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## Make a Plan to Resist



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The cable news talking heads seem obsessed with Joe Biden’s “significant” lead over Donald Trump in the national polls – as if this lead signifies a certain coming Biden victory in the presidential election.

Also feeding the narrative that Biden is likely to win are stories and film clips of millions of Americans standing in long lines to vote early in record numbers.

This is dangerously pacifying. Nearly two and a half centuries since its founding, the United States, self-described homeland and headquarters of democracy, does not select its top elected official, the president, on the basis of a national popular vote. The Electoral College,

devised by slave-owning constitutional framers for whom democracy was the ultimate nightmare, restricts the presidential election to the contest for all-or-nothing Elector slates in a relatively small number of states. And in these states, the horse race between Biden and Trump is much closer than it is in on the national scale. It seems likely that Trump will receive a significant amount of hidden white support, not captured by pollsters.

Overall, the Electoral College leans well to the right, over-representing the country's most reactionary, white and rural regions so extremely that Biden cannot win the final tally without beating Trump by far more than a simple majority of the national popular vote.

But that's not all. People telling pollsters how they are going to vote is one thing. Getting votes adequately taken and fairly counted is another thing altogether.

Reflecting their captivity to the Republifascist party, many of the contested states practice partisan and racist voter suppression (both legal and extra-legal) in ways that hurt Biden's chances. The violence promoting Republifascist president's campaign has added physical intimidation to the mix in and around battleground state cities and towns.

At the same time and far worse, the Trump administration and GOP have made it crystal clear that they will immediately *attack the legitimacy of the record-setting number of mail-in ballots that are required by the very pandemic that Trump has multiplied across the nation.*

Those mail-in ballots are going to lean heavily Democratic since Democrats take the coronavirus more seriously than do Republicans. With many right-wing state and federal courts on their side all the way up to the now 6-3 right-wing US Supreme Court, Trump's attorney general William Barr and the GOP's army of (anti-)election lawyers will move to stop the counting of mail-in ballots, thereby throwing Trump the election in the states that matter and thus in the nation.

Three members of the right-wing Trump court – Kavanaugh, Gorsuch, and now Coney Barrett – were Bush lawyers in the high court's infamous *Bush v. Gore* decision. That ruling *cancelled a re-count* of ballots in a single state, Florida, throwing the 2000 election to the right-wing monster George W. Bush. Trump's first legal assault on the election, telegraphed in advance, will be about *suspending the initial count in multiple states.*

Even if ballots somehow get fully counted, Trump will challenge Electoral College slates in contested states that go for Biden. There's nothing in the US Constitution that requires states to send Washington (Congress) slates that reflect their popular votes. Republicans control both houses of the state legislatures in numerous contested states and can be counted on to advance Republican slates even in states where Biden wins the most vote. his, too, could work its way up to the Supreme Court, where Trump would prevail.

The vote in *Trump v. Biden* before Ruth Bader Ginsburg died was likely 5-4 Biden. With the hard-right Christian cultist Amy Coney-Barrett now in place, the odds lean 5-4 Trump. The chess pieces are in place for neofascistic electoral-judicial checkmate.

That's a big part of why Trump looks so confident on the campaign trail with an approval rating in the low 40s – and of why his campaign is focused just on turning out his big but minority base.

Many Americans will protest the theft of the 2020 election (the third or perhaps fourth of the last six US presidential contests in which the candidate with the most popular votes loses). That's why Trump has been preparing violent mobs to suppress anti-coup protests. It's why his authoritarian handmaid and personal attorney general William Barr is preparing to declare martial law and squelch "Sedition" (protest) with paramilitary forces (from the Department of Homeland Security, especially ICE and Border Patrol) accountable only to Trump.

No one should be surprised by any of this. A review of Trump's horrific record, including stealing babies from their mothers' arms at the southern border, applauding the execution of civil rights protesters by militia members, ordering and applauding the police state assassination of an antifascist, dog-whistling white supremacists, proclaiming his desire to be president for life, calling Black Lives Matter protesters "terrorists," upholding the Confederacy, downplaying and spreading a lethal pandemic, and so much more shows that there's nothing this malevolent orange ogre wouldn't do to smite his enemies and stay in power. Nothing.

Trump recently led his frothing Michigan backers in hate rally chants of "Lock Her Up" directed at a state governor his armed neofascist backers were plotting to kidnap and murder. Trump has called the nation's leading infectious disease expert a "disaster," and described people who advocate public health protections against COVID-19 as "idiots." Trump has even used his own infection to downplay the danger of the virus, claiming that "we are turning the corner" even as numerous states now set new infection records. This is sheer eugenicist madness, literally on steroids.

