

# United States Elections: There Will be Trouble Ahead\* — A long Winded Rant

Saturday 7 November 2020, by [PASHKOFF Susan](#) (Date first published: 18 October 2020).

*\* Yes, I know that the song says “may” but I think we are well and truly screwed ... but I do think that love, romance and dancing will certainly make us feel better, otoh, we may need to do a bit more ...*

**Anti\*Capitalist Resistance Supporter Susan Pashkoff writing in the *Daily Kos*.**

## Contents

- [The Pandemic](#)
- [The Judiciary Nightmare](#)
- [Whatever happened to the \(...\)](#)
- [The Whole Mess feels too \(...\)](#)

If the difference between an authoritarian and a fascist is mass support, then we need to start talking about fascism rather than authoritarianism if the person is Donald J Trump. Trump has a rather significant base (estimates ranging from 25-35% of voters) who will support him come hell or high water; this is not an insignificant number of people. If you think that 1/4 to 1/3 of American voters supporting Trump's politics is not a problem then you are in serious denial. Add to this the normalisation of white supremacist and fascist groupings while he has been President (let's not forget that there is international coordination between the far right propagated by Bannon and others of his ilk) and we need to realise that fixing this problem is not going to be easy. Even if Biden wins (and I hope that he does win), these people will not automatically disappear. Even if defeated, Trump leaves behind an extremely divided American population and the normalisation of ideas that that used to be openly anathema.

The use of far right propaganda by a section of the ruling class is a choice; we need to remember that the ruling class is divided (it is not only people living in the country that are divided). The current regime of accumulation is not working and stagnation was already evident in many countries before the pandemic and they need to find something to keep the system of growth and accumulation functioning and the further introduction of austerity has not solved the problem and if continued may actually create problems that they do not want to see as they have worked so hard to enshrine neoliberalism. The willingness of some of the ruling class to support a right-wing nationalist in power who advocates the use of federal, state and local police and far-right armed militias against those protesting legally should scare you! That is the point!

The appeal of far-right ideology to a section of the American working class means that this is not just another Tea Party “astroturf” situation ... rather we have a serious surge in the support for the far-right (and some of these people are actually both politicians and members of the so-called mainstream Republican party). Divide and rule has been very effective in the US where racism is part of the way in which the system of capitalism has been organised. Bannon's attempt of normalisation of the far-right has unfortunately been successful. The fact that in Michigan [\[1\]](#) some

members of far-right groups already had plans in motion to kidnap the Governor and seize control of the state government is beyond worrying; if they exist in Michigan, they exist elsewhere. While one can scoff and say “only 13 people, who are they kidding;” the reality is that this is extremely dangerous. This is part of a trend of the normalisation of far-right ideology and activities and while the state caught this group of fascists, fascists are organising on the ground and finding sympathisers. After all, they are very fine people.

So while Trump babbles about the danger of Antifa, BLM, and evil Marxists and Anarchists, what is very clear is with whom his sympathies lay ... fascists. It is not just a product of his narcissism that he supports people who like him; rather it is sincere political belief. Really, why would someone oppose Antifa unless they are fascists or have fascist sympathies?! They may not like their tactics, but to blame them for the actions of others is ridiculous. Trump’s attempt to raise the evil spectres of Anarchists and Marxists (in a period of weakness and division amongst the left) is a desperate attempt to unite people behind good old American fears of Communism (think along the lines of “they may not be sympathetic to racism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia, perhaps red-baiting will work”).

In a country where division has often presented opportunities for the worst excesses of the capitalist system; finding a good right-wing point of unity may serve once again to divert peoples’ attention from his failures and those of the system itself. Does anyone really believe that the left in the US is dangerous? In both absolute and relative terms (that is, compared to the strengthening of an armed far-right) the supposed danger of the left is almost laughable ...

## **The Pandemic**

With most eyes on the nightmare that is the US Presidential elections (and those eyes are not only located in the US) things are not only getting strange; they are outright surreal and more than a little worrying.

This includes the current President running around holding packed rallies in the midst of a global pandemic and continuing to attempt to undermine the obvious evil of science in the form of Anthony Fauci, the NIH, and the WHO

We have large numbers of people going to see this nasty right-wing jackass perform – they are not only in denial about the danger of this virus (and as such, they often refuse to wear masks or do any form of social distancing) but have actually abandoned the façade of the recognition of social responsibility. The golden rule of “love thy neighbour” that so many of these people claim to be enamoured of due to their religious beliefs are demonstrably not worth the paper they are printed on (you know the Bible that they all claim to live their lives by) – their individual right to do what they want clearly is more important than protecting others from a deadly pandemic.

