



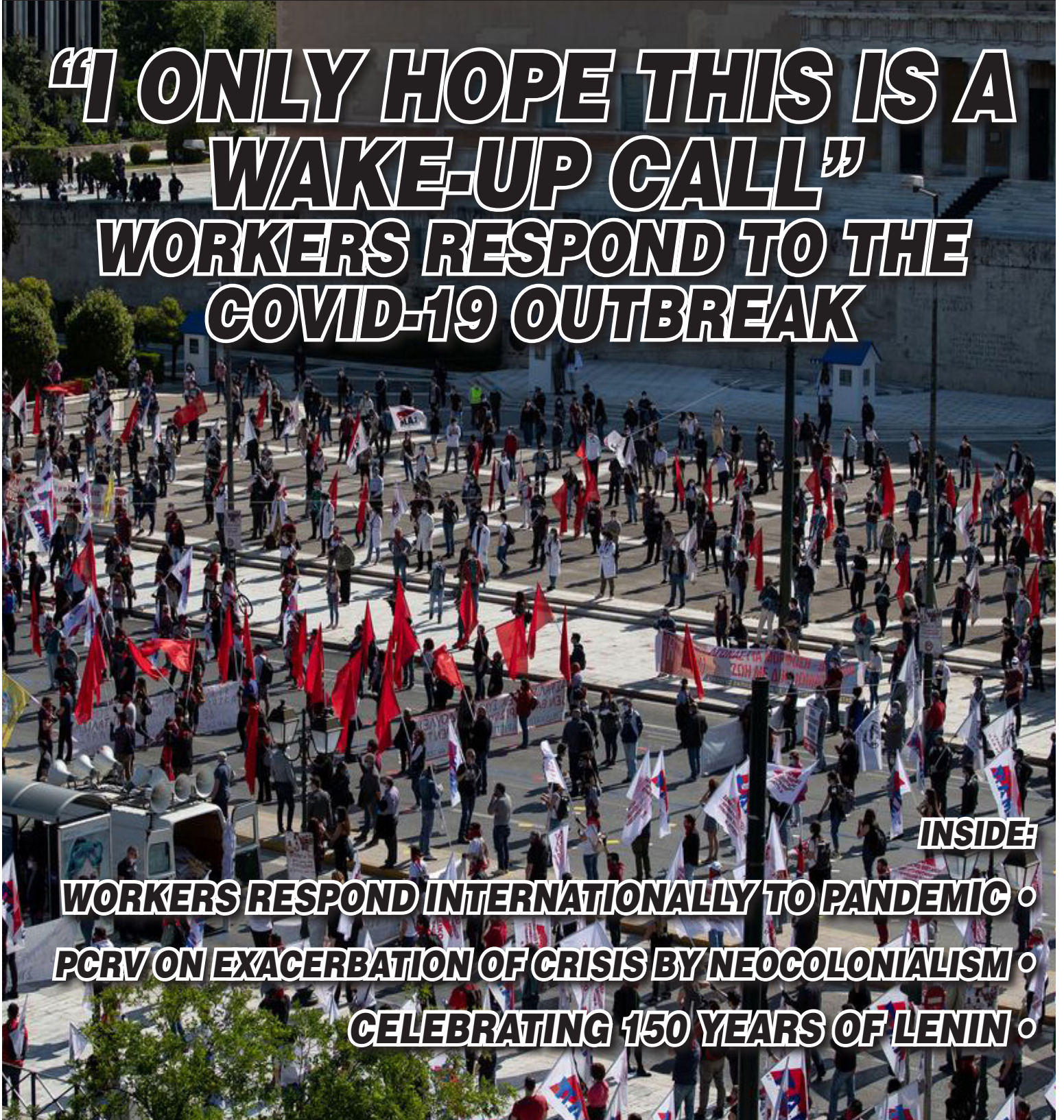
THE RED PHOENIX

NEWSPAPER OF THE AMERICAN PARTY OF LABOR

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“I ONLY HOPE THIS IS A WAKE-UP CALL” WORKERS RESPOND TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK



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LETTER TO THE PHOENIX: LOSING MY JOB AND HEALTH INSURANCE IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19



By J. Thalmann
On
March 21, 2020

On Friday morning I received a distressing email at work. My company would be reducing its staff due to the economic crisis brought on by COVID-19. An hour later I was called into the office and told I would be

temporarily laid off. When I asked if I would get my job back after the crisis I was told there was no guarantee. My employment status is now completely up in the air. I have no idea if and when I will receive a call from my former employer, assuming the company even recovers from the crisis.

My situation is similar to what countless Americans are dealing with right now. The New York Times reported that 1,200 airport workers were laid off in the New York City area. There have been mass layoffs in other states such as California, Washington, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and many more. A poll conducted by Fishbowl – a social network of professional workers – found that 54% of professionals polled said they feared layoffs were coming to their workplace. According to their poll of 17,000 workers, those most concerned about layoffs were working in San Francisco, New York City and Atlanta.

I cannot speak for everyone affected by this crisis. I can only speak for my own situation. This layoff has been a tremendous source of stress. Other members of my household depend on me to provide, and if I cannot do so, we could all lose our home. This crisis makes it all the more clear that workers should not have to rely on the

A call for solidarity from a postal worker in Pennsylvania:

"If you don't mind doing a quick favor for a friend, do this for me. Text USPS to 50409 and follow the instructions. It'll send an email like this with your name and city to your senators and local representative. We're under the gun right now and need all the support we can get. Buy or order some stamps as well if it's a purchase you're able to make! #SaveThePostOffice"

STAND WITH PUBLIC WORKERS! DEFEND THE LAST BASTIONS OF ORGANIZED LABOR!

whims of the stock market to afford a roof over their heads. Why should workers be at a risk for homelessness at a time when everyone should be staying indoors? A freeze on rent and mortgage payments should be an obvious response to such

a crisis. But we must go beyond that and dismantle this system in which people's right to housing is determined by the predatory behavior of banks and landlords.

Another shock that comes with losing my job is the fact that I no longer have health insurance. Now if I catch the virus, I won't be able to afford treatment. How many Americans will lose their jobs from the crisis and then get sick? The number of uninsured Americans is likely to skyrocket just at a time when healthcare is needed the most. In one

outrageous case, an uninsured American was charged \$34,927 for COVID-19 treatment. How many Americans will contract the virus and then stay home?

What we are seeing is confirmation that capitalism is not suited for dealing with crises. In fact, economic crises like the one we are seeing are inextricably bound to capitalism. Even without a virus, the stock market is bound to crash periodically due to the contradictions inherent in capitalism. And even among the capitalist nations, the United States is perhaps the least ready to deal with such a crisis due to its lack of a social safety net.

For now, I have no idea what the future holds for me, my family, the American people or the people of the world. All I can do is hope that this moment serves as a wake-up call. We must acknowledge that the cruel free market system allowed this to happen. We are all forced to rely on capitalists for food, shelter and medicine. As soon as customers and workers stay home, the system goes into chaos and we are denied these basic human rights. We need something different. My family needs something different. We need a planned economy based on the needs of human beings and not the chaos of the free market.

