



THE RED PHOENIX

NEWSPAPER OF THE AMERICAN PARTY OF LABOR

PEACE
★
EQUALITY
★
SOCIALIST
DEMOCRACY
★
ALL POWER TO
THE WORKING
PEOPLE!

AmericanPartyofLabor.com ★ RedPhoenixNews.com ★ Issue #25 ★ January 2023 ★ Please Copy & Redistribute!



LABOR FIGHTS BACK AGAINST CAPITALIST REACTION

Photo: University of California graduate workers and supporters rallied outside the State Capitol in Sacramento. Brontë Wittppenn/San Francisco Chronicle, via Associated Press

ELECTIONS 2022: WORKERS VOTE FOR PROGRESSIVE BALLOT MEASURES WHILE CONGRESS STAGNATES



A polling location in Des Moines, IA, during the 2022 election. (Photo: Phil Roeder/Flickr)

**Red Nesbitt, Red Phoenix correspondent, Maryland
November 12, 2022**

The 2022 US midterm elections are generally concluded, with votes still being counted in Nevada and a run-off election scheduled for December for the Senate races in Georgia. House results are still unknown in Colorado, New Mexico and Maine. The Democratic Party has seen its greatest success in gubernatorial races since 1986. With its coalition with the two Independents in the Senate, and with a potential victory in Georgia, the Democrats may have the slightest of majorities in both Congressional Houses. Before the votes have even been fully counted, liberal pundits have already triumphantly declared the failure of the "red wave to materialize."

This is a dangerous enthusiasm from the talking heads of the Democrats. In 2020 the Biden/Harris ticket won the presidency with the largest popular vote in US history, and at that same time the Democrats lost seats in the House and the Republicans won the governor's race in Virginia. Only the democratic party could be elated at half victories or small defeats. The American people still lack a true voice in congress, with conservative Democrats-in-name-only such as Sinema and Manchin in the Senate and a slim majority, as it stands, of 8 seats in the House. The victory here, though not insignificant, will likely only lead to further stagnation in national government. Despite possessing a tie-breaking vote, Kamala Harris accepted a compromised COVID relief bill that omitted a \$15 minimum wage and \$2,000 stimulus checks. Just recently Congress failed to pass federal legislation protecting reproductive rights, which were endangered by the criminal decision of the SCOTUS.

There are some points of powerful indication to the will and intention of the masses. On several ballot issue items across the nation, the people of this country checked the box for progress, not to be found in the Democrats but in direct action and initiative. Vermont, California, Michigan, and

Kentucky voted in decisive margins to protect reproductive rights in their states: 65% in CA, 76% in VT, 56% in MI, and 52% in KY. Maryland and Missouri have legalized recreational marijuana. Nebraska and Nevada have approved increases in the minimum wage as Washington DC has eliminated a legal loophole for minimum wage employment. Orange County, FL has approved a measure of rent control, now left to the mercy of the FL judicial system. In Cook County, IL, voters approved funding alternatives for mental health services and social services to take priority over increased police department spending in order to combat crime. Also in Illinois, a constitutional amendment was passed easily to ban "right to work" in the state. In Kingston, NYC, the rent regulation board rolled back rent for 1200 dwellings by up to 15% in the face of popular mobilization. The American people have proven once again that, given the opportunity, they are more decisive and further to the left than the bourgeois hacks that claim to represent them.

Unlike the Democratic Party, the working class is not resting on its laurels, and activists and organizations must not let up. The meager, regional gains of individual states and the meek promises of the political players of the "Democratic" party cannot meaningfully repair the foundation of exploitation that props up the United States' sociopolitical-economic edifice. The working masses of this country must continue to organize against reactionary terror, against imperialist war making with Russia, for universal healthcare for all Americans, for social housing, for the end of unemployment, and against the social violence targeting marginalized groups such as the LGBTQ community, women, and POC. The American proletariat has voted today, it will and MUST organize tomorrow, and the American Party of Labor will be on the front lines with them until we have won a nation without exploitation and oppression.

A CALL TO FIGHT LIKE HELL FOR THE LIVING



**Ian Ocx, Red Phoenix correspondent, Texas
November 23, 2022**

On November 21st the LGBTQIA+ community in Colorado Springs came together to celebrate the victories the transgender and gender-nonconforming community has won over the years, and to honor those who have been lost, at a Trans Day of Remembrance event at Club Q. Sadly, the LGBTQIA+ community of Colorado Springs and the world experienced even more loss when Anderson Lee Aldrich, 22, entered the club with an "AR-style rifle" and a handgun. Aldrich murdered five people and wounded nineteen others in what the bourgeois press is calling a "bias-motivated crime" instead of what the working class and its LGBTQIA+ members know it to be: another senseless hate crime and violent attack on the LGBTQIA+ community by means of the prevalent All-American mass shooting.

These attacks do not – as the capitalists and their representatives in the liberal bourgeois news media want us to believe – fall from the sky or come from only the deranged minds of troubled individuals. These violent and deadly attacks emerge from systemic issues, problems, and contradictions within our societies. In this case, like many others, this act of anti-LGBTQIA+ violence comes from an increasingly reactionary political segment of

the American population that was and still is roused and "radicalized" by former President Donald Trump and his far-right ideology and rhetoric. As these reactionaries continue to feel emboldened in their hateful worldviews they need to find a never-ending supply of targets to blame for the problems they think exist within US society and culture. The problems that the right-wing claim are destroying society are not based in material reality (class struggle, poverty, environmental/ecological destruction, healthcare denial) but are instead based in idealism (emotions and feelings), and usually relate to imagined social orders with no firm or eternal basis in the actual sociological development of humanity.

Under Trump's presidency all components of the intersectional working class within the US saw an increase in the attacks geared towards them, but these attacks did not end once Trump left office. In many ways they intensified. In recent years the LGBTQIA+ community, especially those who are transgender and gender-nonconforming, has seen an increase in the number of attacks and discriminatory efforts targeted against them. In 2021 a total of 131 anti-trans laws were put forward into legislative sessions. Many of them failed, but not all. As of October 2022 there have been 155 more attempted anti-trans laws presented throughout various state

legislatures within the US. The status of many of these bills is still pending and defeat of all of them is not certain, though we may hope that to be the case. Republican Party officials continue to share their hateful rhetoric while pushing for anti-scientific policies that feed into the festering anti-LGBTQIA+ pustule brewing within the reactionary segments of the American population. Take Greg Abbott and Ron DeSantis among others as prime examples.

