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AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!



THE ABUSE OF IMMIGRANTS
ESCALATES, WORKERS LAID
OFF, FAMILIES TORN APART...

REVOLUTION IS THE SOLUTION:

PRESENTATION OF THE AMERICAN PARTY OF LABOR TO THE 23RD SEMINAR

ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTION IN LATIN AMERICA.



Comrade Alfonso Casal, National Chair, presenting at the 23rd Seminar on the Problems of the Revolution in Latin America on behalf of the American Party of Labor.

Presented July 25, 2019. Quito, Ecuador.

Comrades,

We are pleased and delighted to be here once more amongst our brothers and sisters from around the world. We would also like to extend our thanks and gratitude to the comrades of the PCMLE and JRE for their kindness, their dedication, and their discipline – which is an example and an inspiration to us all.

The battle against fascism and reaction takes on a special character in the dominant imperialist country in the world. The struggle against rising fascism is being waged on many fronts, against xenophobic immigration policies, against police brutality, against the rolling back of women's rights, and much more. These questions are all intimately tied to the United States' imperialist past and present. The key to winning this struggle lies in building an authentic mass socialist workers movement independent of bourgeois liberalism and social-democracy.

When we first presented at this Seminar, our topic was "Donald Trump and the Rise of American Neo-Fascism." In the three years since then, the process of fascistization of the United States has deepened and accelerated. Popular resistance to encroaching fascism has widened and spread, and militancy has risen. However, the forces of resistance remain, though in many instances, weak, disunited, under the control of the liberal bourgeoisie and social-democrats; and mass struggle is in its early stages.

Fascism is defined as the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of a ruling class exercised through a fascist political party, a fascist "militia" or some other form of mass base. Donald Trump and his administration represent the interests of the most reactionary wing of the monopoly bourgeoisie, relying on the support of the petty-bourgeoisie and small producers, and using demagoguery and right-wing populism to attempt to influence the working masses as much as possible. The Trump administration is neo-fascist in character, adapted to the conditions of American monopoly capitalism.

The current era is one of declining U.S. imperialism, which is in ferocious competition with Russian imperialism, EU imperialism, and Chinese social-imperialism, and is desperately trying to maintain its position as the world's foremost imperialist power. This undeniable decline of the U.S. position and greater exploitation of the working people have led to a greater level of military aggression and intervention overseas, as well as militarization at home. The objective of the U.S. government's increasing turn to fascism is not in response to an organized, militant, mass working class movement, but to prevent one from developing.

Images of the results of the United States' "zero tolerance" immigration policy, which separates migrant children from their families, shocked the world. The establishment of concentration camps to intern immigrants is the clearest and most obvious example of the creeping fascism which is poisoning American life. Liberal bourgeois opponents of Trump flinch at the term "concentration camps," arguing that no one is being gassed in these structures. However, even a cursory familiarity with history demonstrates that the original purpose of concentration camps, from the original Spanish model in Cuba, to the Boer War, to the horrors of World War II, was to "concentrate" a targeted population in order to better control them. There are many historical examples of concentration camps in the United States, such as the internment of Japanese Americans during the Second World War, where deaths also resulted from inhumane conditions, starvation, and disease, and not necessarily

from an overt, predetermined policy of mass extermination. Therefore, the detention camps set up by ICE's reign of terror absolutely qualify.

Incidents of fascist terror and violence have been on the rise. There have been no less than 196 mass shootings, claiming 968 lives, in the United States in 2019 alone. Often, the perpetrators of these killings have been directly tied to neo-Nazi and white supremacist organizations, and the targets of their murderous rampages have frequently focused on Muslims, Jews, African-Americans, and LGBTQ+ people. Attacks and hate crimes against LGBTQ+ individuals are now the fastest-rising kinds of reactionary violence, encouraged by the curtailment of their democratic rights by the government.

Added to this are the revisionist parties in the USA, who claim to be on the left while seeking "red-brown" alliances with the forces of reaction, in one noteworthy case even going so far as to say that the left "panders to African-Americans." These are the supposed "leftists" who make common ground with fascists and reactionaries, pursuing an agenda of nationalism, anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories, and support of the oligarchic capitalist class in Russia and the theocratic regime of Iran. They endorsed Trump as being a "peace candidate;" and have recently taken to decrying militant anti-fascism as being "violent" and counter-productive. Some have even shared the stage, at public events, with prominent Neo-Nazis and reactionaries. Our Party has always stood against fascism in all its forms, against the Trump regime, and opposes giving any platform to fascists, reactionaries, and those who work with them or seek to legitimize their beliefs as a mere difference of opinion. We state our full commitment to the popular struggle against fascism, reaction, national oppression, police murder, and poverty, and stand with the working classes of other countries exploited by U.S. imperialism in this way.

The far-right and reactionaries are on the march against women's rights, as well. The religious right in the United States has waged unrelenting war on the right of women to bodily autonomy since the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision of 1973. This year, nine states have passed laws curtailing the reproductive rights of women. Let it be said openly that the legislation signed into law in Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, and other states is cruel, black-hearted barbarism. To refuse abortion rights to victims of incestual abuse and rape, and to punish doctors who seek to perform safe and healthy abortions with decades more jail time than a rapist is an open manifestation of patriarchy and the rotten heart of religious fundamentalism in the United States.

The presidential election of 2020 has already exposed itself as a parade of far-right and center-right politicians, who differ from Donald Trump only in the sense of being less vulgar, less crass, and less openly racist and authoritarian. Indeed, the Democratic "opposition" seems to have focused mainly on exposing Trump's purported links to Putin, and in doing so have resurrected all the time-worn Cold War tropes and slogans. The political system of the bourgeoisie is in a serious crisis of identity, as the current economic crisis has shaken belief in the founding myths that hold the bourgeois ideological system together. The peoples of the U.S. lose more and more confidence in the bourgeois-democratic process every day as the current administration continues its belligerent anti-popular course.

Many are putting their trust in social-democrats of the Bernie Sanders type. However, Sanders' demonstrated loyalty to the Democratic Party and his long history of support for U.S. imperialist actions abroad, leave little hope of seeing an effective movement in opposition to the reactionary tide arising from that quarter. Corporate-run party politics in the mainstream two-party system has undermined real grassroots organizing, leading to more progressive candidates being side-lined by centrist leaders like Joe Biden, the heir apparent chosen by the Democratic Party apparatus.

As Marxist-Leninist communists in the US, we assert that only a militant mass movement, guided by the principles of scientific socialism and realized through the independent action of the working class itself, can stem the rising tide of fascism in the United States. Only a socialist revolution in the United States can end the menace of fascism, reaction, and imperialism once and for all. This is not an impossible dream. This is an historic inevitability, and a practical necessity. In lock step with the struggles against US imperialism waged by the peoples of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, we can bring the monster down. We must bring the monster down. Our lives, our children's lives are stake. We will not fail them.

Death to fascism!

Victory to the peoples of the world!

Onwards to the Revolution!

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE 23RD INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTION IN LATIN AMERICA



Translated by Red Phoenix staff.

The acute conflicts that register on the international scene, are the expressions of the acute crisis that surrounds the imperialist capitalist system, and reveal the sharpening of the fundamental contradictions of our time, that is, those between capital and labor; between the oppressed people and nations and imperialism; and, among the imperialist powers themselves.

This dynamic explains the development of the economic war between the United States and China, but which also encompasses and aligns the European Union, Russia and other powers on either side, tensing the international stage to the extent of threatening escalation to new and older forms of war and conflict, in the context of the intensification of disputes over areas of influence, market control, raw materials and natural resources among the imperialist powers.