J. Thalmann is a worker out of New Jersey who regularly contributes to the Red Phoenix. If you would like to send a letter to the Red Phoenix on your COVID-19 story, please email a submission to aplinfo@bureau@gmail.com

A frontline report from a nurse working in a nursing home in the Chicagoland area:

"Tyvek suit. "I didn't know that was you!" N95 press marks on my big smiley cheeks. "I want to go with God, where am I?" A foggy face shield. "If you see Richard you tell him I love him." Double gloved hands. "Pray for me, one way or the other." Paper tape over the zipper pulls. "Hold my hand, just for a moment."

Scenes from inside isolation inside a nursing home. These quotes are real and they're from today.

This is our labor."

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF VOLTA (BURKINA FASO): THE EVOLUTION OF THE SITUATION IN BURKINA FASO. THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AN AGGRAVATING ELEMENT OF THE CRISIS OF THE NEOCOLONIAL SYSTEM



The situation remains complex in the context of the strengthening of the imperialist domination, of the deepening of the crisis of the imperialist system, and of their dramatic consequences for the working class, the working masses in urban and rural areas, and popular youth.

The people's daily lot includes the high cost of living, the endemic unemployment, misery, and health problems with the persistence of

epidemics such as measles and malaria.

The MPP (People's Movement for Progress) government is clearly showing its inability to resolve the pressing problems of the masses and to fulfill their expectations, which were strongly expressed during the popular uprising of October 2014. On all fronts, among which the impunity of blood crimes and of economic crimes, the absence of democratic freedoms, the low purchasing power, the high level of insecurity, the government is carrying out the same reactionary, anti-popular and anti-social policies of the defunct regime of the autocrat Blaise Compaoré, who was driven out by the popular insurrection.

The government continues to apply the roadmap dictated by French imperialism, which consists in guaranteeing the geostrategic interests of France in our country and in the West Africa sub-region, where it faces the rivalry of other imperialist powers (US, China, Germany, Russia, etc.) and of countries such as India, Turkey and Brazil. The most important element in this roadmap is to stifle the resistance and revolutionary spirit of the people, who have forcefully shown their potential during the popular insurrection and the resistance to the fascist coup d'état of General Diendéré in September 2015.

This explains the repressive measures taken against the Democratic and Revolutionary Movement, the attacks against the trade unions by criminalizing their struggles, the arbitrary arrests and detentions of citizens, the targeted assassinations of activists such as the two members of the ODJ (Democratic Youth Organization) in Yagha province in the north of the country in May 2019, the extrajudicial executions of innocent civilians by the Defense and Security Forces under the pretext of fighting terrorism, which have caused the deaths and wounding of dozens of people, crimes which have gone totally unpunished.

The people also face the terrorist attacks from various armed groups, which are components of the counter-revolution. These include elements linked to the defunct regime of the Fourth Republic, which was swept away by the popular insurrection. Since 2015, these recurring attacks have occurred in various regions of the country, causing a real humanitarian catastrophe which has plunged these populations into a state of great despair. The macabre toll is the following: hundreds of civilians and members of the Defense and Security Forces were killed, tens of thousands were injured, nearly 800,000 persons became internally displaced people, who have been crammed into makeshift camps and live in total destitution. Many health centers and schools have been destroyed, depriving thousands of children living in areas of great insecurity of schooling.

Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, the imperialist powers militarily occupy our country and the entire Sahel Sahara sub-region with their troops, their military bases and the instruments of domination they control such as the G5 Sahel, Operation Barkhane, MINUSMA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali).

The democratic and revolutionary movement is continuing its work of mobilization and organization in this complex situation, in which the counter-revolution is seen at various levels: jihadist groups, militias and death squads used by the MPP government and the various fractions of the reactionary bourgeoisie, the repression by the Defense and Security Forces against the people's struggles, and the military presence of the imperialist powers in the country. The neocolonial state has completely given up its role of defending the territorial integrity and the security of goods and people, despite its posturing and declarations against terrorism. The measures introduced in this context, such as the establishment of a curfew and of a state of emergency in the northern and eastern regions, are in reality directed against the Democratic and Revolutionary Movement. They negatively impact the populations in their daily life and their income-generating activities. The government is using the lack of security situation as a pretext to curb the democratic freedoms (bans on demonstrations by the trade union and democratic organizations, threats against freedom of the press, assassinations attempts against investigative journalists, kidnapping and arbitrary detention of activists, etc.).

But this repression did not bring about the effect expected by the reactionary bourgeoisie, the sowing of fear and resignation among the popular masses. The fighting spirit is flaring up and developing within the social protest movements that are rising in all the economic and social sectors throughout the national territory. An example of this is the unitary general strike launched by the gigantic March 7 demonstrations. The latter were followed by the general strike of March 16 to 20, 2020, which was widely attended despite the government's measures of pressure and intimidation against the workers. Among these pressures were the containment measures aiming at preventing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The trade unions decided to carry out the general strike but canceled the demonstration that had been set for March 17. The government obviously used the pandemic as a form of blackmail to stop the strike movement.

The March 7 demonstrations held throughout the country had already been very successful. Hundreds of thousands of protesters had stormed the streets in all of the country's major cities and even in the small localities. In the capital, Ouagadougou, and in Bobo-Dioulasso, the second largest city, the parades of demonstrators stretched over several kilometers. The trade unions have shown their ability for disciplined mobilization and organization. The maneuvers to divide the workers intended to pit the public servants against the private sector workers have failed miserably. The reason is that there were, among the demonstrators, hundreds of thousands of workers in the sectors of telecommunications, banks and financial institutions, the decentralized financial systems, commerce, industry, textiles, transportation, etc. The populations also expressed their support for these mobilizations. The various trade unions united around a platform of demands structured around five points:

- the end of measures that reduce purchasing power, and the adoption of measures of improvement to cope with the rising cost of living;
- the end of attacks on democratic and trade union freedoms;
- the end of the looting of the national resources;
- the guarantee of the population's right to security;
- the respect and implementation of the various commitments made by the government regarding workers and trade unions.

These massive mobilizations organized in a context of rampant war of the counter-revolution in our country clearly confirm that the people remain standing and determined to carry on the struggles for their immediate demands and for a revolutionary change in their favor. The COVID-19 pandemic comes into play in a national situation that is troubled, very complex and with contradictory processes.

...continued from page 3

The coronavirus pandemic, an aggravating element of the social, economic and political crisis Burkina Faso is the country most affected by the coronavirus in West Africa, with more than 200 people declared positive, 7 dead, and 10 recovered as of March 28. The government, besides taking measures of closing schools, secondary and university institutions, markets, bars and restaurants, has announced confinement rules. It has decreed a curfew for the whole country from 7 PM to 5 AM, the state of health alert, and the quarantine of Ouagadougou (the capital), which has the majority of the infected people, and seven other cities. These measures adopted to curb the spread of the pandemic are quickly reaching their limits. The public health system is in an advanced state of disrepair, and for a long time now it has not been able to provide primary care to the population. The Structural Adjustment Plan imposed in the early 1990s on the African neo-colonies by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund led the State to disengage from the Health and Education sectors. In the case of Burkina Faso, these budgetary restrictions have brought the health facilities to their knees; they are under-equipped and lack trained personnel. The human and animal health workers' union has constantly waged multifaceted struggles (strikes, sit-ins, demonstrations) to demand from the government better working conditions, the provision of equipment and medicines to hospitals and health care centers, and the reevaluation and improvement of the status of the caregiver staff. From May 21 to 25, 2019, this well-established trade union observed a widely followed strike with a participation rate of 99% throughout the national territory and of 100% in certain localities. The strike was followed by the implementation of the watchword to boycott the on-duty and on-call periods from Saturday May 25, 2019 to June 3, 2019.