Violent and brutal attacks carried out by bigots like Aldrich are simply the result of the continued spread of the transphobic fever that is gripping the right-wing and the legislative sections of the bourgeois state apparatus. As these reactionaries feel that their imaginary society is somehow under attack, they engage in acts of violence like the incident at Club Q to "defend" their ignorant idealist views of the world around them. These attacks are also made easier for them to commit by the incredibly loose gun laws within the US, which designate few restrictions on the types of firearms people can acquire and have led to countless mass shootings on American soil. In the wake of the mass murder that took place in Club Q that claimed the lives of Raymond Green Vance (he/him), Kelly Loving (she/her), Daniel Aston (he/him), Derrick Rump (he/him), and Ashley Paugh (she/her), all progressive and revolutionary organizations and individuals must organize within our own communities and fight like hell to make sure no one else in the LGBTQIA+ community loses their life for simply existing, for being who they are, and for not fitting into an imaginary societal order so enforced by reactionaries. The LGBTQIA+ community needs solidarity and support. We need friends and allies in every progressive segment within the broader working class and of the working class movement itself. This solidarity with the LGBTQIA+ community is vital in the struggle against the reactionaries who threaten the safety of us all. This struggle will involve many challenges and will need to be fought on multiple fronts. The ruling class fights to maintain an oppressive system that keeps the masses cannibalizing themselves in a multitude of ways by focusing on differences between us. We fight this with UNITY among the workers and oppressed. The victory of reaction cannot be allowed. The victory of reaction will perpetuate these targeted killings. Historical and ongoing current events prove this to be true.

FOR RAILWAY WORKERS, THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER

Ryan P, Red Phoenix correspondent, Pennsylvania
December 12, 2022

It is undeniable that, in America, railroad workers are severely underappreciated. Their jobs are physically demanding and require them to always be on call. Considering the heavy workload and the vital service they provide, it would follow common sense that the amount of time they are able to have off should be proportionate. However, in a capitalist society like the United States, profits dominate and common sense rarely applies. American railway workers receive few sick days which often must be requested in advance, as if illness and injury can be predicted. With the rise of infectious diseases such as COVID-19, monkeypox, and RSV, paid time off is more important than ever. Railway workers have called upon the US government, demanding seven more annual paid sick days under the threat of striking on December 9th. Unsurprisingly, this reasonable demand was shut down by the Biden administration and the Senate.

Even as the House of Representatives voted on a resolution to give railway workers additional sick leave, the Senate voted against it. With the administration deciding to outright ban the planned strike by railway workers, it would seem that Biden's given nickname of the "Union President" is more ironic than ever.

Of course, there are claims that at least the railway workers got something out of this – after all, eight of the twelve unions managed to agree on a bill with the House that would entail incremental benefits such as an increase in pay. Yet, the other four unions that rejected this diluted bill represent over half of the country's railway workers, making it clear that for the vast majority of railway workers this is not nearly enough.

The usual excuses were given, such as the difficulty of the decision or that the strike would devastate the economy. What is especially interesting is that even "progressives" like Cori Bush and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez voted against the interests of the railway workers, with only the likes of Bernie Sanders seemingly concerned with the rights of railway workers in any way.

The fight is not over. It took decades of class struggle by the American proletariat to win the right to strike in the first place, and the right to fight for what we deserve on legal grounds. Oftentimes this struggle has been against the trade unions and other organizations that claim to act on behalf of workers but fail to adequately represent our interests. The American Party of Labor calls upon railroad workers of all backgrounds to refuse to allow the US government to trample their rights. Do not let Biden break his promise of being "the most pro-union president you've ever seen." Do not let railroad corporations continue to benefit from the labor and sacrifices of the workers. It is clear that a bourgeois government is unable and unwilling to fight for the rights that workers deserve, and therefore we must keep fighting together in solidarity as a united working class.



Workers standing amid the ruins caused by the 1877 Pittsburgh railroad riots.

RAMÓN V. PEBENITO WILL LIVE FOREVER



As this issue of the Red Phoenix was going to press, we learned of the untimely death of our comrade, Ramón Pebenito, of the American Party of Labor's New York City Division. The APL sends its heartfelt condolences to Cde. Ramón's family, friends, and comrades. The March issue of the Red Phoenix will include an article on Cde. Ramón's life and work, and remembrances by his friends and peers.

Dear friends and comrades,

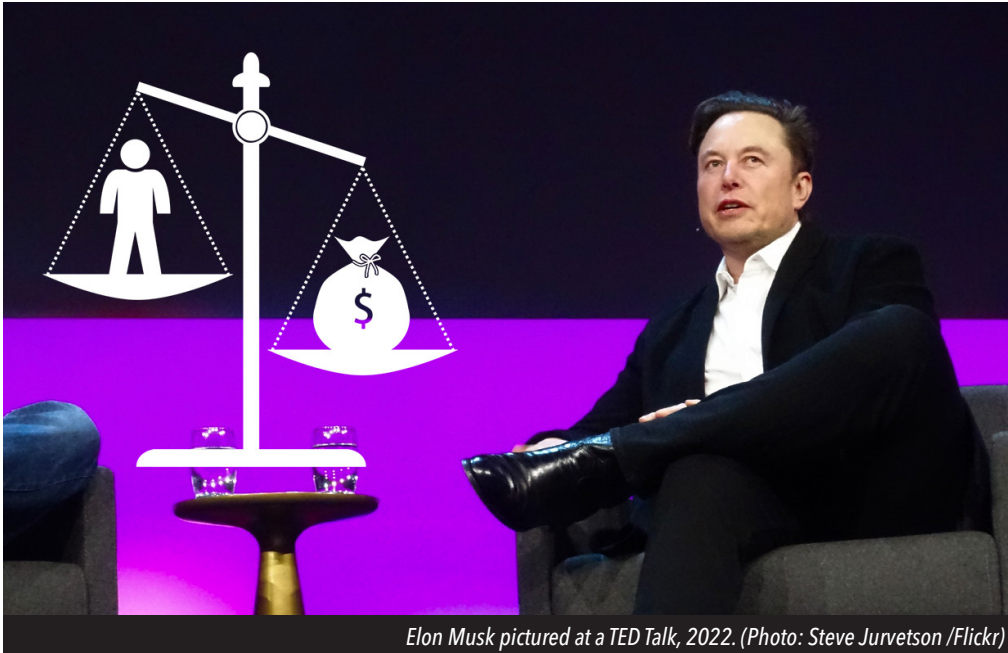
A strong and powerful proletarian heart has ceased to beat. On December 30th, our brother and comrade Ramón Pebenito lost his battle with cancer.