In Latin America, the decline of the so-called "progressive governments" of the early 21st century which, among other things, sought to renegotiate dependence to, without breaking with US imperialism, facilitated a greater penetration of Chinese and Russian imperialisms, and coincided with the rise to power in the United States government of the rightist and fascist Donald Trump, who with the motto of "America First", sought to consolidate the throne of the world's first superpower and regain control of its "backyard."

For his purposes, Trump aims to exalt the reactionary nationalism, placing emigrants, mainly Latin Americans, in the field of his main enemies. To the crusades against undocumented migrants were added to his wall extension project, and the arbitrary detentions of children (separated from their parents) and adults in conditions similar to those used by the fascist regimes of the past. Using pressure, blackmail and coercion, this reactionary anti-immigration policy has achieved the complicit agreement of the governments of Mexico and Central America. Simultaneously it drives an intense offensive in the region aimed at establishing docile and complicit governments in the region. The establishment of the so-called "Lima Group" in August 2017, to support the conspiracy of reactionary forces in Venezuela, is part of the same.

However, the decline and failure of the so-called "progressive governments", which is used by the most reactionary forces to associate it with the supposed failure of socialism, is really about the failure of capitalism itself, and the self-proclaimed "21st Century Socialism."

The discontent of the workers, the youth, the women and, in general, the impoverished masses as a result of the mis-management of these so-called "alternative governments," totally contrary to their own interests, their inefficiency, the repeated corruption

scandals, the intensification of repressive actions and the criminalization of social struggle, etc., are being taken advantage of by imperialism and its henchmen in the right-wing governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to justify the imposition of aggressive neo-liberal and IMF-sponsored adjustment programs; to influence the consciousness of the masses with the most backward ideas, affirming pro-fascist, xenophobic, nationalist and anti-communist proposals – a platform with which the Jair Bolsonaro government came to power in Brazil,

The governments of Bolsonaro in Brazil and Duke in Colombia intensify repressive actions with the criminalization of social struggle, persecution, imprisonment and murder of community leaders and social activists, in their attempt to contain opposition and popular struggle.

Of course, part of this offensive is the war of capital against labor. The consequent proposals for labor flexibility, aggressive cuts in labor and union rights, and the reactionary reforms to the gains of social security, which seek to intensify the exploitation of the workers to the benefit of the greatest possible capitalist accumulation.

The criminal economic blockade of imperialism against Cuba and Venezuela are also part of this reactionary offensive.

The facts have shown that, in order to achieve the legitimate material and spiritual aspirations of the workers and peoples, the fundamental question is not the way in which the bourgeoisie in power is presented or performs. That the social democratic variants, "progressive" or neoliberal rightists, must be taken into account for tactical definitions for the opposition work with, for resistance and struggle against reactionary or ineffective policies; but not to affirm false hopes that change, social transformation and socialism can come from one or another faction of the bourgeoisie.

The delegates to the XXIII SIPRAL have agreed that the current moment, in combination with the specific reality of each country, corresponds to the communists, revolutionaries and leftists, the class unionists, the leaders and social activists and all democratic people, who face the reactionary offensive of imperialism and the rightist and fascist bourgeois factions.

The seminar salutes the courageous and growing struggles of workers, youth, peasants, native peoples, women, black people against the neoliberal policies and measures of bourgeois governments in the region: The general strike of May 29 in Argentina, as well as the mobilization of millions of women to conquer the right to abortion, against femicides and all types of gender-based violence, stand out for their magnitude and significance. the numerous resistance and the combative struggles of workers and youth in Brazil against the Bolsonaro government; the actions of students, workers and peasants in Colombia and Nicaragua; the struggles of teachers in Chile, Mexico, Bolivia; and the growing popular struggles in Peru and the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Haiti.

With enthusiasm and revolutionary fervor, SIPRAL acclaims the overwhelming victory of the brother people of Puerto Rico who, after two weeks of continuous fighting, forced Ricky Rosselló, representative of the usurping colonial power of US imperialism, to resign as governor. This victory is a brilliant page in the history of its tireless struggle to defeat colonialism and conquer its independence; a struggle that incorporated large sectors of its brave people, highlighting the participation of patriotic intellectuals and international leaders of culture, confirming the importance of this front in the emancipatory cause.

The delegates to the XXIII SIPRAL, have agreed that the assimilation of the valuable experiences of resistance and combat to bourgeois governments and imperialism lead us to new challenges, to consolidate our revolutionary convictions, to specify our objectives and programs, to expand the activity of education, and to aid the masses in facing new battles with greater advantages.

For that, it is essential to strengthen revolutionary and left-wing parties and organizations, consolidate trade union organizations and class currents on all social fronts, in order that they become true referential nuclei for the whole of the working

class and the other working classes.

The seminar also insisted on the need to promote and lead processes of broad unity of action with all sectors of rural workers and segments of small producers, who are also affected by the neoliberal policies of the industrial, commercial and agrarian bourgeoisie, and imperialism, because the working class and its politics dispute, conquer and sustain hegemony in these processes.

Following this perspective, proposals for the urgent need to work for a policy of broad democratic, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist fronts in the region were registered.

The revolutionary need to resort to all forms of struggle in combat against the common enemies of workers and the peoples was also raised; as well as multiplying the banners



Comrade Alfonso Casal, National Chair, signs the Declaration on behalf of the APL. Also pictured, left to right: Enver Aguirre, Revolutionary Youth of Ecuador; and Oswaldo Palacios, Spokesperson of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador.

that, gathering the most relevant and immediate demands of the masses, advance the strategic political objectives of social emancipation.

Ratifying the spirit, solidarity, and commitment of the working class and peoples, those attending the XII SIPRAL, condemn, reject and combat the intervention of US imperialism in Venezuela, and affirm our support for the struggle of the working class and the peoples of Venezuela, only in their hands is the final end to the crisis that overwhelms them.

We reiterate our supportive embrace of the brave people of Puerto Rico, who, after their victory, will walk to new battles until they gain their final independence. In the same way, we ratify our total solidarity with the persistent struggle of the people of Haiti, which challenges and confronts the corrupt puppet governments of imperialism, striving for a real change.

Committed to the revolutionary struggle against right-wing and fascism, we ratify that the only true way out of the crisis that surrounds the capitalist world and that unloads savagely on the backs of workers and the peoples, is in real change, in the social revolution, the conquest of political power and the construction of socialism.

Our commitment is manifest in every struggle that confronts and challenges the imperialist capitalist system.

Long live the struggles of the workers and peoples of Latin America and the world!

Long live the XXIII International Seminar on Problems of the Revolution in Latin America!

Signed:

Revolutionary Communist Party of Argentina

Revolutionary Communist Party of Bolivia

Revolutionary Communist Party of Brazil

Popular Unity for Socialism – Brazil

Union of Rebel Youth of Brazil

Movement of Struggle of the Neighborhoods, Villages and Favelas MLB – Brazil

Circle Jaques Roumcin of Montreal, Canada

Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist – Leninist)

Communist Organization Recabarren of Chile

Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador

Revolutionary Youth of Ecuador

General Union of Workers of Ecuador

Women for Change – Ecuador

Federation of University Students of Ecuador

Federation of Secondary Students of Ecuador

Popular Unity – Ecuador

Vanguard of the Technical University of Cotopaxi – Ecuador

Black Nation – Ecuador

American Party of Labor – United States

George Grunental, Red Star Publishers – United States

Communist Party of Mexico (Leninist Marxist).

