasing levels of COVID-19 infections. The latest statements by Public Health officials warn that this is a period of the "most concerning and most deadly phase of the pandemic."^[1] With the vicious infighting over the result of the elections, the dangers faced by the people continue to be ignored. This has further exposed a broken system which is incapable of looking after the needs of the people.

The deep crisis in which the ruling elite are mired is in sharp contrast to the growing movement of the working class and people across the U.S. who have been in action demanding fundamental changes to the existing broken system. Workers from many sectors of the economy continue to demand protections from COVID-19 in workplaces and communities and have also gone into action to oppose racism which they have identified as another deadly disease ravaging the U.S. that must be eradicated. Police killings, decades of racial discrimination in health care, housing, unemployment, education, criminal justice and an unending list of injustices are inspiring the movement of the people in the U.S. for change and to build a modern society which is capable of defending the rights of all.

At this time as the U.S. working class and people face the perilous situation created by the ruling elite in their contention for control of the U.S. economy, the Canadian working class stands as one with the movement of the workers and people who are putting forward their own demands for a modern society which upholds the rights of all.

Note

1. From an internal memo by Dr. Deborah Birx, member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force.

Disinformation to Hide Crisis of Political and Electoral Process

Within the anarchy and chaos which is prevailing in the U.S. election, there is widespread disinformation from various quarters to interpret the vote in a way that distorts what the U.S. working class and people are fighting for so as to divert their struggle for their rights and democratic renewal.

Imperialist media are interpreting what they call the unexpected strong vote for Trump -- unexpected in terms of what the polls predicted -- as showing that millions of U.S. workers are indifferent to the COVID-19 pandemic and how the federal government has handled it and voted for "the economy." The mass struggle of workers of many sectors to protect themselves and the people, especially the most vulnerable, from the spread of the pandemic is denied and hidden behind a wall of silence and treated as taboo by the monopoly media. The media speak of "two Americas," portrayed as the Trump version versus the Biden version, in which a vote for Trump is said to show indifference to the pandemic while a vote for Biden shows concern. The two Americas in contention are not Biden's and Trump's but the ruling elite and its worn out unrepresentative democracy versus the people's fight for rights and a new democracy of their own making.

The U.S. workers and people do not decide the issues in these elections. They do not control the process. Those with immense privilege and power and their political representatives, known for their anti-social offensive against the people -- including racist attacks, deportation of migrants, foreign wars and interference to achieve regime change abroad -- control the process. The will and the consciousness of workers and people is not reflected or expressed in this electoral process. The only way workers can express their will and consciousness is through their own work, discussion and deliberation on the problems the class and the society are facing and working out pro-social solutions to these problems so that the crises that are tearing society apart are resolved in a way that benefits the people.



A suggestion is made that when the workers and people stand up to the provocations of the Trump side -- including the call for political strikes if Trump refuses to leave if he is defeated -- they are defending the status quo of the U.S. electoral process and institutions.

This is not the case. Workers are ready to go into action to make sure that a coup is not organized on the basis of what Trump calls opposing "illegal votes" and the Democrats' "stealing the elections" but the content of this action goes far beyond the confines of the current electoral process and the U.S. democracy. It is a fight to oppose further descent into anarchy and chaos, which means further disempowerment of the people through violence. It is a fight for the rights and well-being of all, against their disempowerment which is a feature of the nation-wrecking anti-social offensive and increased warmongering that has been going on for decades. It is a fight for the renewal of democracy so that people can affect changes in the direction of the economy and politics and exercise control.

The U.S. workers and people are facing serious challenges and Canadian workers must vigorously support them, which includes making sure that Canada does not line up behind the warring factions of the U.S. ruling elite, and stepping up the fight against Canada's integration into the U.S. war economy.

The Peoples of the U.S. and the Americas Are Our Allies, Not U.S. Imperialism

My neighbour is rich
He can buy the earth
He wants to buy the earth
But the earth belongs to everybody and is not for sale.
- Félix Leclerc

On November 4, as the U.S. presidential elections had not been finalized, the Premier of Quebec, François Legault, stated concerning the elections: "We will continue to work hard to build our relationship, regardless of the president the Americans choose. I would not like other states or countries to interfere in our elections. So, it will be up to Americans to decide." The Deputy Premier of Quebec, Geneviève Guilbeault, also stated: "We will work with whoever is elected and

respect the choice of the Americans." Finally, the Minister of International Relations, Nadine Girault, said: "Our ties are strong and we are essential trading allies. We will continue to support the relationship we have always had with our neighbour to the South."