His life was devoted to serving the people and fighting for the rights of the marginalized and oppressed. Comrade Ramón was the best of what we are. We are heartbroken with grief, but we vow that Ramón's legacy of love and courage will live on in everything we do.

Ramón Pebenito, PRESENTE!

Alfonso Casal, National Chair of the American Party of Labor

WHY IT MATTERS: ELON MUSK AND THE DECLINE OF TWITTER



Elon Musk pictured at a TED Talk, 2022. (Photo: Steve Jurvetson /Flickr)

**Mike B, Red Phoenix correspondent, Ohio
December 14, 2022**

When 51-year-old Elon Musk purchased the social media platform Twitter in October for the sum of \$44 billion, the event was heralded by reporters and pundits as one of the most consequential transactions of the present era. Yet on that day – and every day since then – working people have continued to rise each morning, fulfilling important roles in every facet of the economic system under challenging circumstances to provide for themselves, their families, and communities. Indeed, it seems that Musk's much-touted acquisition and the future of Twitter means little for the hundreds of millions of Americans who perform the vital tasks that keep the country moving. But there are lessons to be learned from the affair thus far, as well as real implications on the future of communication, development, and the ultimate quality of life for working people moving forward.

Originally conceived and launched in 2006 by a small group of technology entrepreneurs, within the course of several years, Twitter quickly evolved from a narrowly focused networking and microblogging service to one of the most prominent communication forums in the world, hosting hundreds of millions of users worldwide. From banal observations to major events in popular culture, public health, and geopolitical relations, Twitter has become a vital – and seemingly indispensable – communication outlet for individuals, organizations, and governments.

Twitter's rapid expansion into virtually every facet of the zeitgeist also presented proponents

of division and hate with a powerful new outlet for communication and recruitment. But as Twitter's owners undertook efforts to reform their dysfunctional social media "ecosystem," the ensuing backlash from the far right invoked complaints of censorship and repression, and that's where Elon Musk – widely cited as the world's wealthiest individual – entered the fray.

Although Musk had taken steps to exert control over Twitter as far back as five years ago, his efforts escalated considerably in the wake of the suspension of Donald Trump's Twitter account in early 2021. Publicly, Musk maintained the ongoing narrative that he is a crusader of "free speech" and sought to acquire the platform to promote a broader social discourse. Following litigation and legal maneuvering, the deal was sealed on October 27, 2022, and Musk took the helm as Twitter CEO. Repercussions were immediate, both internally and throughout the Twittersphere. Within the first week of his acquisition, Musk laid off thousands of employees and hate speech exploded across the platform. For his part, Musk consistently downplayed the significance of this trend, while moving swiftly to reinstate the banned accounts of far-right provocateurs and propagandists, including Jordan Peterson, Project Veritas, and Donald Trump.

There is an all-too-evident element of adventurism with respect to the financial risks associated with his capital venture, as well as Musk's conspicuous penchant to extort power and control over vast swaths of humanity. Individualism and egotism are also evident in his present course of action, particularly considering that he opted to spend approximately one quarter of his estimated wealth

not on meaningful and tangible efforts to improve the quality of and access to public discourse, but by expending vast amounts of capital to buttress his bloated public image.

Musk's public assertions regarding freedom of expression provide a thin veil of cover for his true motivation, which is the same for all capitalists at their core: to maximize and concentrate personal wealth. The following points are important conclusions to this end:

1. Capitalists consistently act in their own self-interest, both individually, and as a ruling class (the bourgeoisie).
2. Capitalists seek to perpetuate divisiveness – including racist ideology, hate speech, and repressive language – among working people to sow discord and prevent cooperation between groups, thereby minimizing or preventing meaningful social change.
3. When working people and the working class are at odds, the power of capitalists is effectively unchecked, resulting in a wealth gap that benefits the ruling class and penalizes and represses workers.

In many respects, Musk has already done considerable damage in the early months of his new enterprise by instituting mass firings, perpetuating a reportedly hostile work environment, and, as noted above, inciting the present resurgence in online hate speech. Nevertheless, even greater detriments are possible as the social media platform descends further into chaos. In late November, Twitter ended its ban on COVID-related misinformation, effectively opening the floodgates for old and new strands of the type of conspiracies and pseudoscience that contributed to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people during the peak periods of the pandemic. Most recently, Musk abruptly dissolved his platform's Trust and Safety Council, a volunteer advisory group formed to address hate speech, child exploitation, suicide, and similar problems on Twitter.

From the politics of hate and division to the perpetuation of dangerous misinformation and poisonous ideology, Twitter under Musk has effectively metastasized into a new clearinghouse for pseudoscience and fascism, in which the language and strategies of exploitation and repression are not only accepted, but encouraged. As such, the medium in its current form places the health and welfare of working people at risk – and that is precisely why this *matters*.

SPLITS IN THE GERMAN CAPITALIST CLASS: REFLECTIONS ON THE INTER-IMPERIALIST RIVALRY BETWEEN USA AND CHINA (1/2)

Hari Kumar, Red Phoenix international correspondent
November 12, 2022

Last year in discussing Merkel's retirement, I wrote that:

"In the dynamic of 21st century capitalism, under Merkel Germany has tried to ride several horses. But the increasingly tense race between USA and Chinese imperialism, will likely force Merkel's heirs to be clearer about opposing US imperialism." (*Berlin Left Blog, July 25, 2021*)

Since the Russian neo-imperialist attack on Ukraine, the confrontation between US imperialism and the bloc of Chinese-Russian imperialism has split the German capitalist class. That class which is at the center of the EU is pivotal for the US to influence, or should we say to 'control.' We highlight three particular instances where this division became evident below.

The overall context of this dis-union of the German capitalists is the rapidly evolving inter-imperialist rivalry that is becoming more and more overt. Here the forces of the US, including NATO, are pitted against those forces allied to China and Russia. The states making up the so-called BRICS coalition have not fully revealed themselves as yet, but are likely to be joining that faction headed by China.