Popular Revolutionary Front of Mexico

Popular Front of Students, Peasants, and Workers – Peru

Revolutionary Socialist Party – Peru

Marxist-Leninist Party of Peru

Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)

Peruvian Communist Youth Marxist-Leninist

Women's Movement for Social Liberation – MMLS

April 26 Movement – Puerto Rico

Communist Workers Party – Dominican Republic

Frente Amplio – Dominican Republic

Magisterial Current Juan Pablo Duarte – Dominican Republic

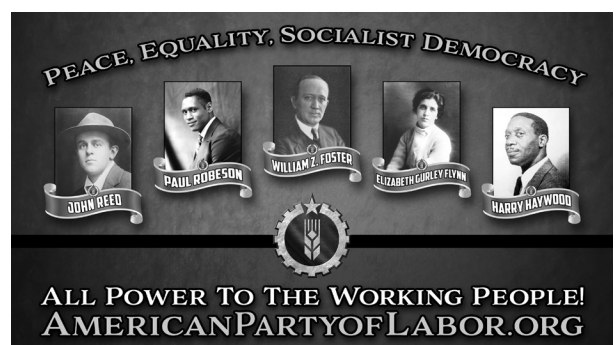
Flavio Suero Student Front Flavio Suero – Dominican Republic

Labor Party – Tunisia

Labor Party (EMEP) – Turkey

Gayones Movement – Venezuela

Quito, July 26, 2019



THE ANTI-ICE MOVEMENT MUST BE AN OPENLY ANTI-CAPITALIST ONE: A NIGHT OF ACTION IN NEW JERSEY



By: P. Brik and L. Zorfass

On July 12 2019, two days before intensified ICE raids were to begin, activists gathered outside of the Essex Detention Center in Newark, NJ to denounce not just the raids, but more importantly, the American concentration camps that were installed by the Obama administration and utilized by the current administration of President Trump.

Police repression began as soon as protesters began to show up. The public parking lot, which is normally open, was shut down by the police for the "safety of protesters." This enforced "safety" meant parking across the street and having to cross an extremely busy road populated primarily by large 18 wheeler trucks. This is certainly not a safer space than a parking lot, especially when one considers how many senior citizens were in attendance. Many senior citizens who showed up had a hard enough time sitting in the summer heat and now had to dodge massive trucks over two lanes of the freeway.

After moving our cars, the cops then attempted to herd the gathering crowd into a smaller area. They achieved both the moving of cars and the herding of protesters with the compliance and active assistance of the North and Central New Jersey Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) who were in attendance.

The radical elements of the crowd had gotten to the protest first, led by the American Party of Labor and the NJ Anti-War Agenda. We started by hanging agitational signs and banners against fascism and demanding the closing of the concentration camps. We made statements and chants against the concentration camps, demanding their closure, and connecting the situation to the imperialist racist state that currently occupies the American people and millions around the globe and were shown a great deal of support from the many working-class truckers passing by who honked their horns and raised their fists in a show of support.

Many of the protester spoke to us, stressing their solidarity to those suffering the brunt of the increased oppression of immigrant communities. Others had experienced that oppression and pain more personally. We encountered a family of Haitian immigrants who recently moved to the United States. Frantz and his two middle school children appeared at the protest with signs displaying "Stop Separating Families!" Frantz was forced to flee his home, Port-au-Prince, due to the devastation wrought by civil unrest due to austerity measures implemented by the corrupt government and insane inflation. He said that he still doesn't feel safe in the United States given the escalation of right-wing organized movements, the general attitude of constantly being targeted by the majority of society as a black male, and most importantly, the inability of the United States government, including the Democratic Party, to do anything about the brutal reality of being in fear for one's own family due to the escalation of anti-immigrant actions carried out by the capitalist state that we exist under.

There were also people in attendance who were inspired to participate in the protest as an expression of direct action. A lot of us may feel like we have the urge to do something about this horrible existence, and a protest may seem the most natural way to express one's unhappiness, or sympathy towards the cause, or simply trying to agitate the masses. Therefore, the protest is a direct form of expression – it is the declaration of one's political alignment, an expression of solidarity, it is an extension of a person and a pronouncement of who one really is politically in relation to the world that one faces. However, what a lot of moderate organizations and individuals fail to see, is that a protest is not the end goal. In order to achieve the very same demands that the moderates raise, protesting on the side of the road will not suffice. While agitation is important, it will not bring about the real changes people in the US crave. But this is perhaps fitting: a lot of those same moderates are the ones whose main goal is to actually preserve the status quo – those same organizations who are backed up by the Democratic Machine, which has failed the American people and functions to protect the rich. Such is the function is the DSA, as well as other organizations whose main concern is to get Democrats elected. They are not concerned about the American people. All their progressiveness is a clever advertising tactic, as we see in demonstrations across the country on issues afflicting millions of

people, to appeal to politically-motivated people, especially youth.

Some protesters emphasized the fact that one does not and cannot exist outside of politics: even by taking an apolitical stance, one either chooses to be benefiting from the structures of oppression, or is blindfolded as a result of capitalist alienation that most of us face every day. By choosing not to care, or to prioritize their own comfort while proclaiming the futility of any kind of political work or action, is a stance predicated by the false consciousness imposed on us by the social relations ("the society") – the same kind of relation that makes us so concentrated on ourselves, on the individual. One may think that the horror of family separation and deportation may not affect them, but this is wrong, as in this case, the very same underlying capitalist forces which make concentration camps in the 21st century possible derives its power from exploiting workers, relying on those who deliberately chose to be apolitical, as well as the moderates and the centrist cowards who work for the benefit of the ruling class.

Meanwhile, as more "moderates" showed up, these divisions amongst activists started to grow. Throughout much of the protest outside of the detention center, the DSA and their allies openly worked with the police surrounding us and helped enforce the orders given by the cops. The DSA continually obstructed and

disrupted speakers and chants that were not from their own people. The DSA made open statements against the anti-fascist banners and demands to close the camps. Instead, giving speeches "begging" the state to not close the camps, but to make the conditions of the camp better. All of this was not said openly to the public but to the activists already in attendance. A large group of people who could be mobilized for action were now sitting around patting themselves on the back for standing on a patch of grass.

Other moderate organizations and individuals present exposed nothing but weak demands of "better conditions" for children while sending empty prayers for those who died in detention.

It became clear that the protest had to move and be brought to the people of Newark who did not show up to the protest. Along with the NJ Anti-War Agenda and other more radically minded groups, we began to build up a march from the gathering of protesters. The DSA and their allies continued to try to impede this effort, wishing instead to stay in the confines set by the police and talk to each other rather than reach the people, the public, the masses. We were not going to sit around, pat ourselves back, and then go home. There had to be movement, a show of will, and of militancy.

When we finally started moving, the number of cops around us nearly tripled. We were swarmed by at least a dozen police cars and over a dozen cops on foot who set up a line blocking our path. We stood our ground and blocked the entrance to the detention center and the road connecting to it. More and more cops showed up. The situation became tense quickly with cops grabbing protest signs from us and a few with their hands in the "ready, set, draw" position over their gun holsters. The DSA and their fellow police-friendly allies simply sat back and snickered. Ultimately we were forced back from our position, as we would have been easily overtaken without being able to make the situation productive in that particular interest.

It has been clearly shown through recent mobilization that one does not need to be a radical communist to have the consciousness to oppose concentration camps, but it is also being made clear that the nonradical elements are holding back the struggle and the chances of mass mobilization against concentration camps may bring. The various so-called moderate groups openly, and have elsewhere in the past, worked with the same cops putting children into concentration camps. These groups are enforcing the cops direction. They have rejected the closure of the concentration camps to the better conditions of the camps, so much so that a speaker attempted to get the crowd to thank Phil Murphy, the current Governor of New Jersey who approved the camps in Jersey, simply because Governor Murphy had allocated more state funds to the improvement of detention conditions in the detention centers Murphy has officially approved of.