To find a period in the past when the Quebec people considered the U.S. an ally, we must go back to the 19th century, when the Patriots considered the U.S. an ally in the anti-colonial struggle against the British Empire, which came to a head with the Great Assemblies of the people in 1837-38 and the need to put an end to the control the British Empire had over their lives.

But with the direct experience of the Quebec people, especially of the expansion of U.S. capital in Quebec and Canada in the 1960s and the all-out U.S. wars of aggression, their brutal and criminal overthrow of governments and their war alliances, the Quebec people sided with the peoples of the world, including the U.S. youth opposed to the Vietnam War. Among many expressions of this, following the coup in Chile in 1973, Quebec communities wholeheartedly welcomed the Chilean people who had been forced into exile by the murderous U.S.-led Pinochet coup.



During that period, Quebec workers and people also felt the brunt of the expansion of U.S. capital in Quebec. They became keenly aware that the official policy of successive governments, irrespective of their political colours, was "Quebec is open for business." This meant that the human and natural resources of Quebec were to be put at the disposal of foreign corporations, especially U.S. ones, a situation which comes to the fore again and again, as the Quebec government openly sides with these monopolies against striking workers and their communities, as was the case in Alma in 2012 when it sided with Rio Tinto Alcan. This also meant, as in the case of the lumber and mining industries as well as of U.S.-financed hydro-power mega-projects, that governments would side with the owners of these industries against the hereditary and treaty rights of the Innu, Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples.

As for interfering in our own affairs here, U.S. agencies were particularly active in Quebec in the 1960s and 1970s, as part of their worldwide Operation Chaos, to subvert and suppress the struggle of the Quebec working class and youth in defence of their rights, including their right to decide their own future and to oppose U.S. imperialist wars of aggression and "alliances," such as U.S.-led NATO and all of its consequences for Quebec and Canada, such as the militarization of the economy and a foreign policy in the service of U.S. global ambitions. This is seen today in the hostile U.S. policy against Cuba and Venezuela, for example, while the Quebec people oppose the brutal and criminal sanctions being imposed on these countries and stand for the right of the people to decide and for relations between countries based on peaceful relations and mutual assistance.

This is what makes statements about respecting what the U.S. people decide so deceptive and so out of touch. To lend any credibility to such a brutal and anti-conscious process which can no longer even be called "political" is precisely aimed at defending a political process that no longer serves the interests of the people and society, and subverting the struggles of the peoples for change. It is to promote an outdated, corrupt and unjust political process in which millions of people cannot even register to vote, in which the campaigns of both parties imposed upon the people as a "choice" are financed by the largest corporations in the world, and in which the very

notion of public authority, of public good and of the polity have been replaced by narrow private interests.



If Trump Wins/If Biden Wins

The struggle of the people of the U.S. to decide is being waged in all earnest in all the workers' and peoples' movements which have been ongoing even during election months and are willfully being ignored by those who want to perpetuate the myth of the "greatest democracy in the world." It is being expressed in the active participation -- in the face of the most brutal suppression -- of more than 20 million people from all walks of life against racist police killings and violence, demanding equality, justice and accountability. As part of this movement, discussions are taking place about the existing political set-up and that its constitution and election fraud do not serve the interests of the people and block the development of a society that can and should serve these interests.

This struggle is being waged by the U.S. workers who have waged thousands of strikes in recent months in defence of their rights and their security, especially in these

times of pandemic. In this respect, nurses -- over 2,000 health care workers have died in the U.S. due to COVID-19 -- have been particularly active as they courageously held vigils throughout the election to honour the dead and fight for the living, demanding better protection and for national public safety standards for which all private and public institutions must be held accountable.

There is a lot at stake behind seemingly innocuous statements such as those cited above, especially as concerns our relationship with the U.S. and the life-and-death struggle for change that is taking place in the Americas, including Quebec and Canada, at this time.

As for the Quebec working class and people, our relationship is above all with the working class and people of the U.S. and of the Americas in this period when, indeed, the effects of all the past injustices have caught up with those who form the ruling classes and have benefited from them.

One humanity, one struggle -- the struggle for democracy based on the defence of the rights of all, and, foremost, the right of the people to decide, to develop and choose the forms of democracy which suit their needs, without any foreign interference.