To deal with Covid-19, Ouagadougou has only one operational center to take care of the infected patients. The health care services that were already overwhelmed lack beds in resuscitation, respirators and protective equipment for the health workers, who are exhausted by the work overload.

The pandemic is taking place in a context where the neocolonial system, through the plundering of the agricultural and mineral resources of the country by the imperialist monopolies and their allies of the reactionary bourgeoisie, causes the development of misery, the destruction of the environment, especially in the mining areas with the poisoning of the groundwater with toxic products such as mercury. Today, in many rural areas, our people have no access to drinking water. These objective conditions limit considerably the ability to respond that the country's health structures require to curb the Covid-19 pandemic.

When applying the curfew, certain members of the defense and security forces use violence and torture on the offenders. These methods have been denounced by magistrates and by the Burkinabe Movement for Human and Peoples' Rights (MBDHP) in the following terms: "It is pertinent for the MBDHP to condemn the acts of torture and other inhuman and degrading measures inflicted by certain elements of the defense and security forces (FDS) on those apprehended during curfew hours. These acts are unacceptable in a state that is governed by the rule of law, and all the more so since the Public Health Code provides for adequate repression in the event of non-compliance with a health measure".

Faced with Covid-19, the democratic and revolutionary organizations, while advocating the respect for measures aimed at preventing the spread of the pandemic, question the

Government on certain immediate decisions to be implemented on the health, economic and social levels. The Trade Union Action Unity (UAS) which brings together the six trade union federations in the country (including the General Confederation of Labor of Burkina), and the independent trade unions expressed the concerns of the workers and of the populations:

We call on the government to:

- strengthen the capacities of frontline combat agents and provide them with the necessary equipment;
- facilitate the access to free screening for the virus and provide effective care to the infected persons;
- develop and strengthen public awareness;
- support all public and private health structures by installing hand-washing devices and by using hydro-alcoholic gel;
- take the necessary measures to control the sale prices of articles and products necessary to prevent the COVID 19 and of products of broad consumption to put an end to speculation and overpricing. We invite the government to consider medium and long-term measures such as:
 - the suspension of certain taxes, water and electricity bills and rents to help the most vulnerable sectors of society, etc.
 - the postponement of the deadlines for reimbursement of bank loans for the affected population;
 - the reduction of prices of basic necessities;
 - the public responsibility for primary health care;
 - the increase of the capacity of health facilities to attend people. The UAS particularly requests the workers to:
 - respect the measures to prevent the disease;
 - commit everyone to break the chain of spread of the disease.

This coronavirus health crisis is an aggravating element of the many-sided crisis of the imperialist system. It exposes the bankruptcy of the neoliberal policies of the imperialist powers and the financial agencies in their pay, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, that have always imposed the dismantling of public services and privatization in the health sector. Today people realize with dismay the lack of resources in the hospitals to deal with the pandemic, to the point where healthcare workers in the developed capitalist countries such as France, Italy and Spain lack protective equipment such as masks and gloves. And in our backward agricultural neocolonial country, the situation is even more. At the same time, the sales figures of the monopolies are mounting, the national resources are being sold off to mining companies that are exempt from paying taxes, the reactionary bourgeoisie is getting richer through the misappropriation of public funds and economic crimes that go unpunished.

In this chaotic situation, our party calls on the working class, the people in its various components, not to give in to panic, to comply with the preventive measures in order to stem the pandemic. It calls for developing popular solidarity with those infected, with the vulnerable sectors of society, notably with the internally displaced populations due to terrorist attacks, and to support the urgent demands expressed by the Trade Union Action Unity.

To continue the popular struggles for democratic and social rights, notably the Right to Public Health. To work to develop the unity of the fighting forces, which is the only condition for greater victories. To unite around the PCRV to carry out the National Democratic and Popular Revolution by the general armed insurrection to drive out French imperialism and its local allies, to constitute a Provisional Revolutionary Government, to convene a Constituent Assembly and to establish a Modern Democratic Republic in order to implement its minimum program of transition to scientific socialism.

"ONLY THE PEOPLE WILL SAVE THE PEOPLE."

Comrades of the Union of
Revolutionary Youth and the Olga
Benario Women's Movement (Brazil)
bring supplies to working families in
Sao Paulo, Brazil.



STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE ICMLPO: "WE ARE NOT ONLY FIGHTING A PANDEMIC – BUT FOR A NEW AND BETTER FUTURE."

We are in the middle of a serious health, political, social and economic crisis. The Covid 19 pandemic has exposed a capitalist society that has not been able to provide even the most basic medicine, healthcare equipment and staff for the workers and especially the poor people. It has demonstrated a public health system on its knees from years of cutbacks and heavy privatization in favor of the big monopolies and the rich. A system on the verge of the breakdown of capacity. The consequences of the neoliberal and capitalist austerity policy, which has made the public health care system into a commodity of profit, are fatal.

This crisis shows also the tremendous capability of the people to develop their concrete solidarity: the bourgeoisie calls for "isolation", the people respond with spontaneous expression of solidarity and support to health care workers and demands for concrete measures of protection.

The public health care systems must immediately receive get the necessary economic and human resources to secure public health. Free healthcare and protective devices for all. Private health resources must be requisitioned.

On the order hand, capital, the big monopolies with immediate greed have demanded full access to public funds on a scale never before seen to secure their profit. The bourgeoisie, their governments and state call for national unity and public spirit. But in fact they have been using fear and shock therapy to start a massive offensive against the working class and popular masses in order to secure themselves through the rapidly growing underlying economic crises, that the Covid 19 has accelerated. The bosses are given almost free hands to deepen exploitation and make further cutbacks to the working and living conditions of the working class. And the top leaders of the reformist trade unions facilitate this in the name of unity with the insatiable capitalists.

Make the exploiters and the rich use their profits and stolen wealth to pay for this crisis and the pandemic – not the workers and popular masses.

Capital and their governments are not at war against an invisible enemy. They have intensified their class war, demanding that the workers, students and the people abandon all class struggle and the struggle for their just needs, at a time when unemployment, lack of income and social need are growing fast. Instead it is time to stand up for our rights and demands and continue the fight for social justice.

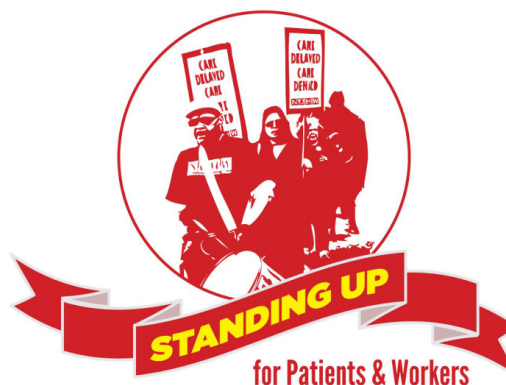
Adequate health and safety measures guaranteed for all workers. Stop all dismissals. Full pay, social benefits and guaranteed income for all. The governments must use the public funds for the social, health and economic needs of all the people.