The forces of reaction in the United States become more powerful by the day. So much so that concentration camps have been built. The burgeoning fascist apparatuses can literally put children in cages to die. Yet, the "acceptable left", the "reasonable left" openly works with the forces that carry out this fascist agenda. They call not to end the horror but make the horror more comfortable. At most, they want to close the camps but not meaningfully address the social catalysts that brought them about.

The camps must be ended. Getting them closed may be the first step but if the system that allows them to be built and exist continues, then fascists will only use a new form to further their fascist, white supremacist cause.

To bring an end to the camps, we must end the ruling class which profits off detention both monetarily and in power, and which constructs these concentration camps where children die, and drops bombs on and politically intervenes in their countries across the globe. We must not just end the ruling class but end the imperialist state which carries out the will of the ruling class. These goals should not be written away by reformist opportunism—history is watching us, as are those currently imprisoned, we cannot settle for police-approved half-measures.

AMERICAN NIGHTMARE: A REPORT OF AN ICE ARREST



By: Elisa von Joeden-Forgey (Facebook)

My good friend and her husband were arrested by ICE early this morning as they left their house for work. I want to thank everyone who has helped for their help. I have had the fortune of having good friends and I have met many good people today. I was particularly moved by the quick responses and the help from the New Sanctuary Movement. In the end, we could do nothing to stop them from being moved to a detention facility. But the fight is not over. I will be asking for letters of community support in the coming days.

As some of you know, my friends are asylum seekers who have been here for about 20 years as their case has wound its way through the system. They have two children who are citizens. They are integral members of the community, people who volunteer for everything and who are loved by everyone. As with many asylum cases, their case has sometimes left them "out of status." This is how their arrest was justified.

At 9:02am I got a text from my friend that read: "Elisa ICE detain me n my husband." It's a text nobody wants to get. I cannot describe the feelings except to say that as the words sank in so did a mounting sense of quiet internal hysteria.

So, I went to the Philadelphia ICE office today. It is a nondescript three-floor operation at 114 North 8th Street. It looks like it was thrown up yesterday, with portable metal detectors and a few chairs, line separators that lead nowhere, cheaply framed photos of Trump and Pence hanging askew on the wall – the only decoration. It looked like a front for drug runners.

The air of the whole place had the feeling of illegitimacy, bordering on criminality. No one seems to be in charge. The security personnel on the first floor don't make eye contact. When they do, they look ashamed – not openly, but deep in their eyes. If you happen to insist on catching their eyes, they then don't maintain eye contact. Quick, furtive glances covered up by brusque commands.

They ask me why I am here. I say because friends have been picked up. Are you

sure, they try to ask, perhaps to create confusion and persuade me to leave, but their hearts are not in it. I wonder, why this pantomime? Security is then asking me for my friend's name ... all this before I walk through a mental detector in a public building ... so I give it. They seem to recognize the name, and I get nervous, because the detention takes on now the intimate, familiar quality I have observed in genocidal violence. What orders have the security personnel been given regarding my friends?

Ok, put your things here, they say quickly. Walk through there. They help me with the two coffees I have in my hand – I am meeting a family member there. There is a smiling, seemingly happy family from Central America (I guess) waiting in a row of chairs by the windows. They are the only other people besides the three security guards and me in this inconceivably small, inconceivably barren first-floor space. Thank you, thank you I am saying to the security personnel, as if they have just done me an immense favor. I am asking myself why I am doing this as I do it – perhaps because they seem to have Knowledge, to be In On The Game. Can they maybe help my friend? Impart to me some secret information that will spring my friends from the grips of state power? No, this is security, I remind myself. They all seem closely related, or maybe briefed!

I suddenly feel the urge to laugh. Not because it is funny. No. Because it is terrifying and absurd. None of this seems real. It seems about as legitimate as a hastily set up carnival with all the pomp of false officiality. This way ... ladies and gentlemen....

You can go to the third floor, they say, miming helpfulness. You can ask about your friends there. Every word unintentionally couched in irony. I feel anxiety rising.

I press the elevator button, thinking about how tired I am of institutions and their elevators, which are always somehow connected to incomprehensible rules and meaningless, endless paperwork. Doors open, I step in, doors shut. Up two floors. Ding.

I get out. The floor plan is the same – tiny hallway in front of windows overlooking 8th street. Waiting area on right. Cramped. Chairs along walls. A standing table for filling out paperwork. Lots of people from many places. Children with toys.

I am momentarily confused by the joy. Banter. Chatter. The sounds of family and friends. A father laughs as his toddler plays with a plastic tic-tac-toe board. For a moment I relax, my body thinking I am in a pediatrician's office. I look for my friend's brother. He is not there.

I sit down and notice the Trump and Pence photos in cheap frames on the wall in front of me. I am reminded of the ubiquitous photos of Paul Biya in Cameroon in 1995, hung up ceremoniously in official offices to show officialness. I try to get a sense of the space and figure out what to do. People are busy with paperwork. Lots of it.

There is a small plexiglass window with one of those metal speakers. Behind it are three people ... doing something that I can only describe as milling about. There is nothing in their "office." Not even a chair. No calendar. A stackable filing system barely used. One tray with many photocopies – the forms people are filling out – but that's it. No banter. No chatter. No laughter. None of the busyness you see in real offices. They seem disoriented. Robotic. Stacking and restacking boxes ... endless boxes.

I feel the distinct sense of nausea. I remember standing inside the Bieber House in Hamburg in 1992 as desperate and traumatized refugees from the Yugoslav wars ran about trying to find the ticket dispenser and the carefully hidden room numbers. Here it is calm, but the internal energy of the place is combustible!

I go to the plexiglass. I try to align my mouth with the metal speaker, which is perhaps 5 feet off the ground. Hello? I say. Three people ignore me, though they are not doing anything but milling. I stand and wait. Can they not hear me? I bend down to speak again and a bent down woman on the other side looks at me and says "press the button," motioning to something in my left. She watches me as I find the button and press it. There is no sound.

She straightens up and squares her shoulders, taking me in. Can I help you?

(Are you kidding me!?)

I'm here about a friend of mine who was picked up this morning.

Yes? She replies.

I would like to register community support. She and her husband are very important members of our community.

We don't do that here.

Her name is --

We don't do that here. We have nothing to write it down on.

Well, can I write it down and maybe you can put it in her file or tell someone?

We don't do that.

She forgets me and bends back down.

I stand back, thinking about next steps, since nobody in the "inside place" even bothers to look at the public on our side. Are they even connected to what is going on out here? There's almost no signage. I notice a photocopy taped to the plexiglass: "Please, please, please ring the bell." Three "pleases." I turn around, baffled.

In walks Scott, my husband, who said he would meet us. I feel like he has come from outer space. Or from a time machine. He seems completely unrelated to this altered universe. He seems to glow. His clothes strike me as fresh and pressed. I feel so happy for a split second.

We approach the plexiglass together.

He speaks through the metal microphone and, before I can tell him, he is told by a man on the inside to ring the bell. I register his immediate contempt and feel happy about that.

With "the bell" pressed, the same man then asks Scott if he can help him. Scott tells him that he is here to support two important community members who were picked up this morning on their way to work.

Ok, the man says, and what do you want?

I feel Scott entrench himself.

I'd like to see them.

You can't do that.

Why not?

Because you can't.

I'd like to talk to the agent who arrested them.