The two opposed blocs in German capitalism are quite clear - one led by the Greens (in particular, Federal Economics Minister Robert Habeck and Minister for Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock) and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) - favor a more overt partnership with (or subservience to) American imperialism. This means burning bridges with China. This bloc also aims to tie the EU to the US apron strings. Opposing them is the majority of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who wish to maintain economic links with China. This would enable markets for German capital and ultimately to maintain an independence from the demands of US imperialism.

This battle between the two blocs unfolded during the Russian imperialist war against Ukraine. The blocs take the following positions on this war. The more bellicose Greens wish to ramp up further sending of war materials to Ukraine. In contrast, the SPD tries to adopt a more 'cautious' policy, while acquiescing in military build-up and verbally condemning Russia. But the war aspects of this would need a separate discussion. Here we focus only on specific recent events.



THE NORD STREAM AFFAIR - MYSTERIOUS EXPLOSIONS IN THE NORTH SEA

On September 26, 2022, a series of explosions hit the Nord Stream pipelines - both 1 and 2 - crossing the Baltic Sea, which led to major leaks of the natural gas. More importantly they blew holes that allowed salt water to enter, destroying any potential for them to be ever used again. These pipelines were majority owned by the Russian state company Gazprom. A map of the pipeline course and a blow-by-blow dating is in Der Spiegel.

This happened in the territorial waters of Sweden and Denmark, near the island of Bornholm. These countries wrote to the UN that "several hundred kilograms" of explosives had damaged the pipes. All observers suspect a deliberate intentional sabotage. However, while Denmark, Sweden, and Germany have launched investigations, these are fractured and separate. Sweden refused a joint investigation as the matter was "too sensitive."

These countries refuse to discuss reports of recent US and NATO warcraft activity near Bornholm. Yet between August to September, a US fleet - "the largest US naval battle group since the cold war ended" - was cruising through the Baltic Sea, and the USS Kearsage reconnoitered around Bornholm.

Three plausible perpetrators are implicated:

"Was it the Russians trying to rattle the West, the Americans trying to sever a Russian economic artery or possibly the Ukrainians trying to take revenge on Russia? - what is known remains (as) cloudy."

But the 'Baltic Pipe' - carrying Norwegian gas to Poland - was unaffected. Had Russia been involved, damage to this pipe would have been much more likely. As for the Ukrainian hypothesis, this would only further exacerbate a potential European gas shortage, and would be unlikely to endear Ukraine

to its European allies. It seems far more plausible that the US was responsible.

On the other hand, the US had long argued vehemently against the Nord Stream pipelines. The German government enabled the deal with Russia under former Chancellor Angela Merkel. It was with considerable reluctance that the US appeared to acquiesce. Therefore a natural question, as Der Spiegel puts it, is: "Did the USA, as immediately discussed in many voices on Twitter, kill the pipeline project, which has always been unloved?"

The very probable US ownership of the sabotage is shown by the following. Firstly, as reported by Der Spiegel on September 27th:

"The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had weeks ago warned Germany about possible attacks on gas pipelines in the Baltic Sea... The German government received the CIA tip in summer, Spiegel reported."

Secondly, three very open statements - of US President Joe Biden; his top State Department official Victoria Nuland, before the explosions; and those of his Secretary of State Antony Blinken, after the explosion - leave little room for doubt.

On February 8, 2022, Biden threatened to "bring an end" to the Nord Stream pipelines "if Russia invades." Victoria Nuland echoed those remarks.

As Russia formally launched the war, it began limiting energy flow via the older Nord Stream 1, forcing immediate energy crunches on Europe. Oil and gas industrialists in the US exulted as their profits soared.

Immediately after the mysterious explosions, the smug Blinken posed as the savior of Europe, saying "it's a tremendous opportunity" - or, in full:

(Continued on next page)

SPLITS IN THE GERMAN CAPITALIST CLASS: REFLECTIONS ON THE INTER-IMPERIALIST RIVALRY BETWEEN USA AND CHINA (2/2)

"We've significantly increased our production as well as making available to Europe liquefied natural gas. And we're now the leading supplier of LNG to Europe ... We've worked to release oil from our Strategic Petroleum Reserve to make sure as well that there is oil on the markets and to help keep prices down... Ultimately this is also a tremendous opportunity. It's a tremendous opportunity to once and for all remove the dependence on Russian energy ... That's very significant and that offers tremendous strategic opportunity for the years to come."

"The U.S. Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, did not accuse Russia and instead said it was in "no one's interest" to destroy Nord Stream 1 and 2. "The United States and NATO/EU seem remarkably relaxed about sabotage of a piece of critical infrastructure," reported an oil and gas reporter for Reuters. "NS 1 and 2 were not delivering gas. But there is an important precedent/principle. Lack of high-profile response from Washington, London and Brussels itself an important story."

Finally, Europeans in the know are well aware of the real identity of the saboteurs. Radek Sikorski, Polish European MP and former Polish Defense Minister and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, blurted out a tweet which has since been deleted:

"An on-line debate erupted between senior Polish officials over who is responsible for the destruction... Sikorski, attributed to the United States the sabotage. 'Thank you, USA,' Sikorski wrote on Twitter."

Recently, President Putin of Russia again dangled the carrot of re-opening the supply of gas through the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which was finished last year at a cost of \$11 billion USD.

"Mr. Putin told an energy conference in Russia that delivering natural gas to Europe through the remaining strand of Nord Stream 2 would be a matter of 'just turning on the tap'."

But that is unlikely. Warfare now includes the sensitive sea beds of the world, where the "US Senate's failure to ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea" – gives it free rein.

GERMAN COMPANY EXPANSIONS IN CHINA VERSUS THE USA - BOTH BLOCS MOVING TO DEINDUSTRIALIZE THEIR GERMAN BASE

There are two separate groups of industrialists in Germany, mirrored by their political representatives. The two opposing directions being pursued are either pro-China or pro-USA. Ultimately, both blocs

propose moving production in significant measure to either China or to the USA. For example, the CEO of BASF Germany, Martin Brudermüller, confirmed:

"BASF Germany ... recently announced that it was intending to 'downsize permanently' in Europe, with high energy costs making the region increasingly uncompetitive. The statement from the world's largest chemicals group by revenue came after it opened the first part of its new €10bn plastics engineering facility in China a month ago, which it said would support growing demand in the country. 'The European chemical market has been growing only weakly for about a decade [and] the significant increase in natural gas and power prices over the course of this year is putting pressure on chemical value chains.'"