In many countries the governments have declared a state of emergency, in which democratic rights are set aside, the police and military are given unlimited power to secure the safety of the imperialist states and the profits of the ruling class, not the safety of the population. The bourgeoisie uses the pandemic to limit the freedom of the workers and silence critical voices, to spread chauvinism and fascism.

Taking advantage of this situation, the European Union, its Central Bank and the EU Commission are centralizing their power. Their only answer is to pay huge sums of billions of euros in order to defend the profits and maintain and strengthen the position of the European monopolies and the EU in the global economic crisis, and to close the borders between the countries and between the EU and the rest of the world.

But we have not forgotten the last crises, in which the banks and corporations were gold plated at the expense of the people, and how their profit were subsequently protected at the expense of the public health systems.

Hands off the rights and freedoms of the workers! It is time instead



to raise the demand: stop the free movement of capital out of the public coffers and the exploitation of the working class for the already full pockets of the stockholders and tax havens.

It is time to demand the repeal of the state of emergency laws. To demand not only the

soldiers out of the streets, but all soldiers engaged in imperialist wars to be brought home and given useful civilian work to stop the pandemic.

The epidemic is a tremendous threat to the people worldwide, especially where the health care system is weak, because of the plundering of wealth by the imperialist states and monopolies, supported by anti-people and corrupt governments. The imperialist cannot wash this responsibility from their hands. It is time for comprehensive sanitation.

The working class and the popular masses are facing a complex and dangerous period with the deepening of the general crisis of the imperialist capitalist society and the sharpening of all the main contradictions: the working class against the bourgeoisie, imperialism against the oppressed people and nations, the contradictions among the imperialist powers and monopolies themselves for world domination and hegemony.

The moribund system of capitalism cannot offer anything but more exploitation and social injustice, more pillaging of the peoples and devastation of the planet. Even when million people are suffering the consequences of the pandemic, the criminal financial oligarchy never ceases to speculate on the emergency. Hence, there is a need for revolutionary struggle for a new, socialist society, which can guarantee the complete well-being of all its members and develop true international solidarity.

We, the independent and revolutionary parties and organizations of the proletariat, call upon the workers, trade union militants, the youth, women and all popular strata to organize themselves independently and be part of and build a united workers front and a popular front on its basis. Let us strengthen unity, solidarity and struggle to stand up and not accept the scenario of the bourgeoisie of attacks on our working and living condition, but to resolutely defend our demands, our health, our interests! We are not just fighting a pandemic; we are fighting for a new and better future.

March 21, 2020

Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist)

Communist Platform, Italy

Party of Labor (EMEP), Turkey

Communist Platform (Marxist-Leninist), Norway

Movement for the Reorganization of the Communist Party of Greece 1918-1955 (Anasintaxi)

Organization for the Construction of the Communist Workers' Party of Germany, Arbeit Zukunft (Labor Future)

Workers' Communist Party, Denmark

Communist Party of the Workers of France

QUARANTINE PROTESTS REVEAL POISONOUS INDIVIDUALISM OF AMERICAN NATIONALISM



Anti-Quarantine Protesters in Ohio

By J Thalmann on April 25, 2020

As the spread of COVID-19 accelerates across the United States, a small but dangerous minority of Americans are protesting to end the quarantine. Many protests occurred, but the April 15 protest in Lansing, Michigan garnered the most media attention. The action was organized on Facebook under the name "Operation Gridlock". Thousands of protesters jammed the state capitol with their cars, slowing traffic to a standstill. As a result, medical staff were delayed on their way to Sparrow Hospital.

Next, a segment of protesters violated Michigan's stay-at-home order by congregating around the state capitol on foot. The crowd was estimated to be about 150, a size which grossly violates Michigan's Executive Order 2020-21, which bans all public and private gatherings besides members of the same household. They carried guns, American flags, confederate flags, and signs calling for "liberty".

Similar protests occurred at state capitols in California, Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington. Participants attended by car or on foot. Those who protested on foot broke state law and refused to comply with social distancing protocols outlined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There was a spike in coronavirus cases in Kentucky following the protests that took place there. COVID-19 has a median incubation period of five days, but it can take up to two weeks before a carrier shows symptoms. Therefore, it will take some time before the effects of these gatherings are known.

The organizers behind these events range from pro-Trump conservatives to far right fascists. Conservative groups such as the Michigan Conservative Coalition and the Michigan Freedom Fund were some of the primary planners. The Michigan Freedom Fund is linked to Trump's education secretary, Betsy DeVos. Violent fascist groups such as the Proud Boys and local militia groups were among the organizers. In Sacramento, California, the protest was organized by the Freedom Angels, a right wing anti-vaccination group.

These protests are deeply unpopular to the American people per several recent polls, most of whom abide by social distancing and support the quarantine. Americans oppose these protests because of the tactics and demands. The tactic of breaking quarantine is extremely dangerous because it helps spread the virus and puts

vulnerable people at risk. Their demand to reopen the economy is absurd because the virus has not even reached its peak in the United States. To reopen businesses now would cause a rapid acceleration in the spread of the virus, as was seen with the 1918 Spanish Flu, in which an early reopening killed more people than World War I. Under such a scenario, the healthcare system could be overburdened, which would lead to rationing of care and a sharp increase in deaths. Despite their unpopularity, Trump signaled his support for the protests on Twitter. Such an endorsement is consistent with Trump's history of courting support from far right extremists.

Make no mistake. These protests are not an expression of working class concerns. Many observers will attribute charitable or desperate motivations to the participants. Perhaps they want to return to work to feed themselves? Perhaps they're worried about evictions or foreclosure? These generous assumptions are not supported by any evidence. One only needs to read their signs and social media posts. Hundreds of anti-quarantine signs have been photographed and spread around the internet, but none of them seem to express concerns over basic needs like food, shelter and medicine. Instead, what we see are appeals to vague concepts like "liberty" and a rejection of supposed "tyranny". It is a classic right-wing dog-whistle, relying on the anxiety of mostly white, petty-bourgeois, small business owners, and, with obfuscation, seeking to rope in working class people.

The "liberty" that they espouse is one of rugged individualism. It is a rejection of the greater good and an embrace and celebration of selfishness. It is the freedom to shout "fire" in a crowded theater. Such notions of freedom have been promoted by the ruling class to atomize the working class. However, in this case, these protesters are following individualistic ideals to such an absurd degree that they actually conflict with bourgeois interests. A pandemic is a rare occasion in which workers and capitalists share a common interest. Both seek a speedy end to the virus. But these protesters are actively standing in the way of that recovery. The far right of the United States is highly useful to the ruling class, but it constantly mutates in ways that are unpredictable and uncontrollable. Its members become encased in an alternative reality in which science and material reality are rigorously rejected. In the end, they lash out in ways that are not in anyone's best interests.

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Working
People!**



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COVID-19 HAS FURTHER EXPOSED AN AMERICAN CAPITALISM IN FASCIST DECAY



Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, who recently urged people to "get back to work" to save a flagging economy.