(Photo: VOR)

Paying Attention to the U.S. Election

If it were not for the reports in the Party press, including reports from the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization's *Voice of Revolution* and other U.S. fighting organizations, and information that people can glean on social media of the resistance movement in the U.S., one could fall into the trap of despair that the media paints of hopelessness and chaos, of a United States divided between

"progressives" who voted for Biden and "reactionaries" who voted for Trump. According to this rendering it is the aims and manoeuvres of the ruling elite that matter and the people are nothing but voting cattle.



July 20, 2020. Strike for Black Lives in Seattle, Washington, part of nationwide day of action.

The two Americas in contention, as pointed out by Kathleen Chandler in *TML Weekly* November 1, are the vision of the people versus the vision of the rulers. Pundits are wringing their hands and wondering why four years of Trump did not result in a landslide vote for Biden. What is striking is the consciousness of the U.S. working class and people that the problems that they are facing are not going to be sorted out by the election but on the basis of the ongoing fight that is being waged.

The U.S. working class is not passive and disengaged, which the media would have us believe, as shown in the many many actions of organized and unorganized workers over the past several months, addressing issues of police violence and repression as part of the resistance spearheaded by the African American community, putting forward the demands of health care workers, teachers and other frontline workers for adequate protection for themselves, those they serve and the public in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and with regard to the election itself.



The resolution of the 70,000 member Rochester labour council calling for a general strike if Trump does not respect the outcome of the election, which also spoke of the diminished quality of existing institutions, and the council's intent that their stand spark a national conversation is a reflection of the growing consciousness of the working class that it, and not the 'leaders' and 'authorities' are upholding their social responsibility, as workers and as electors. The Juneteenth actions of workers in 30 U.S. ports in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, the walkouts of workers in fast food places, nursing homes, rideshare businesses, farms, airports and other workplaces on July 20, along with thousands more who walked off their jobs for 8 minutes and 46 seconds to remember George Floyd and others killed by police, and the continuing organizing of nurses and teachers to demand

action to protect themselves, patients and students from COVID-19 all show what the U.S. working class is made of.

In the aftermath of the 2016 U.S. election, the media and politicians of the main U.S. cartel parties and their counterparts in Canada "analyzed" that the U.S. working class was divided between those who supported the Republican Party and Trump in particular, and those who supported the Democrats and Hillary Clinton in particular. Four years later, in reporting on the initial results of the 2020 presidential election, the same nonsense is being spouted. That shows that the media and the politicians of the cartel parties have only one aim in mind and that is to keep the working class and people of the U.S., Canada and the world disenfranchised and out of the picture. What the ruling elite fear more than anything is the participation of the workers, youth, people from national minority communities, African Americans and people from all walks of life, who have taken to the streets since May to demand an end to police violence and uphold the rights of all, including, most importantly, the right of the people to participate in making the decisions that affect their lives. It is in that fight for the New that the future lies.

(Photos: SEIU, California Nurses Assn)

U.S. Election Night and the Two Americas

Listening to U.S. election night on Radio-Canada, or on any other radio or television station for that matter, was a bitter and suffocating experience, what with all the comments and interviews on how it unfolded. As captives, our eyes remained riveted on Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The issues were reduced to an analysis of pros and cons, of fights between Republicans and Democrats, of predictions based on polls, algorithms and statistics that will eventually let us know the outcome.

During the entire evening all that was talked about was the two Americas, the America of Biden and that of Trump, as if the people of the U.S. do not exist, nor their history, their current struggles for justice, for an end to police powers, their demands and claims for peace, for new arrangements. All that was presented were two individuals, one of them supposedly crazier than the other, and that in the end the people of the U.S. would have to choose the better of the two, between the two Americas that, in the end, pursue the same agenda of excluding the people from any power over the destiny of the United States.

The reality, however is that both these Americas, are of the most reactionary ruling elite and are on the same side against the people of the U.S., who are fighting for a new, just, peaceful, anti-war, humane America, without any discrimination, targeting and labelling, and where everyone's life matters. The people of the U.S. are trying to bring in the New, rejecting the Old that the elite is trying to impose upon their conscience and their lives, to prevent them from moving forward. But the people of the U.S. are on the march to have a modern, democratic personality emerge, one which demands the recognition of the rights of all. There is nothing more liberating.