If you are not a lawyer --

I am a lawyer -- he presents his business card.

Sit down over there.

We sit. I notice a woman in her sixties, with a beautifully done bob and a pretty black and white dress, standing with the family whose toddler had earlier been making his father laugh. Wow, all the generations, I think. She walks over to the plexiglass window.

Excuse me -- she says.

No answer. People walking around on the inside. She rests on her elbow and scans the waiting room with authority. She turns back to peer into the inside. Her left hand presses the bell with annoyance. EXCUSE ME. Press press press.

She scans the room again. She catches my eye and I realize I am smiling with relief at her acknowledgement of the situation. And I feel shame for smiling. But she seems pleased.

You know they do this because they can, she announces to me loudly.

I nod and offer that it is just unbelievably terrible.

They are fascists, I say, quieter. She raises her eyebrows in acknowledgement of that too.

Press press press. Finally, the bent down woman on the other side makes some sort of gesture of recognition.

A LADY I AM HELPING CANNOT READ AND FILLED OUT HER FORM ALL WRONG AND I NEED ANOTHER BLANK COPY. CAN I PLEASE JUST GET ONE? My hero in the pretty dress says.

A blank form is slid through a minuscule opening where the plexiglass meets the wall.

She takes it and walks straight over to me.

They don't provide anyone for the illiterate people who come here, she says loudly. It's a scandal. It's disgusting. What are all these people supposed to do? I don't care

what is going on, she says almost as an afterthought, but you treat people with respect. That's just how it works!

She returns to the family she is helping.

As we wait for the ICE agent (will he come?), I realize that somewhere behind the walls in front of me, behind the two tacky photos of Trump and Pence, behind the hastily installed plexiglass and the soundless bell, are my friends. Their phones have been taken. Are they together? Have they eaten? What must they be feeling? I begin to cry in panic, but have to pull myself together for the morale of the public on our side.

As Scott and I discuss what might be next, in whispers, a blond, blue-eyed man in a baseball cap, an untucked shirt, and jeans appears behind the plexiglass and peers out with small, blank eyes. He looks like he could be at a ballpark. He looks like he could be carrying a tiki torch. He looks like he could be firing up the grill for a weekend barbecue. He looks like he sauntered in on his day off. He looks exceptionally, habitually, ginormously bored.

As if compelled, Scott jumps up and stands tall in front of him. The man looks right through him, as if he is guarding Buckingham Palace.

I'm here to see my friends who are being detained in this building.

You can't do that.

Why not?

If you are not a lawyer--

I am a lawyer -- he shows his card again.

If you are not their lawyer.

Ok, I'm their lawyer. Who are you?

I don't have to tell you that.

The man looks at Scott as if he never existed.

He reminds me of a killer.

None of this matters to him. He seems divested entirely from the reality on this side. He is in a dream state -- one that is a nightmare for everyone who cares about humanity.

I'd like to speak to the agent who arrested them. Is that you?

...

IS THAT YOU?

The man hesitates, then says yes. He motions for Scott to come to the side. They disappear down a small hallway.

I am texting with my friend's brother. The priest is on his way. I am hoping Scott can see my friend. I will my spirit to walk with him and embrace her somewhere behind those blank walls.

Just as quickly, Scott returns. He cannot see our friends without filling out a form that they do not keep at this office. The agent told him that they would be moved to a detention center by 3pm. It is now already after 12.

We sit for a bit and realize that we are sitting there with no goal and no hope. The waiting room has cleared out. We decide to meet the brother and the priest outside of the ICE Office. That same ICE officer had threatened the brother earlier with false claims about his status, so he is afraid to come in. I snap the photo of Trump and Pence. We leave. Press the elevator button. Door opens, we step in, door closes. Down two floors. Ding.

The security guards are milling about now. Nobody else is around. I thank them again, with a sense of despair and also resentment. Why even bother with these useless niceties! They all know the names of those being moved today. They all are going through the motions. No problem, they say.

We meet with the brother in his car to plan next steps and agree there is little value in Scott going in. They have found a lawyer to take their case. My friends' brother's phone is ringing almost nonstop. He has become Central Command. He will meet with the lawyer at 4pm. He will ask the lawyer about community involvement and strategy. The priest, who is young and new, has climbed in next to Scott. He is trying to help and to learn. He carries a letter of community support from the parish.

My friends' beautiful college-aged daughter is very quiet in the passenger seat. She took the day off from her work-study job at the college IT help desk after seeing her parents being driven away in separate unmarked ICE vehicles.

LIFE EXPERIENCES OF AN IMMIGRANT



By: G. Boshcka

He was born less than a hundred miles north of Austin Texas to a Spanish speaking couple who had lived on the land for generations, and despite paying his dues he faces endless discrimination up to the time I am writing his story. We'll call him 'Chuco'. His great grandfather on his father's side was a Mexican farm worker, on his mother's, a native American we don't know much about. His family had evaded draft to the Mexican-American war, and decidedly remained on the American side. Again choosing pacifism in World War I and World War II, remaining self-sufficient, but productive to the cause. Chuco was the second-youngest boy in the third generation of this family that had split from American takeover, born into U.S. soil. In 1949 in a small town of less than 1,000 people.

His earliest memories were of horsing around with his siblings and cousins down by the local little river; two brothers, 5 sisters, always close to his aunts and uncles with children of their own. When he was only four years old his mother passed away, leaving his full-time working father to care for 8 children through 2 more marriages, doing his best, though he was admittedly ill-equipped. Early in his life, child services negotiated with Chuco's father that some of his children must attend public school or be taken into child protective services and he conceded through haggle. Demanding, however, that Chuco and a few other siblings remain home, because he needed help.

Chores were a common courtesy in a small busy house on a semi-remote multi-acre property. Recalling the physical punishment for any inkling of disrespect or laziness still shakes him at over 70 years old. He compares to what his father told him of growing up in the early 20th century - tied upside down to a tree and forced to lick pork grease off of a sibling's back for minute disobedience. By the middle of the 20th century, the family had no indoor toilet, and water was retrieved from an outdoor well. Children would often wake their siblings to walk them to the outhouse at night, knowing full well the dangers of scorpions, coyotes, spiders, snakes, and the off-chance of robbers - guns were kept available in the house, the children boastfully knew how to use them, needless to say.

The weekdays were spent on odd jobs, labor, and errands. There were traditional gender roles, but the girls were expected to additionally get their hands dirty. From caring for animals, to laundry, driving, etc. Chuco worked his way up from general farm labor hand and picking cotton to being able to work with a scythe by the age of 12. Intermittently, he had been practically leased off to do work for the local store owner by his father. The rate at the time was \$0.005 per pound of cotton. The work was hard, but Chuco was proud to do it. As he recalled his first day swinging, he said he could barely move at the end of the day and the whole week was painful - reinforcing pride in his work ethic.

In his early teens, Chuco's father managed to invest in a multi-person, motorized goat shearing machine, which him and his brothers worked with, traveling from farm to farm as jobs demanded. By this time, he worked full time and his time off was spent with friends and family, listening to the radio until they could afford a small TV, going to the movies, and drinking - fully embracing and idolizing a cowboy/desperado style, much like any impressionable kids who cling to a popular style. Still, the work was difficult but dwindled as time went on. By the time Chuco saved up to afford a truck, his father took possession of it, saying that it belonged to the family and he, as the head, would have the final say.