That they will continue to spread this nasty virus (which literally thrives on new victims) by going to these Trump-love fests, that they deny that they themselves may fall victim to it and their obvious lack of concern about people where they live is frightening. Watching CNN, I saw one woman proudly proclaim that she won’t die from it and if she does it is god’s will – does that hold for the rest of her family members, neighbours and does she have the right to make this decision for them? Really who died and elected her the angel of death?! Her choice to do this actually makes her evil by any definition – yet she probably believes she is an upright moral person rather than someone bordering on sociopathy. The individualism underlying the American dream has led to this nonsense; the idea of collective responsibility being somehow foreign to these people.

While the coronavirus rages throughout the world (and the numbers of people infected in the US are rising irrespective of Trump's claims that everything is under control and the worst is over), the irresponsibility of politicians is impressive. This is not only a problem in the US; all over the world politicians are desperately trying to reign in the virus while keeping the economies open - but the problem is that in the absence of a vaccine (and while there is promise there, 2 different vaccine programmes are now on hold and Remdesivir has been recently demonstrated to not have an impact on deaths from Coronavirus, although it probably has other uses relating to the lengths of hospital stays). Meanwhile, in Europe the virus has entered its second round and the situation in the US is not much better as the virus has spread out instead of being concentrated in a few areas.

To add to all the surrealism, there seems to be an odd-collection of people that are coming together and holding demos against lockdowns and wearing masks - we have the anti-vaxxers, the covid-19 deniers, Q Anon, weirdly some civil libertarians and of course some groups of the far-right (and their members). If this sheer insanity were only in the US, I would be concerned but less freaked-out; but yet again the US has exported their garbage overseas and there have been demonstrations in Britain (there are weekly demos; the unfurling of the British Union of Fascists' flag in Trafalgar Square in London is more than disconcerting) and in other European countries.

The lack of a national health care system and pandemic plan in the US has not helped the general fight against the virus - this is compounded by the Governors of some states pretending that there is not a pandemic. So to add to the insufficient available healthcare provision and little or no national coordination there is the danger of the continued spread of the virus rather than bringing things under some control.

The problem is the virus doesn't stay in Florida (for example), it migrates along with people. Even more frightening, Herd Immunity is being raised again and that is a really dangerous eugenicist argument - what it amounts to is willing mass murder in the absence of a vaccine; think of all the nonsense from Trump lauding his wonderful gene pool and that of all these white Minnesotans in his visit there - the "strong" will survive ... too bad the virus affects people of colour, the disabled, the poor and the elderly more seriously (one wonders if we are thought of as surplus to requirements).

## **The Judiciary Nightmare**

I spent time this week witnessing the confirmation hearings of Serena Joy (aka Amy Coney-Barrett) in the Senate Judiciary Committee. While I do recognise the masochism of my watching these hearings as one cannot help getting existential nausea; I, for some bizarre reason, feel the need to witness the destruction of what so many people have fought for over successive generations.

Alas, it was just as I expected; there is little that can be done to stop this woman from getting a seat on the SCOTUS. What we need to understand is that it is not only the SCOTUS that is a problem; under Trump large numbers of judges have been appointed to Federal courts whose reactionary and right-wing political and ideological (e.g., religious) beliefs strongly colour their views and approaches to the law. Cleaning up the judiciary will not be able to be done quickly - it will take a while to actually be able to use the judiciary as a vehicle of progressive change (forget keeping things the way they are as crappy as that is) — at this point curbing the power of the judiciary may be a better tactic. Ruth Bader-Ginsburg's death in this period so close to an election is a nightmare; but the composition of the court had already been shifted to the right - Amy Coney-Barrett is the final cherry on the white sundae of 2020. Her nomination to the court is the blessing that the right have been fantasising about for a while. A woman will be the agent of elimination for Roe vs Wade, Marriage-Equality Laws, Civil Rights and voter protection law, corporate and environmental

regulation and what remains of the ACA.