Whatever the election result, it will not change the current challenge facing the people of the U.S. They are in action to change the direction of the United States and they must stay the course and remain focused on what they are in the process of achieving. They are speaking with their deeds and actions from their own experience and rejecting the rhetoric, empty words and pressure of all kinds in the name of the Union, anti-people patriotism, and an outdated and bankrupt constitution. Courage to the people of the U.S. and full support for their struggle to decide!

(Photo: VOR)

Results of U.S. Elections Do Not Reflect Consciousness of the Working Class

The ruling circles of U.S. imperialism and their mass media have flooded the airwaves with the famous red and blue board representing the electoral map of the United States. Television, internet, newspapers, radio and so on point to the acute division in the country that their picture shows. This division between blue and red allegedly reflects the will of the people of the U.S. Worse, it is said to represent the consciousness of the U.S. working class. All evening on election night we were told again and again that the blue collar workers and the people in the rural U.S. were supporting Donald Trump. It was also said that many unionized workers in the major industrial states such as Pennsylvania and Michigan voted for Trump. All sorts of nonsense is said to explain why U.S. workers prefer Trump to Biden -- that they like his frankness in saying what he thinks without a politician's filter, that he denounces the establishment, that he works for his country, that he does not impose "extreme sanitary measures," etc.

From the other side, it is said that U.S. workers prefer Biden because he has the support of the big central labour bodies and Trump is the enemy of the unions. Biden represents social-democracy, which is said to be more pro-working class, as well as supporting state arrangements that enable the large trade union organizations to have a say. According to this, the Democratic Party is the natural party of U.S. workers.

The imperialist ruling circles and their factions are not just trying to impose their backward outlook on the working class. They are also trying to impose a false consciousness on the working class to serve their own narrow interests. This will not work forever. The U.S. working class is working to solve this problem once and for all and to define democracy in its own interests, and not be defined by an alien social class which is antagonistic to its interests.

The U.S. elections have shown how bankrupt the political institutions of the rich have become, how they serve the rich and represent only the rich. The hundreds of millions of dollars that was spent by both sides to gain recognition and get elected are like a caricature of what U.S. democracy has become. U.S. institutions have lost so much credibility and legitimacy that serious political discussion is destroyed before it can even begin. It can be seen that these institutions are used to block efforts to be independent of the big imperialist cartel parties. The broad resistance movement and the increasing role of the workers in it however is developing independent actions, as seen in the refusal to be diverted by elections and the strengthening of the fight for rights. A problem being taken up for solution is the need for the people's own institutions that allow for discussion and decision-making and further development of the political working class consciousness needed.

The big imperialist bourgeoisie wants to invent a fake and artificial consciousness of the working class based on its crisis-ridden institutions. It can't work. The big media can repeat *ad nauseam* that the working class voted for this or that person or this or that party, but they forget that the consciousness of the working class is transformed every day in its struggle for its rights and the right to be. All the bourgeoisie can do is to imprison the vote for its narrow interests within the

framework of its political system which is in crisis. But that is all. In any case, that's all it seeks because its only goal is to monopolize supreme power.