In his late teens, Chuco's older brother went north to Illinois looking for more fruitful work through mutual friends. The family continued to shear goats, but the work continued to slow. Farmers around eventually got rid of their goats and switched to more profitable livestock; everyone they had worked for now didn't have enough goats to shear to pay for the travel to shear them. Chuco felt it was time to move on. Doing tree trimming, pecan picking, street construction work, factory work, somewhere a long this journey, in his late teens he had his first real misunderstanding at work; the boss spoke English. In retrospect the boss was saying something about moving hay, but at the time Chuco had no idea what was happening and anxiously stepped back, it cost him a job. He was around 18 when he first decided he should learn English, and in his 20s when he finally took classes, though he never learned how to read. His childhood was spent in the fields, working with his cousins, not a classroom as most imagine an 'American' childhood would be. He ended up married before he was 20, and helped raise a few children. Eventually he and his other brother headed north to their older sibling who had gotten a decent job doing seasonal work at a sod farm, with factory work in the winter. For the next 35 years he would work long hard hours, waking up at 4a.m. and coming home at 5:30-7p.m. In bored times his favorite pass time is to write numbers on paper and close his eyes and imagine the memories that happened around those dates, times, or years, or whatever else the numbers remind him of, and practicing signing his name and address because he has trouble remembering how the letters go.

This man was born and raised in Texas, America. He worked his fingers to the bone until his failing health forced him into an early retirement. He paid his taxes, he paid his dues, he paid his bills, he paid for his family to live, and paid with his health for the labor, constructing a piece of everything that makes society run. After battling cancer and enduring countless surgeries, a portion of which his Medicaid would not pay for his struggle continues. Thanks to Trump and his deplorable's contribution to the rise in fascism, this all American worker is scared to even leave his home, to go to the store, to go to a restaurant, to visit his family, to even drive a car, because he knows a racist would never believe he is a second-generation American citizen, with native American blood, who happened to be raised in a Spanish community. He says "I cannot go to those places because my skin is brown". Whether it's an ICE agent, a white supremacist terrorist, or just someone in a red hat, there's an unsettling threat to his life he can only helplessly pray to avoid. Wishing now more than ever that he had instead contributed to a system worth contributing to, because this pseudo-democratic system has thoroughly failed him through a life of incredible exploitation.

680 WORKERS ARRESTED IN MISSISSIPPI BY ICE



Two people are arrested at a Koch Foods plant in Mississippi, before being separated by gender and put on awaiting buses to concentration camps.

By: J. PALAMEDA

In what's being called one of the largest raids in recent US immigration history, ICE agents have arrested 680 workers across the state of Mississippi, mostly at Koch Foods Inc. food processing plants. Workers were ambushed by nearly 600 ICE agents, some workers attempting to flee before being seized and asked to provide documentation that proved their citizenship. Even those who had appropriate documentation were only allowed to leave after ICE officials had searched their car. The raid comes on the same day Donald Trump was scheduled to visit El Paso, the site of a fascist anti-immigrant massacre that killed over 20 people.

The Koch Foods company (not related to the Koch Brothers) has a long history of abusing workers of all kinds, specifically down racial lines. From 2009 to 2015, the company went from having four contracts in Mississippi with black farmers to having zero, with little to no explanation given to the farmers. One farmer, John Ingram, a former sheriff who had saved a life's wages to buy his own farm to leave to his son, lost everything in the process.

In 2012, at one of the plants raided today, the US Equal Opportunity Commission brought an employment discrimination lawsuit against Koch, citing discrimination based on race, gender, and national origin. The lawsuit asserted that workers were "subjected to touching and sexually suggestive comments, were hit, and were charged money for normal everyday work activities." In 2018, the company paid nearly 4 million dollars to put an end to the litigation.

The Koch Foods company, which today cooperated in putting 680 people in concentration camps, has a long history of exploiting the most vulnerable working class communities to maximize profit, and it did so alongside sexist, racist, and nativist abuse. They are thus the perfect target for Trump's agents, a company profiting off the labor of immigrant workers, but totally unwilling to raise a finger to defend them. As these 680 people, sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers, are shipped away to inhumane prisons rife with sexual and physical abuse, undernourishment, a lack of basic hygiene facilities, and general degrading treatment, Koch Foods will no doubt look to hire more minimum wage workers to replace them, many of them immigrants.

Today's raid displays all the contradictions of the fascist anti-immigrant rhetoric with which Trump has saturated our lives as workers. Those local workers who are used to fill the void created by the happy union between ICE and Koch Foods will be paid very low wages, and very likely be subject to all kinds of abuse. The fascists would have us believe that the workers enduring these conditions to support their families are enemies, that the true enemies are people shopping at Walmart on a Saturday afternoon, that the "invasion" and destruction of the livelihood of the American worker comes from Latin America and not the board room.

Today's events in their full context show with little doubt that fascist anti-immigrant rhetoric seeks only to sow division between workers suffering under the same conditions—low wages, abuse from middle management and bosses, and the union of corporate power and unaccountable policing entities—and the fascists do so to empower bosses and strip away basic universal rights. The fight for immigrant rights, then, is a workers struggle, a struggle against fascist separatism, and for the union between workers who do their work side by side.

STEEL WORKERS VICTIMIZED BY CAPITALIST OVERPRODUCTION, NOT SIMPLY TRUMP'S FAILED PROTECTIONISM



The facility at which approximately 200 workers were laid off.

By: L.ZORFASS

Last fall, U.S. Steelworkers saw victory in their fight for better pay and conditions. In recent weeks, U.S. Steelworkers have faced several destructive blows, leading to the announcement by U.S. Steel that they would layoff about 200 workers.

The reason for these lay-offs are the reasons for the constant misery of working people in the United States and around the globe: the capitalist's profit, and inter-capitalist bickering.

Citing low-prices and softening demand, the owners of U.S. Steel will be shutting down two blast furnaces at their Great Lakes Factory. At the moment the company is calling these, "temporary layoffs" that could last six months.

Liberal talking heads have used the layoffs as an occasion to attack Trump's undeniably outdated protectionist policies, but this sort of rhetoric ignores both the general crisis of capitalism that endures across party affiliation, that of overproduction, and the victims of that crisis—the american working class.

The steel industry was meant to be one of the industries injected with new profits with new tariffs on foreign imports. On March 1, 2018, President Trump placed tariffs on the importing of foreign steel. Initially, this did bring about a rise in profits. But these profits created the conditions of their eventual, sharp decline.

Just as with all industries, production is not based on need or even demand, but speculation. The jump in profits was due to a buy-off prompted by the placement of the tariffs. The buy-off caused a rise in the price of US Steel's stock. Like any company, in order to profit from this increase in capital, this capital must be placed into circulation, or reinvested into the growth and expansion of production. In doing this, the company increases production—the output of commodities to be sold on the market. In doing so the capitalists maintain investor confidence by showing continued growth and expansion.

The problem is that there is more capital being produced than can be profitably absorbed into the market. But much has already been produced. As is the norm under capitalism, supply precedes demand. This means when demand goes down, capital falls out of circulation putting dead capital on the books, steel which is not being sold, which loses investor confidence, causing them to pull out of the company, bringing the company's stock price down.

And who pays the price of this speculative production? The investors? The Shareholders? The Board? No. It is the workers who pay.

When the company overproduces in order to make a short term profit and then prices fall 73%, investors pull out to safeguard their money, and the company lays off workers. This is the norm under capitalism and has been since the earliest days of capitalism in Europe. The workers who did nothing but their jobs are punished for the short-term greed of owners. A job well done has cost nearly 200 people with families, ambitions, and debts their livelihood in an instant. In doing their work they were exploited at a rate of over 91.2% and now have lost their jobs altogether. The only reason? To maintain profit margins. This is not a condition particular to the Trump Administration's tariffs or any one policy of any one state. This is a condition of the market system, seen all around the world, in every industry, in every national economy, in the global economy, since capitalism first came to be the dominant system.