While I do recognise that bitterness and the feeling of extreme helplessness and disempowerment are not necessarily useful emotions in this period as we must start preparing for a response to this crap, it is hard to not feel this way. So while wallowing in my misery and fear was useful for a short period; I finally took control over my need to witness the descent into barbarism and when Ted Cruz said that when Roe v Wade was repealed people are thinking that the right of abortion will disappear overnight but they are wrong, I turned off the SCOTUS hearing. It felt so good to make Ted Cruz disappear that I considered turning on the tv just so I could do it again.

While the leadership of the Democratic Party made clear their concern with the elimination of the ACA arguing that in the middle of a pandemic the last thing that people needed was to lose their health care; the Republicans not only spoke about why it should be eliminated but how it is actually preventing their state's right to deny healthcare and reproductive rights (and let's not forget their ability to deny basic civil rights like ensuring the right to vote and actual representation of their citizens so their votes actually count and marriage equality).

My favourite speech was Lindsay Graham's opening of the hearings describing how South Carolina did not need Obamacare but rather "South Carolina care" complaining how few people in SC actually took up Obamacare. But of course he did not address the fact that both the SC legislature and Governor refused to do the Medicaid Expansion which was part of Obamacare which would have covered more people's healthcare and nary a word was said about how many South Carolinians actually have access to health care. The reason for this is they quite honestly do not care what happens to the citizens of South Carolina; moreover, racism is a useful sop for divide and rule so that they can carry out their political and economic agenda against the needs of the citizens of South Carolina with the support of some of their citizens.

What is impressive about this point is the chutzpah of the right-wing (they are not Conservatives) politicians running state governance complaining about the ACA while actually preventing it from working. Rather than take responsibility to ensure that their citizens can actually access healthcare of some sort, they prefer to blame others for their failures of any sense of responsibility.

But as we know, the issue is not only the ACA; there are far broader issues that will be affected when Amy Coney-Barrett takes her seat on the court. As we know women's reproductive rights, basic civil rights, voting rights, regulation of corporations, environmental regulations and a whole host of things that people have fought for are endangered. The fact that Serena Joy refused to even comment on the limit to Presidential powers (which are specified in the Constitution) did not help the feelings of angst that are rising in the minds of many people.

### **Whatever happened to the Separation of Church and State?!**

Quite honestly, even though the Dems could not stop this nomination from going forward to the Senate from the Judiciary Committee and its confirmation in the Senate, there are things that I wish could have been raised like her membership in a bizarre cult of the Catholic church in which women are dependent upon Patriarchal permission (e.g., their husband, church leader or father - in other words their owners - I am wondering if their sons will suffice in the absence of these dominant males) to do basic things - how can any person be thought capable of independent thought if they need to get their man's permission to do things? The same problem also held for the odious Michelle Bachmann Presidential campaign even though she is Protestant.

So are we getting only her on the SCOTUS or are we also getting her husband and church leader on

the court as well? Seems to me that is an obvious thing - the separation of church and state is in the US constitution yet somehow that inconvenience is not mentioned unless right-wing religious fanatics feel somehow that their ability to spread the joy of their beliefs is threatened. Her specific sect of the Catholic church is so far outside the mainstream of traditional Catholic thought (even under John Paul II) that most Catholics would not recognise their religion in this sect - while people would certainly be horrified if a Scientologist (or name your favourite cult) were nominated to the SCOTUS; somehow that it is a Catholic cult means that you cannot raise this rather relevant issue.

Even though I was raised in what is a minority religion in the US; the separation of church and state protects everyone. While I do respect that people have their own personal beliefs on a whole host of issues and that they are entitled to these beliefs; what I don't accept is that they try to force me to obey their beliefs - that their personal beliefs become the reality for all of us. So, while the right-wing Repugs in the Senate may have screamed that her worship of her religion was sacrosanct - actually her religion as well as her political beliefs are relevant in this discussion as they will condition her judicial decisions. While the latter was raised by Democratic members of the Judiciary committee, the former was not raised and that is a lost opportunity and I believe is an error as this is a basic point.

### **The Whole Mess feels too big - but we can do something ...**

First of all, vote ... it will not solve all the problems that we are experiencing but we really need to get Trump out of power; really if it is the choice between a fascist (or a right-wing authoritarian populist if you don't think he is a fascist) in Donald Trump and a true conservative (Biden) - the fascist is the bigger danger. We need to get the Senate out of the hands of these far-right nutters in the Republican Party. We know the limits of the Dems and they often make me feel like Sisyphus, but there is a desperate need to at least make a stab at addressing the Environmental crisis and that cannot be left in the hands of Climate Change deniers as they will not do anything and we have 10 years before climate change becomes irreversible.