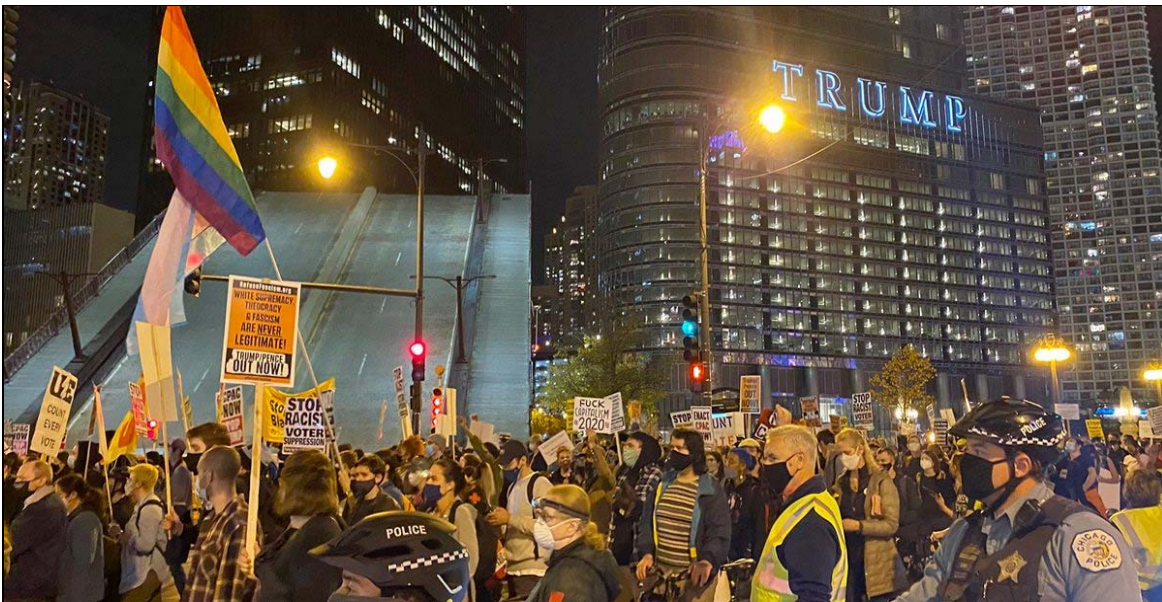
The only real thing that can be seen in the red and blue picture is the rotting consciousness of the imperialist big bourgeoisie. The true consciousness of the working class is being formed by the resistance struggle that is taking place throughout the United States. It is this new consciousness that represents change and the future for the people of the U.S.

Statements

Defend Our Rights! Into the Streets! Shut It Down!

- United National Antiwar Coalition -

We, the undersigned social justice activists, peace and justice organizations, defenders of fundamental democratic rights, defenders of Black Lives, of Migrant workers, defenders of healthcare for all and in opposition to endless war, recognize that no matter who is elected president on November 3, the attack on our democratic and human rights will continue. However, we reject President Trump's threats to ignore the November 3 election results and declare himself president.



November 4, 2020. Chicago, Illinois.

Clearly the system itself is in crisis. Corporate controlled elections are used as a distraction to their failures to protect and defend the people. Tens of millions of people have been in the streets against racist police violence. Their voices are ignored. Both parties want more police funding and ignore healthcare for all.

On Wednesday, September 23 President Trump, in response to a reporter's question declared: "We want to get rid of the [mail-in] ballots, and we'll have a very peaceful -- there won't be a transfer, frankly. There'll be a continuation."

We can only consider President Trump's November 3 assertions as the attack on fundamental democratic rights and an effort to establish an open U.S. dictatorship.

Democratic rights have been under attack for a long time. The will of the people is denied in a

system so dominated by money and corruption that neither of the major party candidates represent our needs or interests.

The defunding of the Post Office and aggressive voter suppression measures, threats to reject mail-in ballots, plans to use Republican controlled state legislatures, state courts and the U.S. Supreme Court are overwhelmingly aimed at suppressing Black, Latinx and Native American representation.

President Trump threatens to void the entire process by massive disenfranchisement of tens of millions of voters and to call in the U.S. military to suppress massive protests.

The fact that U.S. elections are largely limited to the parties of the corporate elite, that ballot access and access to the corporate media is similarly restricted, further confirms the system's basic failings.



In this period of economic collapse, escalating pandemic, climate crisis, racist police violence and armed militias the only way forward is determined people's mobilization to secure our rights. The corporate elite and their political parties can't be relied on.

As collective signers of this statement we take no position on any of the 2020 presidential candidates. We are united in defense of the right of the people to freely cast their votes and that their votes will be counted.

In a November crisis of the entire system and all its institutions we see no alternative but a full national mobilization in the streets to shut down the nation entirely, including the closure of all government and corporate institutions via united and coordinated strike actions and related mass protests. Deploying the mass power of the people is the only way forward.

***Prepare to Shut It Down!
Into the Streets!***

(Photos: Vashon Photo, APWU)

Defund Hate: No Matter Election Outcome, Congress Must Defund Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection and Prioritize Wellbeing of Our Communities

- United We Dream -

As the people of the United States await the election results, the Defund Hate campaign issued the following statement:

"In January, the next president of the United States and members of the 117th Congress will assume responsibility for the health and wellbeing of U.S. communities and families still fighting for survival in a global pandemic. This includes immigrants who are detained or who are at risk of

having their families and communities torn apart by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Regardless of the outcome of the election, the Defund Hate campaign will continue to fight to dismantle these racist and militaristic agencies which endanger our families and neighbors, and drain resources from our communities.