This recent mass firing at U.S. Steel only exemplifies that the capitalist system can only function at the expense of the working class and the need of the working class to rid itself of the capitalist parasite, to produce for itself rationally, and not the irrational chaotic market system which produces on speculation for the profit of the few on the exploitation and livelihood of the many.

LATEST ATTACK ON TRANSWORKERS IS AN ATTACK ON ALL



By: L.ZORFASS

It is no secret that the Trump Administration is one of a great reaction that preys on the most vulnerable of our society. The marginalization of people leading to the furthering division of the working class, the majority of the American population, has become the Trump Government's bread and butter. This week, the Administration continued its pattern of attack on minority populations in the working class, this time targeting trans workers specifically in a case which could overturn legislation preventing all sex discrimination in the workplace.

R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes Inc. fired an employee, Aimee Stephens, for transitioning. Stephens former employer gave only this as justification for her firing: "...believe that the Bible teaches that a person's sex is an immutable God-given gift." Since then, Stephens has taken the case to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) who have disputed the firing citing Title VII which prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of sex and sex stereotyping.

The Trump Administration and the Department of Justice (DOJ) have said that Title VII does not extend to gender identification. Stephens and the EEOC brought the case to an appeals court which has ruled in favor of Ms. Stephens. The Supreme Court has now been asked by the Administration to review this case.

If in fact the Supreme Court rules in favor of the employer, the Trans community at large will be under direct attack by business owners, from whom there is already great discrimination, who will be protected by law. This will not only affect trans workers but the LGBTQ+ community at large and even cis-gendered workers who do not fit their gender stereotype. Simply being too masculine or feminine for your sex, by your employer's judgment, would be grounds for firing. This case greatly illustrates that an attack on one is an attack on all.

This case greatly exemplifies the need for worker solidarity. By deepening divisions in the working class, the most marginalized and vulnerable groups not only become attacked themselves by reactionaries, but become the doormat for which the working class as a whole may be attacked, stripped of their jobs, their livelihood, for merely existing naturally.

It is true that many who claim to be Marxists, communists, leftists, etc. are and have expressed quite explicitly transphobic and trans-exclusionary politics. This is wholly incorrect for any student of Marx to take in our modern era. It is true that, in the past, socialist states took an incorrect stance when it came to the LGBTQ+ community. But as Marxists, we must think scientifically and not uphold the mistakes of our forebearers for the sake of "tradition" or to repeat the prejudices of the past.

The fact for any Marxist should be simple: there is no rational/scientific reason for the discrimination against trans-people or the LGBTQ+ community at large. Such people are just as natural as a CIS person is. Before class society, many cultures around the globe recognized multiple genders or did not even classify people into genders as we know them today. With the advent of class society, these various notions of gender were gradually done away with. The need for men and women to give birth to a child who can inherit the private property, and in turn give birth their own child to inherit the property, became paramount. Thus, the natural sexual orientation of the human race was put into chains to serve the needs of private property. Of course, it was the class of people who were ruled that were and are most subjected to this oppression. The ruling class which uses its power to cultivate these values amongst the past and current working class also have the power of sexual privilege. Members of the ruling class are constantly being caught having sexual relationships of the same kind they publically oppose, while many also engage in degenerate sexual acts such as pedophilia and sex trafficking. Sexuality became a class privilege.

This division has kept the working class divided and fighting itself for thousands of years. The latest attacks on the trans community serve the current Administration in two direct ways, the first is to continue to carry out the reactionary attacks on minorities, continuing to cultivate a society of reaction. The other is to have the working class fighting itself rather than the ruling class and its officials in the state. Just as the ruling class pits workers against one another over race, sex, nationality, etc. they do so in sexuality as well.

And these divisions, which the ruling classes have been cultivating for over 5,000 years keep us, the members of the working class at each other's throats or simply not caring. But this case exemplifies needs working-class solidarity. It is easy for the apathetic and selfish to simply say, "well, I'm not trans so why should I care?". But this case exemplifies the old saying "if you think the problems of one people is not your problem, then do nothing and the problem will soon be yours." This case particular has already shown that the attack on trans workers is being extended to other workers well. If the Supreme Court sides with the Administration, sex discrimination in the workplace will run even more unchecked than it already is, and even more so, it will be completely legal.

An attack on one is an attack on all. As workers, we must move past the reactionaries values that are cultivated and shoved down our throats by the ruling class. We must stand together with those groups in the working class who are easy targets for the forces of reaction. We must not give in to old thinking, thinning based on irrational ideas, metaphysical concepts, and dogmatic commands. We must negate the negations of class society.

Trans rights are workers rights, they are human rights, and they must be upheld by those who want to push society, humanity, forward.

The working class cannot lose its chains by oppressing its own and siding with the ruling class. If we do not stand together in solidarity, if we do not protect each other from the attacks of reaction, then the working class will continue to be in disarray, fighting itself rather than its oppressors.

COMUNA ANTILLA'S RESPONSE TO THE DISCOURSES OF THE IMPERIALIST RIGHT IN THE FACE OF THE NATIONAL SITUATION IN PUERTO RICO

Translated by J. Boshcka

General Secretary • 27th of July, 2019 • San Juan Puerto Rico

An embrace of solidarity to all people in the struggle!

During the past few days we have seen how the colonial government starts to reorganize after the resignation of Dictator Ricardo Roselló.

The right and colonialist class is utilizing the following discourse about the situation in Puerto Rico to justify itself:

- Corruption shows that the Puerto Rican people cannot govern themselves
- The demonstrations jeopardize the policy and economic restructuring that they are implementing
- Ricardo Roselló's government failed because he did not follow the recommendations made by the Fiscal Control Board
- The corruption demonstrates that the colonial government requires even more "supervision" by the federal government

All these ideas can be observed in Fox News, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, official communiqués and Social Networks of Donald Trump and expressions of some colonialist policies; like Jennifer Gonzales (Resident commissioner in Congress) or Thomas Rivera Shatz (president of the Senate in PR). This is done with the intention of robbing the historical events of the struggle of the people, and utilizing it according to the imperialist interests in our lands.

Before such postulations we answer thus:

- Corruption in the country is not a new matter and is a reflection of the corruption of the US government itself. During the past few days we have been in constant communication with North American organizations and they have told us how unpunished is the corrupt politics of the empire. Therefore, if corruption is evidence that our people cannot govern on their own, the same must be said of all American people. What corruption actually demonstrates is the logic of a system that feeds the ruling class through the exploitation of the working and marginalized classes.
- It is the neoliberal policies that are putting the marginalized and working classes at risk. Both sectors have a duty to protect themselves from austerity and its consequences. Our country lives in constant violence, which worsens, while poverty, lack of opportunities, and the elimination of rights continue to increase. These measures are the real danger and encourage the influence of the US government in our country. It is them who are responsible for each action and measure that people have had to take in defense of their own well-being. We should not be confused by the discourse that the country is unstable because the government has not been as "strong" with austerity measures as the situation "requires." With those words, what these people mean is that the masses must sit down and obey their commands; they are asking us to keep silent while we continue to close schools, hospitals, privatize beaches and eliminate rights that are necessary to have a decent and fair life. We reiterate, this is a struggle on the part of the ruling and exploiting classes to continue plundering us to pay for the debt that they themselves created. The marginalized and working classes ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEBT. Debt has been the excuse for all the policy undertaken during the past years; the debt is illegitimate, it is illegal, and it is colonial, WE MUST NOT PAY WITH OUR SWEAT.
- The government of Puerto Rico failed because it is not designed to serve its people. This means that the colonial government has consistently failed from the moment it was created. The people, the working and marginalized classes, do not have to plunge the burden of feeding the capitalist exploiters who only care about their own welfare. These are the people who created the debt, who hide the corruption, and who smile on camera while killing the future of the country.
- Corruption is not the main problem of the country. The main problem in Puerto Rico, and many countries of the world, is the silencing and political alienation of the masses. The capitalist system works to protect the oppressive, exploitative and corrupt classes. These classes are not only present on our island, but the governments of the United States and other parts of the world. Corruption is a symptom of a system based on exploitation: this system limits our political powers to an issue every four years; this system makes us passive entities of little importance as to what the government does; This system eliminates the rights of the poor, marginalized, and working classes, while feeding the pockets of large multinational corporations, vultures and banking class. We do not need further intervention; we require a new government that really works for our well-being and progress and not that of the bourgeois class. This government will be forged from below, to suppress those who are now above.