Believe the tyrant. Drop the disbelief. Trump "wouldn't actually move to steal an election"? Seriously? *Nothing is beyond the pale* when it comes to the wannabe fascist dictator Donald Trump. Nothing.

Trump has been openly proclaiming his aim to cripple and steal the 2020 election. It's not a hidden mystery. The Trump-Barr coup has been unfolding in the open to no small degree. As *Salon's* Chauncy de Vega [recently observed](#):

"Donald Trump continues to make it clear that he does not intend to leave office peacefully if he is defeated... *Trump considers any election in which he is not the 'winner' to be null and void.* Trump's appointment of Amy Coney Barrett to the United States Supreme Court *is an obvious quid pro quo to secure his 'reelection' if his attorneys and other agents can sufficiently sabotage the vote on Election Day and beyond...* During his debate with Biden, Trump... [commanded white supremacist paramilitaries to be prepared to attack](#) his and their 'enemies' if he loses on Election Day or is otherwise removed from office... Trump also wants Joe Biden and other leading Democrats imprisoned and perhaps even executed because

he deems them to be guilty of ‘treason’ and a ‘coup’ attempt against him. Trump and his Attorney General William Barr have also threatened to use the United States military against the American people if they dare to protest the outcome of the 2020 Election if Trump somehow finds some extra-legal (if not outright illegal) way to stay in office” (emphasis added).

Liberal and progressive “defend the vote” activists talk about organizing demonstrations and strikes “if and when Trump tries to steal the election.” It’s good to know they are mobilizing for protest after the holy day, but there’s no “if” about it. The “when” is now and has been since at least the beginning of the summer, when Trump and Barr tried to use the George Floyd rebellion as a Reichstag Fire moment – and since whenever it dawned on the Trump team that the Trump pandemic could help them steal the election by requiring mass mail-in ballots they could challenge both in court and in the streets.

“Don’t let them take your power away,” Barack Obama says in a flyer dropped on my steps in Iowa City. “Make a plan now to get involved and vote.” How typically Weimar of Obama, who went to Urbana, Illinois two years ago to tell young people that “the best way to protest is to vote.” Of course millions are going to try to vote the orange monstrosity out of office. But, no, the best way to protest and resist is to protest and resist and this is an election in which sustained popular resistance is required even to have a minimally decent vote and vote count, insofar as such a thing is possible under the deeply flawed, right-leaning US party and elections system. The courts won’t save us. The Democrats and their allied Astroturf movements won’t save us.

A serious commitment to “getting involved” will involve far more than just voting for candidates selected in advance for you by the ruling class once every 1,460 days – and more than resisting the theft of the election. Still, *the theft must be resisted*. The whole American System that hatched Trump and his inauthentic Dem opposition is cancer on numerous levels. It is both spiritual and material death. It can only be cured through social and not merely political revolution, the “radical reconstruction of society itself” that Dr. Martin Luther King identified as “the real issue to be faced.”

*But the Trump regime is a malignant fascistic tumor that must be removed through mass action if the patient is going to have any chance of moving forward towards “the real issue to be faced.”* The administration is a loaded gun aimed straight at the head of our hopes for a decent, democratic, and sustainable future. It must go.

By all means, vote, but understand that that voting once every four years is a woefully insufficient form of people’s politics. Make a plan and reach out to activist and revolutionary groups like [Refuse Fascism](#) for a deeper and daily engagement beneath and beyond the quadrennial electoral extravaganza. Vote with your feet and your voice in the streets, in the public squares, in the schools, in the workplaces, online, offline, from your car, on the bus, in the subway every single day going forward. The ruling classes of this country all the way up

to the military command and top financial elite, needs to understand that America will be ungovernable if they insist on jamming a second and worse racist-sexist-nativist-eco-cidal and neofascist Trump term down our throats.

Even in the unlikely event that Trump is defeated by popular and Electoral College margins so large that he can't semi-credibly contest the outcome, the wannabe fascistic dictator will remain in position to do unthinkable damage for eleven more weeks. The world can't wait until January 20th, 2021 for the defenestration of this lethal lunatic.

The death toll of the pandemic that Trump has fanned and continues to lie about ("it's going away") may well reach half a million (nearing America's body count during World War II) by next February. This regime must go now.

The tumor must be cut out. The Trump regime/nightmare must go. Then we must attack *en masse* the conditions that gave rise to it — the whole damn system, including the populace-pacifying fake-progressive "liberal" operatives and apologists like Obama and his friends at CNN and MSDNC.

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*Paul Street's* new book is [\*The Passive Resistance: Obama, Trump, and Politics of Appeasement.\*](#)