By J. Palameda on March 24, 2020

Lieutenant Governor of Texas Dan Patrick has sparked controversy with his recent call for people to be put to work to "save the economy," going so far as to say that grandparents should be willing to risk their lives for the economic future of their grandchildren. It is easy to write this off as the murderous musings of a reactionary Trumpite looking in terror at his stock portfolio, but such thinking is hardly isolated in American politics at the moment, and reflects the general fascist creep that has been occurring since 9/11, the patriot act, and the inhumane persecution of immigrants.

While many on the left still refuse to reckon Trump and his movement as a proto-fascist one, openly on the move towards fascism, and underplay the meaningful differences in the way the American state has exercised its terroristic chauvinism against immigrant communities since 2016, these new developments and political rhetorics in the era of COVID-19 push the debate further. All of our lives have fundamentally changed, and the political body of the country has begun to reflect this.

There are two key aspects of this economically-driven deathwish rhetoric that reflect the fascist decay of American capitalism. First, Dan Patrick and many Trumpites reflect the cynical "reason" that was at the heart of 20th fascist barbarity and is the heart of 21st century fascist apologism. Fascists always seek to portray efforts to prioritize human life at economic or national expense as the product of decadent, weak liberalism that lacks the stomach to achieve true success. Sure, for the Dan Patrick's of the world, thousands of elderly people will die, but how many, they ask disingenuously, will suffer from an economic recession? Killing thousands for economic gain, in such a construction, is actually

good for the country, because it saves many millions from financial destruction. Our fate and the fate of stockholders are the same fate—the age-old Reaganite, trickle-down myth. But who, ultimately, did the American state help in the last recession? Did they offer mortgage relief for those who lost their home? Student loan forgiveness for graduates who couldn't find a job? No, they offered trillions to corporations. We are asked to risk our lives, the lives of our parents and grandparents, for the good of the nation—but we know from experience who suffers and who doesn't during the crises of capitalism. We understand that the cynical reason of fascists is but a rhetorical flourish meant to obscure the prioritization of economic gain for the ruling class over human life. Hitler may have been a tyrant, the fascist apologists say, but at least he was good for the economy!

Second, an argument like Dan Patrick's demands that we stratify society into "productive" and "non-productive" people, a necessity for fascist criminality. The elderly, rendered to be "unproductive," must be spent like currency in yet another stimulus plan for the rich. We shouldn't be fooled into thinking such an understanding is unique to COVID-19, and only applicable to its particular qualities (higher mortality rates amongst older population, for example). This kind of thinking is the bedrock of fascist attacks on those with disabilities and mental health issues, groups who were among the first to be killed during the holocaust, and on who Zyklon B was given its test runs after the Wansee Conference. The economic conditions created by COVID-19 have accelerated this fascist descent, such that a political leader can openly advocate for huge swaths of the American population dying to save the economy and be defended by the right wing establishment, but this differentiation between productive and non-productive people has long been at the heart of the american fascist creep. Immigrants are abused and killed at the border because they are portrayed as leeches who do not pay taxes yet use social services like education and welfare (both flagrant myths). Capitalism in decay must seek to sow separatism in the working classes who might unite for its destruction, it must create a difference between those who are "productive" and "unproductive." It must convince us that we have less in common with an elderly person who has worked their entire life than we do with venture capitalists on Wall Street. It has been the breaking up working class solidarity, and turning different sectors of the working class against each other that empowered fascists to commit their greatest crimes.

We must be unafraid to label a politics that partakes in a cynical reason that happily trades lives for stock gains and seeks to turn workers against each other for corporate gain what it is—fascist. Capitalism, facing a resurgent socialist movement and internal crisis, is turning to its last bastion. As workers, and socialists, it falls to us to press through the anxiety, despair, and isolation many of us are facing, and redress ourselves with new vigor and ingenuity to the task of destroying fascism, once, and for all.

TRUMP FIXES AND SILENCES UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBERS DURING PANDEMIC

By L. Zorfass On March 23, 2020

Last Wednesday, The Trump Administration sent a plea out to State governors to not publish unemployment numbers. This information was found by The New York Times in a leaked email to the paper.

The plea was sent on the heels of a state by Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin warning that unemployment could hit over 20%. With more and more states taking up the "shelter in place" strategy to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, many businesses have been required to close up shop. Even in states without "shelter in place" orders being given, the lack of economic activity due to social-distancing and self-quarantining caused a massive loss to the stock market that has continued this week. This previous loss has already caused massive layoffs with millions of Americans without an income or insurance.

It is not surprising the Administration would try to take these measures on unemployment numbers. The American State is concerned first and foremost with investment in the market, with keeping dollars circulating, and shares traded. But with large unemployment, the system is laid bare. Not only does the lack of circulation due to a near halt in economic activity but, prevents the most important sectors of the economy from producing.

While many may often see this as a result of light commodities, of retail store consumer goods not being able to be bought, the ramifications are much deeper. The primary circulation of the economy, not just The United States' but the world economy is the production and processing of raw materials. This primary trade, which is the trade, the buying and selling of capital between capitalists themselves have come to massive slow down. With consumer goods low, manufacturing takes a hit as the everyday reality of overproduction becomes a hindrance to business. When circulation is up, overproduction is used to keep up investor confidence, with a lack of circulation the high finance trading cannot hide the build-up of now dead capital not-circulation on the market.

The Administration plans on giving official unemployment numbers next Thursday. The main reason for the Administration to want states to keep their unemployment numbers close to the vest is so that the official number can be massaged. Almost every Administration over the past 40 years has changed the definition of "unemployed". When the Trump administration boasted of its low unemployment numbers, it could do so because the Department of Labor under Trump changed the definition of who qualified as "unemployed," cutting the rate in half by merely changing the legal definition.

There is also another side of this, labor itself. The capitalist system relies on maintaining the myth that it is the capitalist that keeps



A Long Line Outside A Las Vegas Unemployment Office

the world moving, and not the productive power of labor. However at times when unemployment sores, when markets crash, and when the economic system enters its bust cycle the truth of labor being the mover of the world stands as the naked truth. A simple matter like a strike shows that all value is created from labor and not the trading (i.e. gambling) of stock market investors.

At a time when unemployment is climbing and millions cannot work, the most important jobs of maintaining day to day life become clear. It is not the bankers and day traders, the accountants, shareholders, and CEOs that are integral to the health of the economy. It is the workers who under normal conditions are paid little and even mocked for their "lowly" trades who are needed most. Those who work in supermarkets are now designated by the state as "priority workers," with some states beginning to give them hazard pay. Farmworkers, truckers, warehouse workers, food workers, construction and maintenance workers have all been shown to be vital pieces of the functioning of capitalist society. If such workers now were to take the advice of the bullies amongst the right-wing who in the past have advised them to "quit and get a better paying job," those same right-wing bullies would have no food to eat.

Hiding and obscuring unemployment numbers is just another facet of the capitalist attack on workers and the legitimacy of their suffering under austerity-ridden capitalist American government. One day, your work is valueless, the next you're essential. One day you have a job with benefits, the next you're working Uber, but at least you're not unemployed. And even if you are reckoned to be unemployed, the government will delay in reporting it, as to not scare investors too much with your financial ruin. That is how much the American state values a worker.