November 3, 2020. Youth from United We Dream in Houston, Texas provide food and other supplies to those forced to spend long hours in line to vote.

"Twenty-one people died in ICE custody in fiscal year 2020, the highest number of deaths in 15 years, even as the number of people in custody decreased significantly because of Trump administration policies sealing off the southern border to people seeking asylum. Adding to the tragic loss of life in ICE custody, CBP officers have killed two people in Texas and California in the past two weeks. The death toll in ICE and CBP custody underscores that these agencies operate within a culture of violence that results in sexual assault, violent abuse, medical neglect, and unsanitary conditions. Yet ICE and CBP suffer no consequences for endangering the health and safety of hundreds of thousands of people.



"This system of abuse and neglect has cost U.S. taxpayers more than \$25 billion -- an unacceptable waste of resources at any time, but especially during a global pandemic that has cost the lives of more than 225,000 Americans, shuttered school, and threatened the livelihoods of millions of people.

"Our nation cannot heal until we end racist systems of incarceration and immigration enforcement. We're thankful for congressional champions who have stood with us since the launch of the Defund Hate campaign in 2017. Regardless of what is to come, we look forward to continuing this fight for the safety and wellbeing of immigrant communities together. We call on Congress and local and state governments to end the wasteful spending of our tax dollars on ICE and CBP that puts lives in jeopardy, and to instead fund education, housing, health care, and other programs that provide opportunity and increase our collective wellbeing."

The #DefundHate campaign, composed of organizations representing directly impacted communities, faith leaders, and civil rights and immigrant rights advocates, is committed to divestment from agencies that tear apart our families and terrorize our communities. For too long, our representatives have said they care about our communities while simultaneously funding aggressive immigration enforcement and deadly immigration jails. They must be held accountable to keep their promises and stand with the immigrant community. We call on our members of Congress to say no and vote against wasting taxpayer dollars on an abusive and deadly immigration enforcement system. Instead, we want our tax dollars used to strengthen our families and communities by investing in education, housing, nutrition and health care programs that provide opportunity and increase well-being.

United We Dream is a youth-led network in the U.S. that fights for justice and dignity for all immigrants.

(October 30, 2020. Photos: C. Jimenez, VOR)

Photo Review

Actions Continue Across the Country in Defence of Rights

Across the U.S. in the days before and since Election Day, November 3, working people, youth, African Americans, Indigenous peoples and national minorities have been boldly continuing to defend the rights of all in the face of ongoing police brutality and the anarchy and violence arising from the contending factions of the ruling circles in the elections. The people are making clear that whatever the outcome of the election, they will continue to press their demands and rely on their own initiatives and organizations. Actions in Portland, Minneapolis, Washington, DC and elsewhere made this clear.

Sustained protests against police brutality and impunity carried on in several cities. Protesters also opposed the self-serving attempts to manipulate the election process, adamantly defending their right to have a say in the direction of the country by casting their votes and demanding that at the very least, all their votes be counted. This was notable in places like Detroit and Philadelphia, where there are disputes among the rulers as to whether to count all the mail-in ballots. The demand raised by the people is not so much about the outcome, but rather that the existing electoral system excludes them and they demand to be counted.

In Seattle, on November 3, hundreds of people carried on the more than 150 days of continual protests demanding equality, justice and accountability. As has occurred since May, they were met by a heavy police presence and arrests. Their actions continue.

Demonstrations also continued in Portland. On November 4, the day after the elections, state and county police again attacked people, declaring the action a riot. The Oregon National Guard was already on standby for the elections. It was activated by Governor Kate Brown to assist in "crowd control." Some 50 National Guard troops joined the repression of protesters.

Other states, including Wisconsin, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas also had National Guard deployed, both in anticipation of protests and to assist at polling stations Election Day. In the ongoing protests for rights since May, about 40,000 National Guard have been deployed in various states at various times. Some of them, like the many veterans joining protests, have taken their stand with their neighbours demanding rights and refused to participate in repressing people.

