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USA

Trump: Shamelessly Making America More Unequal and Government More Corrupt

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The House of Representatives, dominated by the Republican Party, last week passed President Donald Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill," as he calls it, by a vote of 215 to 214, giving tax cuts to the rich and more money to the military while reducing a variety of social programs for working-class and poor people. The bill, more than 1,000-pages, reduces Medicaid which provides healthcare to low-income adults and children, cuts the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that provides aid for food for those with little or no income, and cuts to education at every level from elementary school to graduate research. And Trump is in the process of firing 100,000 federal workers.

At the same time the bill provides more money to the military and to the immigration authorities. But despite the cuts to social programs, the bill will increase the national debt by about \$3.3 trillion. The bill now goes to the Senate, also with a Republican majority, which will amend the bill; then the two houses must reconcile their differences. Still in the end the law will be devastating for the poor and a bonanza for the rich.

And as he was taking food and medical care from the poor, Trump hosted a dinner at his Trump National Golf Club in suburban Washington for 250 billionaires who were the biggest buyers of his \$TRUMP cryptocurrency, a digital coin that has no function but speculation. Diners who attended bought an average of \$1.7 million of \$TRUMP, with the top seven buying \$10 million, and one bought \$40 million. Many of those present—a large number from Asia—said that they had invested in \$TRUMP in order to be able to influence the president and U.S. economic policy. Since he became president, Trump has added billions to his personal wealth, most recently \$320 million in fees through the sale of his cryptocurrency. As diners arrived, dozens of protestors held signs with slogans like "Crypto Corruption" and "USA is For Sale," and shouted "Shame, shame, shame."

Democrats have criticized Trump's use of his office to enrich himself. "Donald Trump's dinner is an orgy of corruption," Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts said at a Democratic Party press conference held before the dinner. "Donald Trump is using the presidency of the United States to make himself richer through crypto and he's doing it right out there in plain sight."

Governments and businesspeople around the world make deals with Trump in an attempt to influence U.S. policies. Trump put a 46% tariff on Vietnamese imports, but perhaps in an attempt to reduce the tariffs that affect about a third of the country's exports, the Vietnamese government has been cooperating with the Trump family which is building a \$1.5 billion golf complex outside of Hanoi, the nation's capital. But there are 20 Trump-brand properties in countries around the world, and cooperating with the president's private businesses becomes a way to try to influence political decisions.

Trump does all of this with impunity. The U.S. president is not bound by laws regarding conflict of interest. The Supreme Court gave him immunity. His loyalist Pam Bondi controls the Department of Justice. He is untouchable.

While resistance has been slowly growing to Trump's attacks on working people and the poor, there is little or no resistance to Trump's corruption. Why?

Some, of course, admire Trump the businessman, others are bamboozled by him. In any case, he controls the executive, the legislature, and has the support of the Supreme Court, so he seems all-powerful. Then too, we have never in U.S. history seen corruption on this scale. The rapidity of Trump's actions has left us breathless. In response we have only the Democrats' criticism, while the party leadership is both divided and unpopular. And we have a few

dozen protestors shouting, "Shame!"

What should be done? The task is to figure that out.

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