Olaf Scholz made his position clear in an opinion piece for "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" on the eve of leading a major business delegation to China. Scholz rejected any "decoupling" of relations with China. The business trip was continually undermined by loud criticism from the Green-FDP elements of the Ampel Coalition. But Scholz's position reflects a dominant strand in German capital, which wants access to the large market of China. In recent years this has expanded:

"In the first half of 2022, German companies' direct investment in China hit a record high, surpassing ... tens of billions of euros, according to ... the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin)... This is proved by intensive investments by German enterprises in China. ... BASF inaugurated the first plant... on September 6 in South China's Guangdong Province... German auto parts manufacturer Hella announced in July that it will expand capacity in China and open a new lighting plant in Changzhou.. Robert Bosch Venture Capital GmbH, a subsidiary of Bosch Group, announced in June that it will set up a new fund of 250 million euros for start-ups in China."

Meanwhile the opposing, and thus far smaller, pole of German capital plans branch plants in the USA, tempted by investment funds and the lure of cheap energy:

"German companies are expanding their presence in the United States – at the growing expense of production sites in Germany. (Because of – HK) huge investment programs in the USA... economic stimulus measures, some in the triple-digit billions, to induce German companies to set up production sites in the United States... (for example -ed.) the Northvolt company is considering suspending its plans to build a battery factory in northern Germany and instead to build a plant in North America. At the same time,

the existence of energy-intensive industries is being jeopardized in Germany... The threat of their relocation abroad – particularly to the USA, where energy prices are significantly lower – is tangible."

THE PRO-USA WING OF GERMAN CAPITAL TRIES TO OBSTRUCT TIES OF GERMAN CAPITAL WITH CHINESE CAPITAL

Meanwhile 'Green' Habeck tries to obstruct pro-Chinese moves of German capital:

"Habeck's economy ministry refused to extend Volkswagen's investment guarantees for China, citing the repression of Muslim Uyghurs in the western region of Xinjiang. The ministry is now working on plans to cap the number of such guarantees for China."

The pro-USA camp tried blocking China's acquisition of port facilities in Hamburg. Of course this is where Scholz hails from, politically speaking.

"The Chinese shipping company COSCO's acquisition of a stake in a terminal in the port of Hamburg, agreed upon last year, was approved last week only with certain restrictions. Federal ministers from the FDP and Greens had done their best to prevent it."

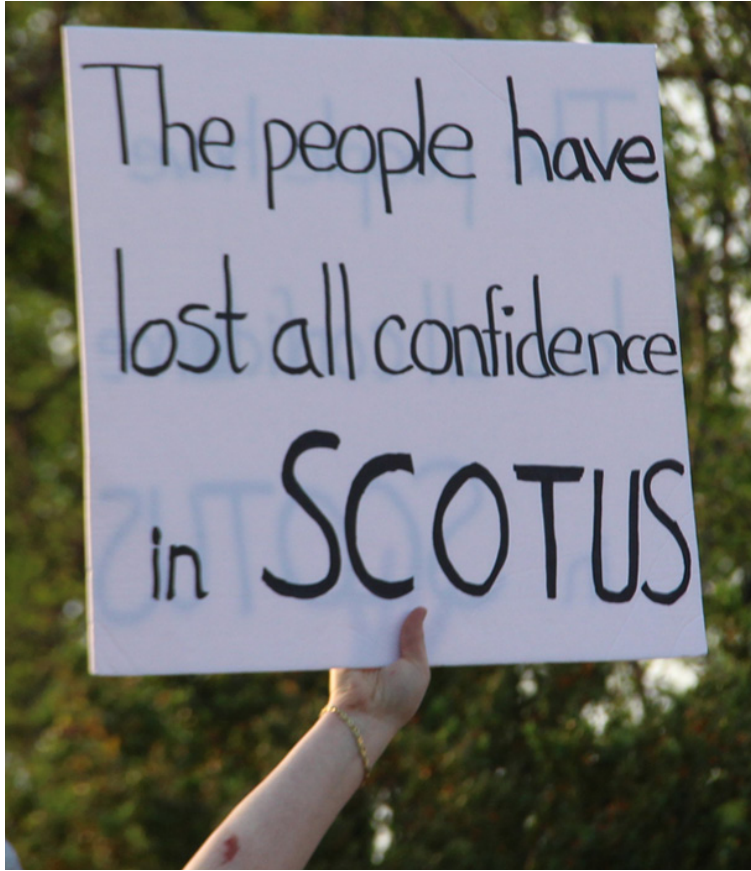
In the event, Habeck was only able to reduce the acquisition of the stake to a minority position. But this itself was welcomed by the USA.

Moreover in the strategically important sector of semi-conductors and chips, initially it seemed as if the German firm Elmos, which produces chips, was to be taken over by a Swedish company, Silex, which is owned by Chinese semiconductor group Sai Microelectronics. While formerly apparently approved, now Habeck has vetoed it.

CONCLUSION

Marxist-Leninists do not weep for either factional bloc of German capital. However we do argue that this is the prelude to the coming inter-imperialist war. While this may still be years off, all of these maneuvers are intensifying. Only a genuine workers' party, in as many of the countries driving the re-division of the world as possible, will help. By workers' parties of course we mean Marxist-Leninist parties. Those parties masquerading as "Green" or as "Social-Democrat Socialists" – or indeed those parties masquerading as "Marxist-Leninist" as in China – are simply covers for differing sections of imperialists.

THE RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT: ANOTHER LEGISLATIVE FARCE



The LGBTQIA+ Commission of the American Party of Labor December 4, 2022

Since the overturning of the 1973 Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade* in June of 2022, the reactionary Supreme Court has made it known that they are interested in reviewing and most likely reversing progressive victories of the past. This includes the landmark victory in June of 2015 from *Obergefell v. Hodges* which legalized same-sex marriage. In response to both the looming threat faced by many marginalized communities and to possible regressive attacks coming their way from the Supreme Court, liberal politicians and the Democratic Party have begun to use these fears to rally support around themselves and create half-hearted attempts to protect these communities in the name of publicity. The Respect for Marriage Act (RFMA) that was recently passed in Congress and signed into law by President Biden is one of these half-hearted reforms that offers too little for the LGBTQIA+ community.