Don't wait! Get involved, today!



NORTHERN ILLINOIS SHELTERS CLOSE THEIR DOORS TO THE HOMELESS

By G. Boshcka On March 18, 2020

The pandemic of COVID-19 is sweeping the globe and stress testing the inadequate mechanisms in place for dealing with public health and wellbeing. Here in Illinois, the increasing lockdown measures have put people into a panic and changed social dynamics from town to town. Everyday working people and rich people alike are inconvenienced by stores being out of stock, increased traffic, crowded grocers, losing work or working from home, concern for loved ones, and isolation. Let alone the tragedy of those lost to the disease.

The effects are felt by everyone, but some people are enduring a unique sort of hell in the wake of public panic and the state's failure to meet public need. The people in charge of the country immediately pumped 1.5 trillion dollars into putting the stock market on life support so that big profits won't fall, while everyday people endure, and the struggle is amplified for the less fortunate. Despite the fact there are over seventeen million empty homes across America, and they're empty for no reason beyond the simple fact that Property means more than People under Capitalism.

We've talked with former recipients of McHenry County PADS homeless aid to get a better picture of the situation they've been hurled into. These people chose not to be named out of fear that they might be rejected from future applications for help as they struggle to get a roof over their heads. They range in age from early thirties to early sixties, notably some are of the demographic most vulnerable to COVID-19 symptoms were they to contract it - nothing is being done for them despite this.

On a "good day", the Homeless endure unthinkable hassle to be able to compete for assistance. In McHenry County there are a small handful of options available through the Pioneer Center for Human Services (which saw its funding cut under the governorship of Bruce Rauner). Most homeless people you'd meet would actually qualify for Social Security Income or Disability benefits as well as Public Aid healthcare - but applying to such things with no address or ID is nearly impossible. There are success stories, but to say that there is any sort of legitimate opportunity here is not the reality on the ground.

The most common assistance the homeless manage to get into is referred to as the "Rotating Shelter" program. Every day a church in another town allows people who signed up to sleep for the night and leave in the morning. It rotates to combat abuse and drug use, but effectively punishes the unlucky. There's a small bus program, which costs money without the appropriate voucher, as every church is too far to walk to in a day. The next assistance offered is a waiting list to get into the PADS shelter which allows people to sleep on a mat on a floor in a room with several other homeless people from night until morning - chores are a requirement and disability will not waiver the responsibility. It is against the rules to remain in the PADS room through the afternoon. There is also a voucher program for a motel for people who have the money to move into a new apartment soon, some people get stuck in the motel program for upwards of decades through entanglement with the process, but it awards very few applicants yearly and was not budgeted for since 2019.

Because these options are overburdened, underfunded, and understaffed, what they offer for people who do not aggressively push their foot in the door can get very basic camping supplies and a tent. It should be noted that this is a suburban county in Illinois, there is no free land, vagrancy is a criminal offense, and all property is private property. The PADS shelter workers and volunteers will tell you that, very clearly, "don't get caught, because you're in trouble if you get caught" and then explain a short list of potential spots to sleep out for a night. We could list plenty that we heard here, but it would only serve help law enforcement continue to track them like sport. They are particularly adamant in advising these people in dire straits to pack up when daylight comes and find a new camping spot every day, stressing the fact that it is illegal, but still the only option they have. The capitalists provided no backup plan for the rug being pulled out from under their safety nets.

As we began, these resources are available - with struggle, and endurance, and competitively, - "on a good day". But since COVID, these already ill-prepared social welfare and charity resources are closing their doors to people. The bus route for the rotating shelter has been cancelled to combat spread of COVID by limited public transport to a minimum. The churches are giving up on the program because they would otherwise crowd people into a big room, and that's being prohibited with no solution or alternative. The PADS shelter is in quarantine, once you step out, you're not allowed back in - they do not allow people to stay in their room during the afternoon. The Motel voucher program has been dead since early 2019 with a several-



McHenry county PADS of the Pioneer Center for Human Services in Woodstock, IL.

year queue already and no foreseeable plans to supply more vouchers. The services were quarantined and locked down, but with nowhere for the afflicted aid recipients to be locked down or quarantined to. Due to the market panic, people with cars have emptied the food pantries for their own families. To contract the disease in such a situation is unimaginable to bear through. The systemic result is that no assassins could compete with how effectively the ruling class murders their oppressed strangle victims. These unfortunate people are asking themselves now, with a tent in their hands, "where do we go now?"

The White House Administration is in favor of giving everyone a \$1,000 check to pad the disaster, there is no humanism in this handout, it's a convulsion of the imperialist beast desperately trying to stabilize its markets. But what good does anything like that do when you don't have an address anyway? Again, where do you go if you have no healthcare, no address, no roof, no money, no food, no openings, the churches close their doors to you, and the streets are flooded for panicked consumerism? What would you say when a billionaire "leader" tells you, as an "American", don't worry, 'we got your back, tell us where you live and we'll send you help'? These people in McHenry say "I'm sorry Mr. President, I don't live anywhere, I just survive."

Those most vulnerable to the worst effects of pandemic are being systematically shut out, ostracized, and pushed into the public as assistance falters in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. Those once struggling are now drowning. People with stable careers are seeing upturn in their lives like they never predicted and even small-business owners are looking at the plight of the homeless in the face - because even they recognize, capitalism wants to put you in that place, so long as they get to keep their money, their factories, and their political power. This situation is deplorable, and tragic, but it's happening on an incredibly larger scale in places all across the world right now. At every stage the common thread is the ineptitude of an economy which is not planned, which is not geared toward social goals, which can't resolve social problems, exacerbating the catastrophic effects of a natural disaster.

The unsustainability of this system has been objectively proven, time and again, from top to bottom, on a global scale and in your backyard. Surely, we can do better. A society, like the Soviet Union, that eliminated homelessness in 1936, provided universal, socialized medicine, and provided meaningful and gainful work opportunities for all its citizens would not produce the suffering that consumes all the country during this crisis, from New York City, to a quiet suburb outside Chicago.

April Update:

We called to find out if the people we talked to have had any improvement to their situation and have since said PADS and the community has come together to provide temporary shelter by paying for motel rooms for clients already registered for help. It remains up to the community to support those most afflicted by the irrational misfortune begotten of capitalism.



"ORGANIZE AND MAKE THE REVOLUTION:" COMMUNIQUE ON THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE 9TH CONGRESS OF THE PCML ECUADOR



The Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador has successfully completed the work of its IX Congress. The final sessions were preceded by a period of debate within their ranks and among the youth of the Political Report presented for this purpose by the Central Committee, in a document entitled **Organize and Make the Revolution**. The successful holding of this Congress constitutes an important ideological, political and organizational victory for the working class and the Marxist-Leninist communists of Ecuador.

The process of preparation and development of the Congress has been an important stage of debate in which all the organs of the Party and Youth participated, as well as friends of our organization, which allowed us to penetrate into the analysis of how the Party fulfills its historical responsibility to organize the social revolution of the proletariat in our country, the successes that we achieved in its execution and the limitations that we still have. The debate has also allowed us to deepen the analysis and understanding of the international and national situation and define a set of guidelines to advance the process of organizing the Ecuadorian revolution.

