Video: **The Price of the American Dream** (four corners, 43 minutes)

This documentary shows you the lives of three Americans (Germania, Joe and Tim) who

are in search of the American Dream.

Please answer the following questions:

a) What did Trump promise during his campaign?

He promised to create 25 000 000 jobs in 10 years

A resurgence of growth

The economy was in deep recession

b) How is America's economy currently doing?

The economy has recovered

Gathered steam

c) What has happened to millions of Americans despite the economic recovery?

Lots of people work for a small salary and more and more people loss their job

Fell into because of low-paid part-time jobs

Working poor, middle class disappeared

To fall through the cracks

The American Dream has become unattainable

d) What kind of job is hiding behind America's economic miracle?

Low paid jobs (underpaid)

Working in fast food restaurants

Part time jobs

9 000 000 jobs were created but there are minimum wage jobs, part-time jobs

Far from reaping the benefits

e) What does 'the working poor' mean?

You have several jobs, but you still don’t have enough money to live

Despite working 2 – 3 jobs (70 h / week) the income is insufficient to meet the basic needs

f) Who are the profiteers of America's economic miracle? How do companies maximize

their profits? (Mention three strategies)

big corporations

* pushing the workers to their limits
* short or no breaks are allowed
* underpay the workers
* outsourcing factories to US states without unions, with lower wages taxes
* parcel out hours, break up shifts to not pay for benefits like health care
* fringe benefits (everything you get from the company extra to your money)
* unstable, underpaid
* the law of the market

A. Describe the working and living conditions of Germania and her family.

How does her story end?

The live together in a motel => 15m²

She lives together with their 3 children and her mother-in-law

The mother-in-law looks after the children, while Germania is at work

She earns 850 $/month 🡪 ¾ rent

She works 18h/day

She can only see her children 4 hours a day

Can’t afford a deposit (down-payment)

She is just 25 years old, and her mother-in-law believes that she will be stuck in the system for a long time and doesn’t believe in the American dream

Nothing has changed for her (same jobs and still no apartment)

They found an apartment by a “family help organisation”

More than 1 000 000 children are homeless in the USA

B. Why did Joe and his family move to Seattle?

Describe their living conditions.

How does Joe feel about being American? How does his story end?

Construction workers were needed

He believes there is a chance for the American dream

He and his family lives in a tense, these are places where the city “forget” the people

The mom is a casher who works fulltime

They had no other choice to live in the parking lot because the hadn’t enough money to live in a hotel

Joe is searching for day work, but he overslept and came 10 minutes later and didn’t get a job

It took him to 2 hours to get there (with the bus)

He is proved to be American (he loves his country, he would die for his country, but there are some things that should change)

Are leaving the tent place and go live in an emergency canter where they get a own room (they are just allowed to stay there for 6 month)

And after 6 month they went back to the tent place

C. What happened to Tom from Erie, Pennsylvania?

Why is he better off than most other workers?

The name of the company was “general electrics”

70% of his salary for 6 months

What do big American companies, such as General Electric, do to maximize profits?

Release employees

What has happened to the American middle class in the past few years?

More and more people lose their job