One of several failures of the RFMA is that it does not prohibit individual states within the US from banning the right to marriage for LGBTQIA+ people in the event that *Obergefell v. Hodges* is overturned by the Supreme Court, at a time when 71% of Americans support same-sex marriage. It is worth noting that the RFMA does keep states from nullifying already issued same-sex marriages and interracial marriages. Further, it forces states to recognize same-sex and interracial marriages held in other states going forward, in the event of the repeal of the relevant court cases.

We in the LGBTQIA+ Commission of the American Party of Labor find it especially frightening that not only are queer rights coming under attack once again, but that even interracial marriages could be under attack, as the Supreme Court has hinted at "reviewing" *Loving v. Virginia*. This is sickening. In the leaked brief by the Supreme Court, they said the following: "Nor does the right to obtain an

abortion have a sound basis in precedent. Casey relied on cases involving the right to marry a person of a different race, *Loving v. Virginia* ... Respondents and the Solicitor General also rely on post-Casey decisions like *Lawrence v. Texas* (right to engage in private, consensual sexual acts) [this would enable currently unconstitutional sodomy laws to be enforced against straight and LGBTQIA+ people], and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (right to marry a person of the same sex) ... None of these rights has any claim to being deeply rooted in history." At the same time, a recent Gallup poll shows that 94% of the US population supports the institution and practice of interracial marriage.

The fact that the Supreme Court is now planning to attack social conventions that are overwhelmingly popular among the American population brings us to an objective fact: the Supreme Court is NOT a democratic institution and is not answerable to the oppressed masses who constitute the majority of the country. Consequently, there can be no genuine democracy in the United States under capitalism. The problem of throwing these liberties to the State Legislatures, even with the popular support established above, is that a mere 46.97% of eligible voters – not including disenfranchised and ineligible Americans – voted in the 2021-22 state legislative elections, and the arch-reactionary Republicans dominated 54.7% of all legislative seats in the states. 45% of Americans say the Supreme Court has too much power, 43% of Americans say they have hardly any confidence in the Supreme Court, and 67% of Americans support term limits for Supreme Court Justices.

Knowing this, it becomes evident that liberal reformism, a reformism that is so intrinsically tied to capitalist relations, is unable to guarantee the preservation of any democratic right won through the struggles of the working class and its allies. It is the responsibility of all progressive and revolutionary minded organizations and peoples to struggle for the continued existence of the established democratic rights already won (e.g., same-sex marriage, interracial marriage) through the bourgeois-democratic system, such as supporting term limits for Supreme Court Justices. However, this battle cannot end with another liberal reform of capitalist institutions. Revolutionary organizations must also struggle to create a new society, a socialist society, in which these democratic rights can be ever protected and guaranteed without fear of reversal and dismantlement. Only through a socialist society can the working class and all its members find total security, power, and safety over their own lives and be free from ruling class instruments of oppression like the Supreme Court of the United States. As such, we call for the abolition of the Supreme Court as a bourgeois mechanism that defends the capitalist system and enforces its tyrannical cannibalistic nature.

#AbortTheCourt



CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY



Ian Ocx, Red Phoenix correspondent, Texas
December 23, 2022

In Fort Worth, Texas, a few miles outside of Dallas, McDonald's announced the opening of the first ever "fully" automated fast food restaurant, where customers place and pick up their orders without interacting with any human workers, despite the necessity of the workers in the kitchen who prepare the food and drinks. Shortly after the opening of the store, videos on various social media platforms including Twitter and TikTok went viral. Several of these videos made reference to the demand of workers within the US for a \$15 per hour minimum wage, and claimed that this automation of a fast food store is the obvious corporate result of the ongoing struggle of workers for living wages. In essence, this is true. Rather than pay their workers – the source of their profits – enough to live on, McDonald's would instead invest in replacing them altogether, save for the kitchen staff that cannot yet be replaced with technology. Representatives of McDonald's claim that this experiment in automation is to help improve the customer experience and is geared towards those customers "planning to dine at home or on the go." This excuse must not be believed.

An essential part of capitalism is the constant need caused by market forces to create surplus value, of which capitalists hoard a percentage as profit and recirculate another percentage in the quest to produce even more surplus value. The accumulation of capital through the production of profits for the bourgeoisie essentially takes on two distinct forms: the struggles over absolute and relative surplus value. Absolute surplus value refers to the

amount of time that the worker spends laboring to create the surplus value. This method of accumulation usually occurs in one of three forms. The capitalist will keep wages of the worker low, extend the number of hours worked, or control the rate at which the worker produces. Relative surplus value is usually accumulated through technological advancements employed by one individual or business, which allows for the depreciation of the cost of production while still selling the product at the socially accepted price. It is relative because as soon as other capitalists employ similar technologies in their industries which make similar products – depreciating the cost of production overall – the market price of the commodity is expected to fall in correlation with the necessary labor time needed to produce it.

McDonald's, in the process of automation, has engaged in both tactics of surplus value production. They have entirely eliminated the wages of now-obsolete workers (increasing their absolute surplus value) and they have employed new technologies to lower the cost of production without adjusting the sale price of their products (increasing their relative surplus value), at least until other companies do the same. Of course, McDonald's and any competitors who mimic this model could artificially keep prices high based upon the speculative value of the brands. This is nothing more than a complete and outright attack on the working class. However, the elimination of positions in the labor force at the restaurant in question leads to the development of a very dangerous contradiction within the drive to accumulate capital.

It can be safely assumed that if the experiment currently taking place at the Fort Worth location proves to be a success then McDonald's and other fast food industry giants will invest more heavily in automation, leaving more and more workers unemployed. As of the most recent data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) there are over 3 million people laboring in the fast food industry who now stand to lose their jobs to mechanical replacements. It can be safely assumed that others in the capitalist class, outside of the fast food industry but in other service related sectors, are also eagerly awaiting the results of this experiment to potentially develop their own ways to implement automation. If we leave it to all workers involved in food preparation and service of some kind the USBLS estimates

a workforce of 11 million people nationwide. If that is expanded to include other sectors of the service industry then the number grows steadily.