In Minneapolis on November 4, people persisted in their efforts to demand justice for George

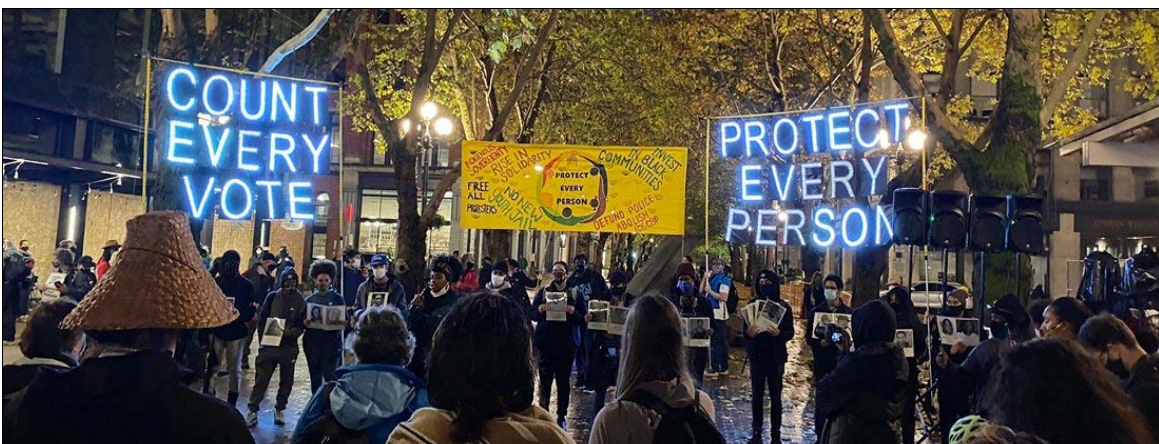
Floyd and all those killed by police and for defunding, demilitarizing and control of policing. They again marched on Interstate 94 to focus attention on their demands. Local and state police carried out mass arrests of 646 people. Undaunted, protests continued November 5 and 6 to denounce the arrests and persist in their demands for justice and equality.

In New York City, nightly protests in support of the Black Lives Matter movement have been underway since the evening of November 3.

In Washington, DC protests to oppose police brutality and demand rights have been persisting since May and have been daily since Election Day. The most recent case of racist police killings involves Karon Hylton, the 20-year-old African American man who was killed in a traffic collision in October as a result of an unjust police chase. Actions here and elsewhere also demanded an end to detention of immigrant children, and that detention camps be closed and expressed the unity of African Americans and Latinx together with all those fighting for equality and justice. On November 4, several organizations also raised demands to protect the natural environment.

It is evident from all the actions that people of all nationalities and walks of life are standing together as one and advancing their battles for rights. The election chaos did not divert these efforts but rather further affirmed the need for the people to be the decision-makers on all matters that impact their lives.

Seattle, Washington





November 4, 2020. Police attack on the peaceful march left one person in serious condition in hospital and a number of arrests were made. Organizers called for further actions.

