

Amid explosive rise in new COVID-19 cases

# White House attacks Fauci for suggesting Trump does not take pandemic “seriously”

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On Saturday, the White House unloaded against Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, after the nation’s top infectious disease expert told the *Washington Post* that the US would surpass 100,000 new coronavirus cases a day and see rising death tolls unless there was an “abrupt change” in policy regarding the pandemic.

Fauci spoke as the US recorded a new daily record of 100,000 cases on Friday, along with soaring hospitalizations that threaten to overwhelm the health care system.

“We’re in for a whole lot of hurt,” Fauci told the newspaper. “It’s not a good situation. All the stars are aligned in the wrong place as you go into the fall and winter season, with people congregating at home indoors. You could not possibly be positioned more poorly.”

Fauci directly criticized Trump’s chief adviser on the pandemic, Dr. Scott Atlas, who opposes mask wearing or any other measures to slow the virus. “I have real problems with that guy,” he said, adding that his approach to the pandemic “doesn’t make any sense.” Of White Chief of Staff Mark Meadows’ recent statement that the administration is not seeking to control the pandemic, Fauci said, “I tip my hat to him for admitting the strategy.”

Fauci went on to compare the attitude of the Democratic Biden campaign favorably to Trump’s strident opposition to measures to contain the deadly virus. Biden, he said, “is taking it seriously from a public health perspective,” while Trump is “looking at it from a different perspective ... the economy and reopening the country.”

In fact, Biden and the Democrats, while paying lip

service to the advice of scientists to take measures to slow the spread of the virus, support the essence of Trump’s “herd immunity” policy—forcing workers back into the factories and teachers and students back into the schools in order to fully resume the flow of profits to the corporations and banks. The Democrats voted nearly unanimously for the multitrillion-dollar bailout of the corporate-financial elite last March, while allowing minimal aid to the millions laid off in the pandemic to expire so as to increase pressure on workers to return to unsafe workplaces. Going forward, Biden proposes little more than encouraging people to wear masks.

Trump, however, is doubling down in the final days of the election campaign on his open opposition to measures to contain the virus. He is seeking to whip up backward and far-right forces in a bid to hijack the election and remain in power regardless of the outcome of the vote. At his recent rallies—super-spreader events with thousands of mostly unmasked supporters standing shoulder to shoulder—he has repeated his claim that the country is “rounding the corner” on the pandemic. To this he has added the charge that doctors and hospitals are inflating the number of cases in order to make more money and denounced the media for focusing attention on the pandemic.

On Saturday, White House spokesman Judd Deere said it was “unacceptable and breaking with all norms for Dr. Fauci, a senior member of the president’s Coronavirus Task Force and someone who has praised President Trump’s actions throughout this pandemic, to choose three days before an election to play politics.”

In a call with campaign staff last week, Trump said, “People are tired of COVID. I have the biggest rallies

I've ever had, and we have COVID... People are tired of hearing Fauci and all these idiots."

Meanwhile, a new study by Stanford University analyzing epidemiological data from Trump's rallies has found that over 30,000 more infections and 700 deaths have resulted from them.

The past month has seen an explosion of new cases due to the back-to-work drive being carried out by both big-business parties. The first week in October saw a cumulative 329,797 cases, while in the last week of October, this figure had jumped to 571,416, a 73 percent increase.

Since the first reported case in the US of a person diagnosed with COVID-19, there are now over 9.4 million cases in little more than nine months. At the present rate, this figure will exceed 10 million by the end of the week.

With over 236,000 fatalities to date, the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation projects that more than 170,000 more people could die before February 1, bringing the total death toll to over 400,000. Dr. Michael Mina, a professor at Harvard's T. H. Chan School of Public Health, told National Public Radio, "We are likely to see massive explosions of cases and outbreaks that could potentially make what we've seen so far look like it hasn't been much."

If he wins the election and succeeds in coming to power in January, Biden will do nothing to seriously address either the public health crisis or the social catastrophe resulting from the official response to the pandemic. The policy of a Biden administration will resemble that of European leaders such as Angela Merkel in Germany and Emmanuel Macron in France, who have been forced to impose partial lockdowns in the face of a massive surge in cases in their respective countries, while keeping open factories and schools, key vectors for the transmission of the virus.

On CNN's *State of the Union* program on Sunday, the Democratic governor of Wisconsin, Tony Evers, gave a devastating assessment of the impact of the pandemic in his state over the last several weeks. When asked, however, if he would consider imposing another lockdown, he said, "No. I'm not considering a lockdown."

On March 24, the *World Socialist Web Site* wrote of the CARES Act bailout then being finalized: "This massive boondoggle has nothing to do with helping

people endangered either medically or financially by the epidemic and the economic dislocation it has caused. The financial aristocracy has seized on the public health crisis as an opportunity to raid the federal treasury, plundering the American people and grabbing whatever it can."

This analysis has been fully confirmed by subsequent developments.



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