The course of these discussions has allowed us to confirm the ideological, political and organizational unity of the Party, its affirmation of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and the high spirit of militancy to undertake the revolutionary tasks, which constitute the basis for the successful development of this IX Congress.

In its final sessions, Congress approved the Report presented by the Central Committee, which becomes the line of political action for the next five years; in addition, it elected the new Central Committee, which, as is customary in our organization, combines experienced cadres - men and women - and young people who guarantee the continuity of a revolutionary leadership.

Our Congress had the honor of having the presence of delegations from various fraternal parties, members of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, ICMLPO: Revolutionary Communist Party of Bolivia, Revolutionary Communist Party of Brazil, Communist Party of Labor of the Dominican Republic, Communist Party of the Workers of France, Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist), Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist), Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Uruguay. Also present were the Revolutionary Communist Party of Chile and the internationalist George Gruenthal. The Party of Labor of Turkey, the 'Party of the Workers of Tunisia, the Communist Workers' Party of Denmark, the Communist Platform - for the Communist Party of the Proletariat of Italy and the Party of Labor of Iran (Toufan) sent messages of greeting. The presence and communications of these parties constitutes an important contribution of the International Communist Movement, which we value highly and commit us further to our internationalist work.

We share with the workers, youth, women, and peoples of Ecuador and the world this ideological, political, and organizational victory of the Ecuadorian Marxist-Leninists and Marxist-Leninists grouped together in the ICMLPO.

In the midst of a capitalist world that goes from failure to failure, we proletarian revolutionaries are advancing and fulfilling our mission of organizing and carrying out the social revolution of the proletariat.

Long live the IX Congress of the PCMLE!
Long live the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations!
For the revolution and socialism!
Central Committee
Marxist Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador
March 2020

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDS \$1.5 TRILLION FOR 30 MINUTES OF STOCK GAINS



Stocks saw a 30 minute boost after the New York Fed injected 1.5 trillion dollars into the market. It didn't last long.

By J. Palamedes On March 12, 2020

In a move aimed at curbing the quickly stumbling stock market, the New York Federal Reserve injected 1.5 trillion dollars into the market today. The Fed released a statement, claiming that "These changes are being made to address highly unusual disruptions in Treasury financing markets associated with the coronavirus outbreak." The move saw stocks gain for little more than 30 minutes, before decreasing significantly again, finishing over 2300 points (-9.99%) down, the worst day in the stock market since 1987. It is but the latest example of the lengths to which the capitalist class will go for itself, as it denies us basic human rights.

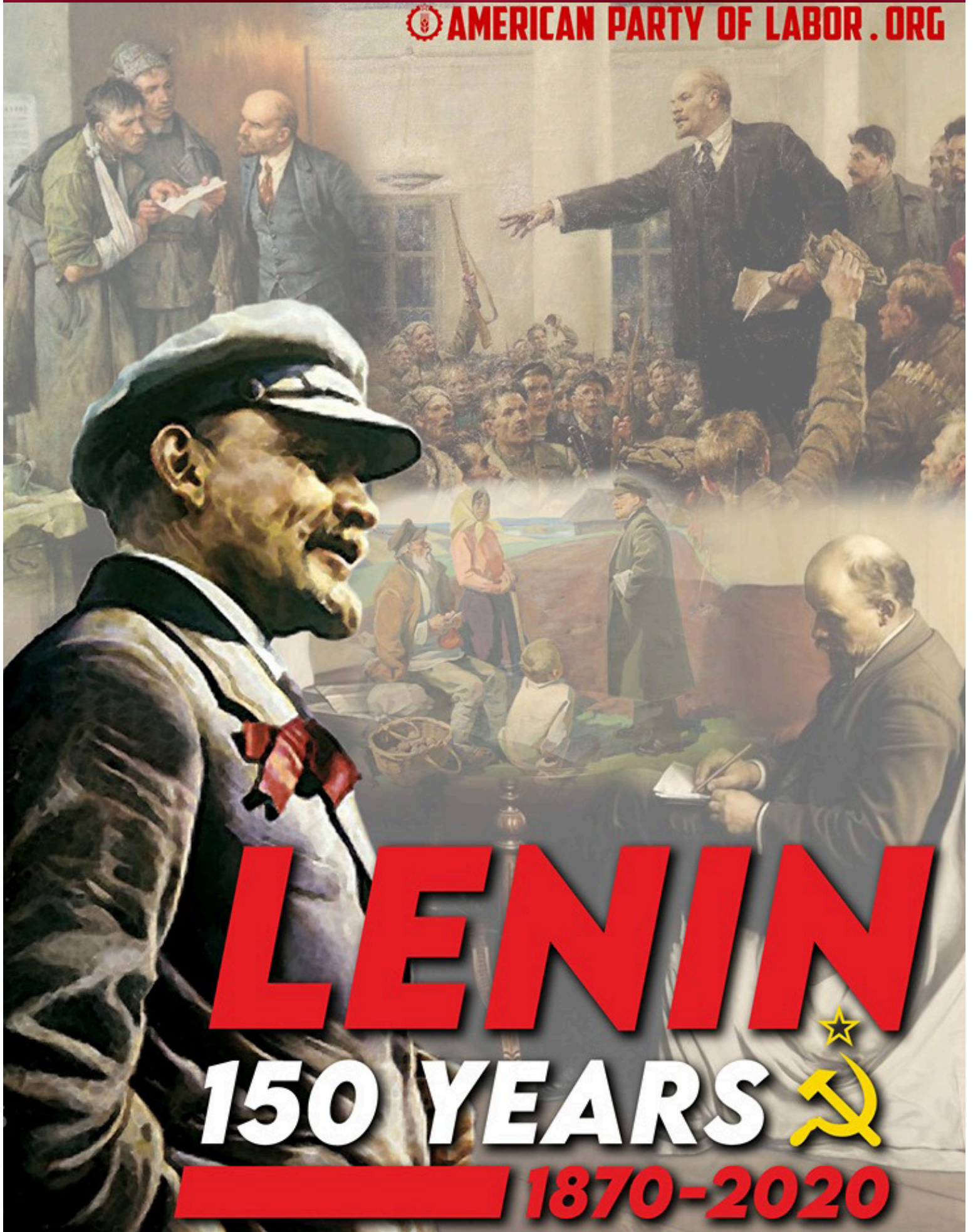
To better understand such a total, 1.5 trillion dollars is the estimated amount that would be required to cancel all student loan debt in the United States. Making state universities tuition free would cost \$80 billion. Free school lunches for every child in America would cost \$20 billion. For a person making \$30,000 a year, it would take 50 million years to make \$1,500,000,000,000. \$1.5 trillion also represents over 11% of all individual debt in the US including car payments, mortgages, and credit card debt. All this, for 30 minutes of financial optimism for the capitalist class.

During an election cycle in which we have been told basic social democratic measures like healthcare and student-debt forgiveness are wild dreams, this move underlines with particular intensity the fundamental inequalities and systemic barriers movements for economic justice face within the United States. The capitalist state can buy 30 minutes of gains for shareholders for trillions of dollars, while working class americans contemplate healthcare costs, budget rent and food, and count paid sick days.