Now, we are seeing the struggling sectors coming together more and more. We are seeing how the popular classes in Puerto Rico are organized in self-convened assemblies to sustain their own power outside political parties or entities of the system. We believe that a better tomorrow is possible and is beginning to be built.

It was the union against corruption and dictatorship that allowed victory. The work done by different organizations, the discourses they built against the Board and austerity measures, prepared the ground for people to say "ENOUGH." What we saw happen does not come from nowhere, it has been a succession of events that have accumulated to give people the motivation to go out and demand what they need and for what they feel is right

Finally, if you want to start organizing and do not know how, feel free to communicate with us, we can, and we want to help. Let's talk, let's be people, let's share ideas; LET'S CONTINUE OUR MARCH OF GIANTS!

THIS LABOR DAY, CELEBRATE THE HISTORY AND PROMISE OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT



By: J. PALAMEDA

In the United States, those of us who are leftist workers have a vexed relationship with this labor day, the first Monday in September. The day was a refuge for the American state and compromising union leadership from the May Day riots, namely Haymarket, and has since then become a state-recognized and confined day off for all workers in the US, matched with the expected sales and marketing campaigns.

Yet, Labor Day in September did begin with mass demonstrations of laborers with the Knights of Labor, AFL, and other unions in New York City in the last two decades of the 19th century. The first Labor Days were celebrated with picnics and demonstrations, finished with rousing speeches from early labor leaders. And recently, there have been preliminary attempts and rumblings to bring the red spirit of May Day to our official holiday in the US. My union, the NEA, for example, sent out a flier calling for labor day to be recognized as the labor holiday it is, as a celebration of working class pride, not merely a day off.


If there ever is a time to revisit Labor Day with this perspective, it is now. Workers across the country face mounting attacks post-Janus. As we've reported, trans workers are having their workplace rights attacked, hundreds of steel workers and Del Monte workers have been laid off, and nearly 700 immigrant workers were arrested in a wanton fashion by ICE in Mississippi with the help of abusive management. The union in which I participate has similarly faced serious financial difficulty, as some adjunct teachers have shortsightedly chosen to opt out of their dues, endangering our accreditation as a union.

Resurgent unionism has nonetheless risen in these conditions. Countless strikes organized at the workplace from fast food fights for 15, to graduate student unions, to rideshare strikes, have come to define the growing leftist movement in the United States. The DSA Convention, largely panned for its procedural "difficulties," nonetheless clearly declared democratic unionism to be the beating heart of the American left. And turning to Labor Day, bringing the militancy of our May Day marches to this day, reflects

the general turn in American left strategy to bring our politics to the American worker, to merge our spaces, and make left spaces less exclusive and distinct from the lives of American workers.

In this spirit, we mark Labor Day not half-heartedly, but with the full strength of our voices as American workers. Our labor did not, as moderate union leaders will no doubt say on this day, "create the middle class," as if our identity as workers is a transitory state between poverty and wealth. On this day we remember the millions of US workers, many of them immigrants, who made the American labor union the most militant movement in recent American history, and we appreciate the progress we are making in reforcing that movement. In the face of increasing attacks on immigrants and our unions, we say emphatically that, in the words of David C. Coates, radical union labor organizer: "An Injury to One is an Injury to All."

**PEACE, EQUALITY
SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY &
All Power
To The
Working
People!**



AMERICAN PARTY OF LABOR . ORG

The American Party of Labor is...

a revolutionary working class organization. Our aim is to abolish the capitalist system and all its horrors by replacing it with socialism, a system based on the principle laid out by Marx, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work." This is the first phase toward the higher phase of communism, defined by the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

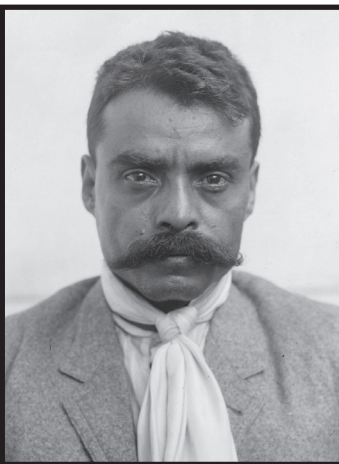
Who Can Join? How Do I Get Involved?

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

We recommend that you check out our publications page to get a more in-depth look at the Party. Another good place to look is our online library. The cornerstones of our Party are the works of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, and Enver Hoxha.

You can find everything that you should know about us here, and you can join online or 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.



"La tierra es de quien la trabaja con sus manos."

The land belongs to those who work it with their hands" - Emiliano Zapata

Why is Marxism-Leninism the Best Answer? Can't We Regulate Capitalism or Try to Create Some Kind of Third System That Isn't Fully Communist or Capitalist?

One must understand 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 and start proposing an alternative system. 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, not ideas he dreamt up on his own. Solutions to the problems of capitalism can only be reached by understanding and observing the system itself, not by dreaming up some wonderful Utopian alternative. As for regulating or restraining capitalism, this has been done many times before.

Oftentimes the governments of capitalist states must restrict the private sector for various reasons. The problem is that political power is still stacked in favor of the ruling class, and if you slap regulations on big business, they have every avenue and all the resources necessary to see those regulations overturned in the long run. What truly led to the collapse of the old socialist bloc was not that these countries followed Marxism-Leninism, which was ultimately too radical, but rather quite the opposite- that these nations all came under the impression that they needed more and more market style reforms, until they had more or less become capitalist countries.

Nowadays, ideas such as "21st century socialism" would have us do basically the same thing, 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. This kind of idea can only lead to temporary gains for the workers.

How is the American Party of Labor Different than Other Socialist, Communist, or Left-Wing Parties or Organizations?

First of all, the main difference is that we see the solution to the problems of the working class in revolution and the seizure of state power by the working class and its political organizations. The methodology by which we strive for revolution is Marxism-Leninism—that is, the scientific methodology of social/economic revolution first devised by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and contributed to by figures such as Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin and the late Albanian leader Enver Hoxha. This does not mean, however, that we look at these figures the way religions look at their own prophets, nor do we see their every written word as some kind of Holy Scripture or their every action as blameless and divine.

That being said, we critique their actions from the Marxist methodology of historical dialectical materialism, analyzing actions and events in their historical context, taking into account the benefit of hindsight and trying to avoid idle speculation about what could have been if certain events had or hadn't happened, etc. Because we uphold the general line of these figures, from Karl Marx to Enver Hoxha, we consider ourselves "anti-revisionist," and it is in this way that we differ from most communist parties or organizations in the United States.



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!

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 and the ending of neo-liberal policies in other countries, particularly 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.

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