Portland, Oregon

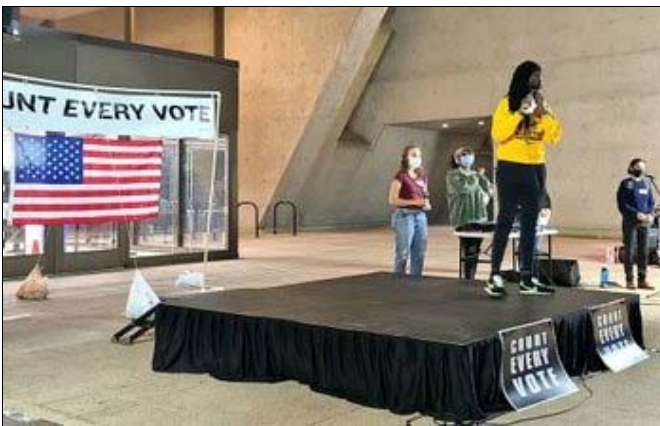




Denver, Colorado



Dallas, Texas



Milwaukee, Wisconsin



Minneapolis, Minnesota

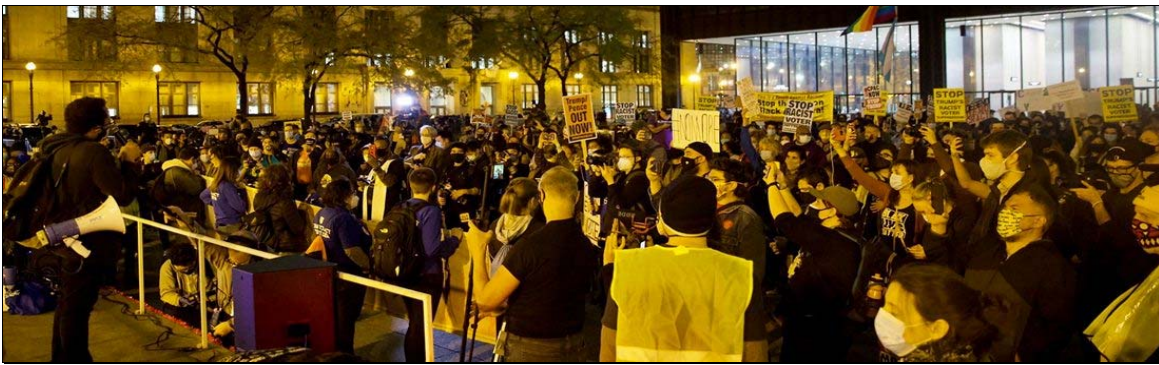


November 5, 2020. Twin Cities organizers hold a press conference outside Minnesota Governor Tim Walz's mansion to denounce the mass arrests the previous day.



November 4, 2020. People are kettled by state and local police on Interstate 94 during a peaceful protest and 646 are arrested.

Chicago, Illinois

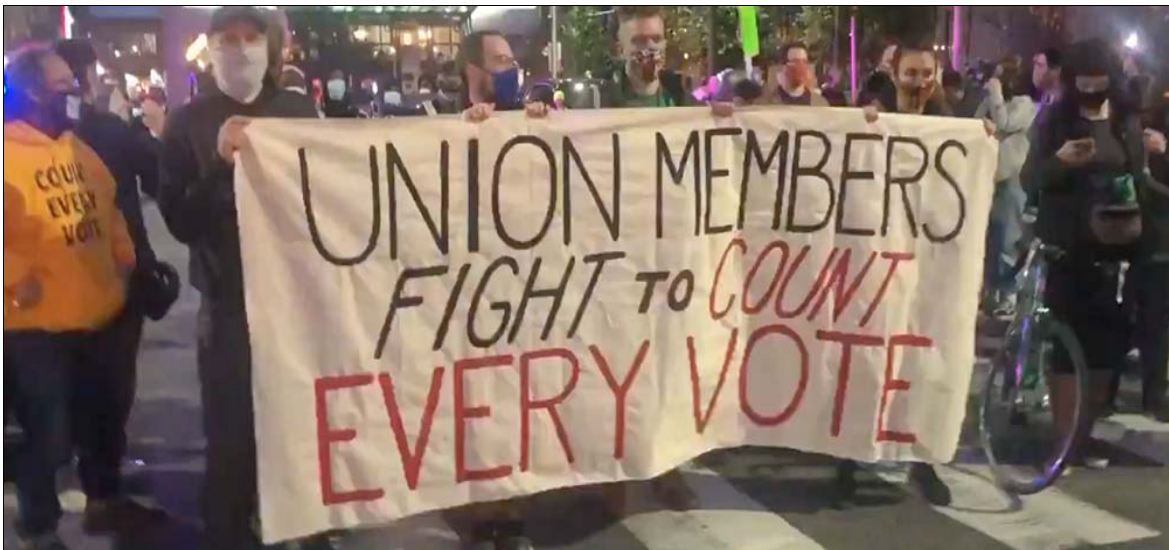


Detroit, Michigan





Philadelphia, Pennsylvania





Harrisburg, Pennsylvania



November 4, 2020. Rally outside Pennsylvania state legislature.

Lancaster, Pennsylvania



Graham, North Carolina



November 3, 2020. Participants in an Election Day rally are violently attacked by police.

Georgia



Boston, Massachusetts



New York City, New York





Washington, DC



November 4, 2020.





November 3, 2020. Election night protests outside the White House.

(Photos: Unicorn Riot, O. Salisbury, Jaoquin, Top Quality DF, S. Burkey, Popular Mobilization, S. Olmos, Texas Working Families, G. Butterfield, D. Johnson, J. Potter, Vashon Photo, A. Azikiwe, E. Newman, We Are Michigan, Philly We Rise, Indivisibly Philadelphia, Tues Toomey HBG, Lancaster Stands Up, A. Criden, Its Going Down, New Georgia Project, New York Communities for Change, D. Turetsky, Make the road Action, G. Livingston, M. Jourdan, V. Pickering, Spaces in Action, M. Kerrigan, C. Folgar)



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