And while moderates will argue that a change in leadership is all that is required to return to "normal," coronavirus has in many ways exposed the razor-thin veneer of stability in capitalist America. Many workers, working several jobs to survive and still failing to cover basic needs like affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, and healthy food, when faced with something like coronavirus, find themselves particularly vulnerable. The Reaganite myth that corporate wealth fosters national prosperity is truly dead, as corporations reap massive profits, and working class people, unable to forgo 14 days worth of pay, face the most immediate threat of disease and the most profound costs of stock market crashes and quarantines.



 **AMERICAN PARTY OF LABOR . ORG**



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150 YEARS



1870-2020

The American Party of Labor is...

a revolutionary working class organization. Our aim is to abolish the capitalist system and replace it with a socialist, working democracy, a system based on the principle laid out by Marx, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." There can be no true freedom or democracy, we argue, when billionaires have more wealth than the bottom 90% of Americans.

Who Can Join? How Do I Get Involved?

Every working person who is open to our plan for change, agrees with our Program and Platform and is over the age of 18 is welcome to join.

To look at our joining procedure, activity, membership FAQ, and more: please visit:

bit.ly/JoinTheAPL

You can find everything that you should know about us here, and you can contact us and connect to members in your area.

If we don't have a presence in your city, we'll get to know you and help you establish one.

Why be Marxist-Leninists in the USA in the 21st century?

There is an important fundamental difference between Marxism and other so-called anti-capitalist or "third way" theories. Marx, unlike many thinkers of his day, did not just see a problem with capitalism that could be mitigated. Instead, he and his compatriots analyzed capitalism itself to understand how the system worked. Marx's ideas for revolution are based off of that analysis, and the experiences of the struggles in Europe of 1848. Solutions to the problems of capitalism can only be reached by understanding and observing the system itself, textured with the political reality of the country and historical struggles. This is why we think revolutionary history is worth talking about, and making part of our platform.

Regarding the regulation of capitalism and emergent social democratic reform movements, it is not uncommon that capitalist states restrict the private sector for various reasons. The problem is that political power is still stacked in favor of the ruling class, they have every avenue and all the resources necessary undo reforms and regulations. What truly led to the collapse of the socialist bloc was not that these countries pursued communism, which was ultimately too radical, but rather that these nations pursued market style reforms until they had more or less become capitalist countries. As we have seen in the US, liberal victories are short-lived.

Today, social democratic movements would have us do much the same, if not less - regulate capitalism, nationalize some industry, and try to maintain a welfare state- without expropriating the ruling class, without giving the nation a clear direction for the future, and worst of all, without putting the working class in power. We cannot face climate change, resurgent fascism, police brutality, the exploitation of oppressed nations, and the threat of American imperialism around the world without a revolutionary, centrally organized movement.


How is the American Party of Labor Different From Other Organizations?

An Anti-Revisionist, Internationalist Party: The American Party of Labor is a dedicated anti-revisionist party, opposed to concessions to capitalists, and critical of all imperialist actions by the US, Russia, and China. The APL is an observer member in the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO), and participates in the international anti-revisionist struggle.

A Party of Working Class People: The American Party of Labor is made up of workers fighting for workers rights. Many of our members are in active union and unionization struggles, and we all do our political work after clocking out.

A Party of Equals: The APL is active in the fight for the rights of women, oppressed nations, the LGBTQ+ community, and immigrants, and for the community control of police departments. In 2019, the APL was a founding member in the National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression.

Forever Anti-Fascist: We take the anti-fascist legacy of the Marxist-Leninist movement. Members of the American Party of Labor are dedicated anti-fascists, and active in movements against the Far-Right on college campuses, and the barbaric treatment of immigrants at the border.



"The artist must elect to fight for freedom or slavery. I have made my choice. I had no alternative. The history of the capitalist era is characterized by the degradation of my people: despoiled of their lands, their true culture destroyed... denied equal protection of the law, and deprived their rightful place in the respect of their fellows."

- Paul Robeson



Legalize Workers - No More Detentions, No More Deportations, Abolish I.C.E.!

Guaranteed Work and a Livable Income!

Socialized Healthcare For All!

Nationalized Healthcare!

Free Education For All!

Equal Rights, Pay, and Housing For All!

End All Wars of Aggression!

Abolish Private Prisons, Free All Political Prisoners!

No Platform for Fascists!

Abolish Profit Made By the Exploitation of Labor!

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Editorial Board: Victor Vaughn, Alfonso Casal, Sebastian Lemba, Benjamin Rizzo, Garit Boshcka.

Managing Editor: John Palamedas.

Staff: Leonard Zorfass, Polina Brik, J. Thallman.

Contributors: Mike DeRuiter, Ekim Kilic, and workers like you.

Labor donated.

Our General Line.

1. The American Party of Labor comes from and represents the American working class. From time to time and place to place there may be individuals who are admitted to the Party who do not have a working class background, or are not currently considered to be working class by Marxist-Leninist ideology and principles. Such individuals are exceptions to the general rule, as they have in effect transcended their class through conscious application of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

2. The American Party of Labor maintains that value in society is produced by human action within the material world. That is to say, value is created by the consumption of labor power. The working classes, which have only their labor power to sell for their daily sustenance, therefore make production possible. We call for the reorganization of society to provide the means of production to the working class to be administered either under an elected or selected management or collectively through a council system.

3. The American Party of Labor demands the abolition of private property and that all means of production be in the hands of the working class. Profit under capitalism is extracted surplus value from the consumption of labor power and constitutes a theft from the working class by the capitalist ruling class. Under our system, the working class will be paid the full value of their production less the necessary deductions to support the state and its various cultural, economic and social support projects.

4. The American Party of Labor demands that all oppressed nations within the context of the American Empire, including, but by no means limited to, Indigenous peoples, Native Hawaiians, Guamanians and Puerto Ricans (within the context of Puerto Rico), be given national self-determination as to whether or not they wish to remain in the American socialist state, which shall be constructed on the remnants of the United States. We call for the end of the so-called commonwealth system in all U.S. imperial possessions. The nations in these political organizations should either choose to become a U.S. state or an independent country.

5. The American Party of Labor demands the cancellation of all current debt held by developing countries to the U.S. These loans were not made with the intention of helping the people of these countries, but rather to enslave those countries with debt.

6. The American Party of Labor is a party against all imperialism. We are opposed to all wars of aggression on the world stage and all other threats of war and military intervention. We call for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from abroad. We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all occupied peoples and with all nations living underneath neo-colonial regimes. We call for the end of foreign aid to Israel, Colombia and other outposts of capitalist and imperialist aggression.

7. The American Party of Labor is an internationalist party. All peoples around the globe struggling for their emancipation from their own systems of exploitation are our allies. We extend our hands to all revolutionary organizations guided by Marxism-Leninism worldwide and to national liberation movements of exploited peoples of all countries because our cause is one and the same.

8. The American Party of Labor demands the U.S. withdrawal from NATO and other imperialist alliances.

9. The American Party of Labor stands fully against the militarization of the U.S.-Mexican border. It supports the rights of immigrants in Latin America and the Caribbean, that drive sustenance farmers off their lands and to the United States due to a lack of economic opportunity in their native countries.

10. The American Party of Labor has a more generalized list of our demands and positions in a separate document called the Party Platform.