If continued automation proves to be a profitable investment, then countless millions of workers risk unemployment or underemployment. This is of course the contradiction that becomes inherent with automation under the exploitative laws of capitalist relations. The capitalists may be initially saving themselves money by reducing the necessity of human labor, but without a sustainable source of income for the workers, who will be able to afford to buy the products and services these businesses bring to market? The initial savings of automation will inevitably lead to a greater crisis of unemployment, overproduction, and all the poverty and misery that comes with it along with a crisis of capital accumulation for the bourgeoisie. Perhaps for a small time the crisis could be averted through the circulation of anti-value through the extension of credit, as was done leading up to the 2008 international financial crisis, but eventually the credit lines and debt accrued would need to be paid. Credit would be a temporary delay to the impending crisis of automation, not a solution. When all is said and done, it will be the workers who bear the burden of the crisis, just as has always been the case with capitalism.

It is worth noting that even with automation's present status as a looming threat and contradiction within the socioeconomic relations of capitalism, this does not mean that automation will always have an adverse nature. During socialist construction the expansion of automated labor will benefit the working class as a whole by eliminating various forms of superfluous labor tasks, leaving more time for workers to engage in other fields for their betterment. It is only under the corrosive laws of the market that we see this inherent evil in automating fields of work.



ALL TRUSSED UP: LIZ TRUSS' SHORT TENURE WAS NO MISTAKE

Hari Kumar, Red Phoenix correspondent, international
October 21, 2022

How stupid do the British ruling class think we are? The Tory party hidden masters knew perfectly well what they were doing by enabling Truss to become Prime Minister. No attempt was made to disguise her vicious policies. Even a very placid working class would find it difficult to swallow the astonishing tax-relief for the upper-crusters that she and her Treasurer inaugurated. Let alone as led by the rail workers, a newly militant one facing a bitter "restraint" on real wages – after inflation that is. Her rival in the leadership campaign made clear – the slimy prime minister Rishi Sunak – she was destined to alarm the financial elites. They would worry about under-writing upper-crust bonanza while falsely promising relief for the new winter of discontent to the working class. Something did not add up, nor does it now! Can we really believe this was all a mishap...?

A smoother operator – [Labour Party leader Keir] Starmer – will be relied on to strait-jacket the working class. Truss was no mistake... a hypothesis that I believe true. The working class needs its own party and not a social-democratic façade for the ruling class.

We know Marx's famous words on "personages in history" that "once is a tragedy, the second time is farce" (The 18th Brumaire). But five times in six years...! Cameron, May, Johnson, Truss ... and now...? Well, what is going on?

The mean, opportunist climber ex-Home Secretary Suela Braverman smeared Guardian readers as "tofu-eating wokerati smear." But as the writer Polly(-Anna) Toynbee blithely boosts Starmer and Labour (Polly Toynbee), she seems "woke" – if this is read as a falsely aware person. I surmise the ruling class want the disemboweled, sanitized of leftists and exorcised of Marxists party – Labour in power.

Three years ago in Berlin Left I suggested that "the UK ruling class was sorely divided about which direction to go. (Shown by) tensions between the industrial sector ruling class (declining) and the trading and speculative financial sector ruling class (dominant)... The Conservative Party was hijacked by the section of the ruling class whose mandate is to tie the apron strings of the UK back onto the (Trump-ite) USA. A significant part of the Labour Party hierarchy seems to have bought into this." But the best laid plans of these mice are fouled.

After their "success" of Brexit the lies and machinations have fallen apart. The major matter for them is that the USA under Biden, and pushing at Germany to "spine-up" against Russia, finds the UK of far less relevance than did Trump's USA. And things are dire in the UK for workers.

As Toynbee rightly says, inequality has grown. The "Living Standards Audit 2022" states: "the UK's Gini coefficient for disposable income was 0.37, lower than that in the US's (0.39) but higher than all other G7 countries, and higher than every country in Europe other than Bulgaria."

At the same time, according to the former Bank of England Governor Mark Carney, "in 2016 the British economy was 90% the size of Germany's. Now it is less than 70%." The Economic and Social Research Institute states "ESRI shows reductions in UK to EU goods trade by 16% and trade from the EU to UK by 20% relative to the scenario in which Brexit had not occurred." So much for Singapore-on-Thames.

The ruling class wants to trim sail, as the working class gets more uppity. But their rightwing was rather noisy still. What better way to disillusion them of their pretenses that the UK could still rule the world, than allow Truss and Kwarteng show how dependent the UK actually is? This is a Suez moment for the most right-wing upper class ideologues who seized the UK by the neck. I believe a smoother operator – Starmer – will be relied on to strait-jacket the working class.

Truss was no mistake – a hypothesis that I believe true. The working class needs its own party and not a social-democratic façade for the ruling class.



Photo: Andrew Parsons / No 10 Downing Street / Flickr

WE ARE FOR A SOCIALIST HOMELAND WHERE THE WORKING CLASS, THE POOR PEASANTRY, AND THE PEOPLES OF PERU CAN REALIZE THEIR CLASS ASPIRATIONS



Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) December 27, 2022

We Marxist-Leninist communists and revolutionaries of the world defend to the last consequences the right to self-determination of the peoples, but just as the people have their right to self-determination, the proletariat also has the right to establish its system, Scientific Socialism, wherever it is. We provide this preamble because a current has appeared in the popular organizations of "Southern Peru," which want to promote a process of independence in the regions that have currently shown greater combativeness in confronting the usurper government of Dina Boluarte, the coup Congress of the Republic and its civilian-military dictatorship. They are responsible, together with the Armed Forces and Police, for more than 28 civilian deaths in the protests against their attempt to seize the Executive Power, together with their allies of the parasitic bourgeoisie of Peru and US imperialism, mainly.

Apurimac, Arequipa, Ayacucho, Cusco, Huancavelica, Madre de Dios, Moquegua, Puno and Tacna, would be the regions that form this "new republic," given the permanent violation of rights from Lima's centralism, which attacks with racism, fascism, discrimination and embezzlement of resources, which gives crumbs and marginalizes the regions where extractive projects for gold, silver, copper, gas, lithium, among others are carried out; which were also imposed through concessions that permanently violate the possibility of the progress of the peoples throughout the country.