Yes, we know that many Dems are beholden to the Fossil Fuel Industry and that they are loathe to bite the hands that feed them, but even an extremely watered down version of the Green New Deal is better than nothing. What we can and must do, is to keep the environmental movement alive - that is needed to not only raise concerns about the ongoing environmental catastrophe we are living through, but it will also pressurise the Dems to go beyond Biden's GND minus policy (alas which supports fracking). A Green transformation can create jobs, re-orient the US towards sustainable energy production and hopefully reduce the US contribution to the climate crisis. Participate in the climate justice movement, fight for a Green transformation with a just transition to get workers new jobs and ensure sustainable energy product is placed in areas where people's employment depends on the fossil fuel industry. We can demand that our green transformation be based upon social, economic and political justice; environmental transformation must address that this is a class issue and that the oppressed are included in this transformation.

Second, support movements for social, political and economic justice. BLM still exists and it is still fighting, refugees and migrants deserve support and assistance. Stand with them, if needs be remember that your families were most probably former refugees and migrants unless you are Native Americans. The rights of women, disabled people, gay and trans people have been seriously under attack. Do not let what feels like an insurmountable nightmare of a situation make you stop fighting for a better future for all. Our standing together with the oppressed in solidarity is a fight against the use of divide and rule by politicians and members of the ruling class. This solidarity is perhaps one of the few things that can stand against the rising right-wing tide. A major dose of

solidarity unites people and we protect each other from divide and rule. We must put an end to the criminalisation of poverty and the scapegoating of blacks; we need to defund the police, put control in the hands of the local communities, we must stop the militarisation of the police and federal agencies like DHS and ICE and we must create a society in which all are valued equally and have an equal say in their future. Empowerment of the oppressed and exploited is essential if we are going to build a better future for all.

As we know, the economic support for citizens from the Federal government and the protection of jobs during the pandemic and the economic crash has dried up in the US and has been rolled back in many places in the world. Whatever small economic recovery that was happening will come crashing down if/when general lockdowns are put into practise by governments. So, foodbank usage is now becoming routine for those that never in their lives have experienced it and those that actually have good healthcare plans tied to their jobs are losing them and we are in a pandemic. Can you help in a foodbank? Do you have enough to provide goods or money to help them out? Mutual aid is important; it unites us and weakens the impact of fear and unwarranted shame that people feel who are in trouble.

Another nightmare that is coming down the pike is that people are increasingly unable to pay their rents and mortgages (either due to job loss or the stoppage of government support) and that means that evictions will start to rise. This would be an appalling situation at any time, but in a pandemic and with winter coming, this will be catastrophic as we are talking whole families in deep trouble and their extended families who have to take them in facing extreme hardship as it is not only a couch or spare room that will be needed, it is food, water, medical and heating bills that will rise and, of course, spreading of the virus is also a danger to extended families. We need to support organisations that are fighting evictions; either monetarily (if you have a bit extra) or helping those in danger of losing their housing - eviction resistance support and support for the homeless is essential and while we may feel powerless, think of these people and help empower them - community resistance and support is a tangible thing we can do in the name of solidarity. We can do all this wearing masks and practising social distancing!

We may not be able to fix the Judiciary or force the Federal government to provide support and assistance, but we sure as hell can stand with our neighbours and our communities in these troubled times. This is part of a fight-back and getting rid of Trump will not be enough, we need to show solidarity and unity to combat the damage done by the far-right in the US. If we want something better, we need to fight for it. We may not succeed, but we must try.

**Susan Pashkoff**

---

**P.S.**

• *Daily Kos*. Sunday October 18, 2020 · 11:00 PM:  
<https://www.anticapitalistresistance.org/post/there-will-be-trouble-ahead-a-long-winded-rant>

NY brit expat. Community. NY brit expat Joined in 2008

(This content is not subject to review by Daily Kos staff prior to publication.)

---

## Footnotes

[1] [https://www.washingtonpost.com/gdpr-consent/?next\\_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2fnational-security%2fmichigan-governor-kidnap-plot%2f2020%2f10%2f08%2f0032e206-0980-11eb-9be6-cf25fb429f1a\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/gdpr-consent/?next_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2fnational-security%2fmichigan-governor-kidnap-plot%2f2020%2f10%2f08%2f0032e206-0980-11eb-9be6-cf25fb429f1a_story.html)