19 children, two adults killed in Texas elementary school shooting

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Another horrific mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas Tuesday left at least 19 children and two school employees dead at Robb Elementary School. It was the 30th shooting at a K-12 school so far this year in the US and the deadliest since the 2012 Sandy Hook school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut where 20 children and six adults were killed.

The shooting started around 11:32 a.m. local time. The district told Robb Elementary parents to stay away from the school during the day, which was put in lockdown. Children were transported to a nearby civic center from the school to be reunited with their parents afterwards.

The 18-year-old suspect, Salvador Ramos, a student at Uvalde High School, was killed in a gun battle with police, including federal Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents who responded to the shooting. Uvalde is just 65 miles from the US-Mexico border and the site of a CBP station.

Ramos allegedly shot and killed his grandmother and had ditched his car before running into the elementary school armed with an AR-15 and multiple magazines. Sgt. Erick Estrada of the Texas Department of Public Safety told CNN Tuesday night that Ramos was wearing body armor and was able to fight his way past police already at the school and began going classroom to classroom.

University Health in San Antonio said it had two patients from the shooting, a child and an adult, with their condition unknown at this time. There may be another fatality, according to State Senator Roland Gutierrez, but authorities have not confirmed it.

School shootings have occurred so far in 2022 at a rate of more than one per week. There have been 200 mass shootings so far this year, including a shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York by a fascist gunman who killed ten people.

President Joe Biden, having come back from his warmongering tour in Asia, held a nine-minute press conference where he gave perfunctory remarks, quoting scripture, calling for prayer, and denouncing the gun lobby. “So tonight, I ask the nation to pray for them, to give the parents and siblings the strength in the darkness they feel now,” he said. “As a nation, we have to ask when in God’s name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby? When in God’s name will we do what we all know in our gut needs to be done?” Biden also ordered flags to be flown at half mast at all public buildings for four days.

Once again Biden, and the political establishment more broadly, are evading the deeper, fundamental issues which give rise to the phenomenon of mass shootings.

The US indeed has the highest per capita gun ownership in the world, in no small part due to lobbying by weapons manufacturers. Former president Donald Trump, Texas Governor Gregg Abbott, Senator Ted Cruz and other fascistic representatives of the Republican Party will be speaking at a conference of the National Rifle Association in just three days. Last year Abbott proudly signed a law which allows Texans to carry a handgun without a license or a permit.

This, though, does not come close to explaining the mass shootings that have become a horrific part of American life. If anything, the focus of the Democrats on the gun lobby and gun control serves to obscure the real causes of these outburst of violence.

More information will emerge in the coming days to shed light on the particular circumstances behind the mass shooting in Texas. However, the regularity of such horrific acts of homicidal violence can only be understood in relation to the social reality of the United

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States, which is riven by extreme levels of inequality and overseen by a ruling class that promotes violence at every turn.

In the US, over 1,000 people a year are killed by the police. Summary executions by the police continue to occur at a rate of three every day. Some of the most recent victims include Patrick Lyoya, a Congolese refugee and auto parts worker who was shot execution style after a traffic stop, and DeAnthony VanAtten, who was shot running away in the parking lot of a grocery store.

The US government under both Biden and Trump has racked up over one million deaths from COVID-19, the highest absolute death toll in the world. The Biden administration has completely embraced Trump's pursuit of "herd immunity" and dropped all protective measures, preparing the way for the next million deaths.

Biden is also working to escalate the US/NATO war with Russia, funneling $20 billion in arms to keep the bloodbath in Ukraine continuing. The administration is deliberately and recklessly seeking to provoke a war with both Moscow and Beijing, the largest and third largest nuclear superpowers respectively.

This is following 30 uninterrupted years of US warfare around the world since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, where US soldiers, tanks, drones, planes and death squads are sent to impose neocolonial rule at the end of a bayonet. Millions around the world have perished at the hands of US arms during this period, with whole societies reduced to rubble.

This is not the picture of a rational, healthy society. The mass death, wars of aggression, militarism and police killings are the product of a bankrupt ruling class, and this product finds its reflection in the massacres in schools, shopping centers and elsewhere that have become a part of daily life in America.

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