The Congress of the Republic, filled with the most rancid reaction and social democracy and presided over by someone accused of crimes against humanity such as José Williams Zapata, carried out a coup d'état to remove Pedro Castillo

from the government, who came from a rural background and who was carried to the presidency by the desire for change that exists and the push of popular organizations. The South has played a leading role; it feels that a president has been taken away, in addition to having restricted the right to referendum so that the people could intervene in the political development of the country. Elections were called without consultation to a Constituent Assembly; these are arguments that from its point of view justify the desire for separation of the regions of "Southern Peru."

As an organized party of the working class and its ally the poor peasantry, we state our position, so that adventurous decisions do not have negative impacts on the development of the popular movement, nor distract the people from the central problem of power, nor damage their fabric of organic resistance.

1. The independence of the South must be illuminated not only by desires for revenge or by a plan to consolidate a project for the country and a new political, economic and social system that conflicts with the foundations of the country that it renounced. The "South" does not propose the establishment of Scientific Socialism and its leaders are not going to build the Workers' Homeland, so the danger of a war of secession to preserve capitalism in the "South" or to rely on one imperialist bloc hungry to take away our natural resources is not justified.

2. There is a lot of talk about the income from the canon [the share that local governments receive from extraction of natural resources - translator's note] and other extractive royalties that Lima appropriates and that it is time to recover them. However, it does not listen to the desire of the peasant and native communities who demand the cancellation of extractive concessions and who are not willing to be soiled by being petty cash for any project of consolidation of reaction or separatism, nor to fatten any new bourgeoisie or regional bureaucracy, nor to sell themselves to any imperialist power by sacrificing their agricultural production and sovereignty.

3. The "South" has shown that it can put presidents into government, that it has the capacity to mobilize and that it has allies in the workers of the center and the north of the country, with peoples who continue in the struggle. Together with them real transformations can be promoted in our homeland; so that their capacity to create change cannot be diminished, nor can they accept to leave a single

centimeter of Peru to the exploiters and fascists. If we want an emancipated and free people, the reactionaries must leave; the peoples, the working class, the poor peasantry, their organizations and the Party can take up a new government that builds Scientific Socialism.

4. The declaration of independence for a part of Peru the whole country puts in danger of war, in which it will be the children of the working class and poor peasantry who die so that the bourgeoisie and imperialism continue to feast on our resources. In place of a declaration of war of secession we propose a declaration of revolutionary war of national and social liberation. If the current capitalist system is not replaced by Scientific Socialism, any danger of war is unjustified. The only war that is justified is that of the whole people against the exploiters and fascists, in which Marxist-Leninist communists are in the front line of combat without ever giving up our historical mission.

5. In the face of the desire for change of the "South," we propose the struggle for a Democratic-Popular and Federative Republic, composed of macro-regions with relative independence in government, economics, legislature and judiciary with respect to the Central State. In the current circumstances that can be established with popular pressure and the achievement of the calling of a Sovereign and Popular Constituent Assembly, where the peoples, nations and cultures that make up Peru are recognized.

Just as the people have their right to self-determination, the working class has its right to establish its system wherever it is!

Long live the struggle of the working class and the people for national and social liberation!

For a Democratic, Popular and Federative Republic and Socialism!

We will not lower our arms until they all go and a Constituent Assembly is called!

Nilo Candela - General Secretary - For the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Peruvian Communist Party (M-L)



About the Red Phoenix

The Red Phoenix is the mass voice of the American Party of Labor, published and printed bi-monthly. It is a newspaper dedicated to providing a creative and original insight on what is happening in the United States of America and around the world. Along with analysis of important news, events, reviews, and commentary, the paper also includes interviews and letters from workers across the country. The goal of the Red Phoenix is to provide a platform for working people of all kinds, without the biases and mitigation of corporate media.

The Red Phoenix is aimed at revolutionary and progressive-minded people, activists, workers, and others who are fighting in firm opposition to the war against the poor and the oppressed. Our political stands are taken from a revolutionary perspective and our writing serves as a medium of expressing that sentiment.

The Red Phoenix was founded in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crash, as a way to give a platform and voice for working class people left outside popular media narratives. During the Trump presidential campaign and the George Floyd Movement, the Red Phoenix grew to have correspondents across the country seeking to interview workers, analyze the resurgent labor movement, and agitate for a true workers' democracy. In our era of misinformation and rising fascism and union-busting, the need for true working class stories, under the "blue and red" mythology, has never been greater.

To help us with our work by subscribing, donating, or submitting your own articles for publication, please contact our editors at RedPhoenixNews.com

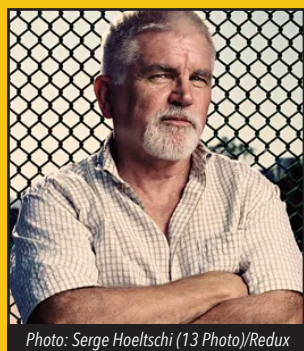


Photo: Serge Hoeltschi (13 Photo)/Redux

"Although it costs taxpayers more than twice as much to send an 18-year-old to prison as to university, politicians reap greater rewards from lobbyists and conservative voters for building cells than for building classrooms."

Mike Davis (1946–2022)
Political activist, writer, and historian

About the American Party of Labor

The APL 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 when billionaires have more wealth than the bottom 90% of Americans.

★ **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 LGBTQIA+ 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 uphold the anti-fascist legacy of the Marxist-Leninist movement. Members of the American Party of Labor are active in movements against the Far-Right on college campuses, and the barbaric treatment of immigrants at the border.

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 apply.

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

AmericanPartyofLabor.com

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.

The Red Phoenix is published bi-monthly by The American Party of Labor.

Editorial Board: Victor Vaughn, Alfonso Casal, Hari Kumar, Benjamin Rizzo, John Palameda, Sebastian Lemba, June V, Mike B.

Managing Editor: June V.

Staff: Red Nesbitt, Ian Ocx, Ryan P.



Visit us online to read more, subscribe, or contribute.

Red Phoenix:



RedPhoenixNews.com

American Party of Labor:



AmericanPartyofLabor.com

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 see a problem with capitalism that could just be mitigated. Instead, he and his compatriots analyzed capitalism itself to understand how the system worked. Marx's ideas for revolution are based on 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 nations 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.



**PEACE,
EQUALITY,
SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY**

Powered by Labor and made possible by contributions from workers like you.