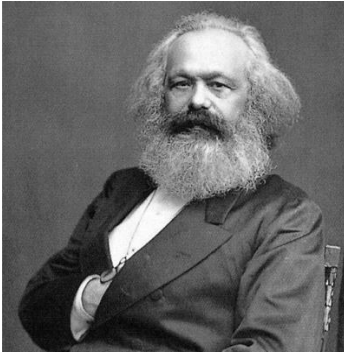


# Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity



## A Journal of Discussion and Debate



Vol. 1, No. 5  
February, 2020

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To see the reasoning for publication of TMLU, please see the article “Why ‘Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity’ in the first issue on the web-site below. Though we believe that a Party must have ideological unity, we occasionally include progressive articles from groups with varying views.

Comments, criticisms and articles are welcome. The next issue of TMLU is scheduled for mid-April so material should be sent in by late March.

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## **Filthy Rich Declare War on Workers 2020 is Year to Unite and Fight Back!**

### **Cuts to Food Stamps, Medicaid, Workers Rights Will Hurt All Workers**

One social program after another is being cut. Overtime and safety laws are being gutted. Millions of people are losing food stamps, others Medicaid. Threats are made to completely cut Medicaid and Social Security. Trump is moving to kick people off of disability benefits. Millions are imprisoned for slave labor or thrown into migrant prisons. Meanwhile, more than \$1 trillion (\$1,000,000,000,000) is handed out to ultra-rich war profiteers who have bribed politicians into slashing taxes for the ultra-rich.

The purpose of these attacks is to make all workers poorer. The capitalist class wants more and more people to be desperate to accept jobs for low pay. This will bring down the pay of all other workers. It's a race to the bottom unless we fight back.

Every one of the social programs we once had were won by workers fighting for them. Some go back to the massive movement of workers in the 1930's when workers won unemployment insurance as a benefit to all workers. Capitalist politicians—both Democrat and Republican—have sought at every turn to wipe these out, treating unemployed workers as criminal "welfare recipients" while the lazy rich get tax credits galore.

44% of the U.S. workforce makes less than \$18,000 a year, and millions more are barely above that. Yet the 1% have amassed incredible

fortunes, and the gap gets worse every year. Both Trump and the majority of the Democratic Party are funded by these greedy, disgusting people.

If you still have a job with survival wages, it may feel okay to turn your back on cuts to the poorest workers. But this is a wake-up call: they are coming after you, too.

### **Solidarity of all workers needed to fight back against the capitalists**

In France today, millions of workers have shut down the country to stop the theft of their pensions. In Chile today, millions are saying no to austerity. This is true around the world.

### **Massive worker protests are needed in 2020**

Every worker and community organizer can circulate a petition calling on working-class communities, unions, and activists to support the call for a massive protest. Don't depend on an election or politicians—unite and fight.

### **PETITION:**

### **TIME TO UNITE AND FIGHT!**

To Unions, Community Groups, Activists:

We, the undersigned, are joining the call for the millions of workers to unite and fight against low wages, cuts to social programs, pension theft, and for a stop to endless wars and the destruction of the planet.

# The Bernie Sanders campaign and building the movement for socialism in the US

By Brian Becker, PSL, Party of Socialism and Liberation



*Photo: Jackson Lanier*

The Democratic Party establishment and the major capitalist-owned media have been waging a low intensity war against Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign for the past year and it's not working too well. Now these attacks are escalating. If Sanders continues to succeed, the floodgate of scurrilous and demonizing assaults will open, just as happened to Jeremy Corbyn in the UK.

For the past 12 months, almost all of the ruling class centers of power have been arguing that Sanders is a socialist and thus "too left;" that his medical reforms "are too expensive" and will break the bank; that he "can't beat Trump;" or, in the aftermath of his heart attack, that he isn't "healthy enough," which goes along well with the mantra that he is "too old." Then at the last debate CNN and Warren conspired to set up Sanders as "sexist," yet another argument to add to the list. These attacks on Sanders have not worked.

## **What's the real reason the ruling class is so alarmed?**

What has become crystal clear is that the Democratic Party establishment and its echo chambers in the "free press" clearly would favor four more years of Donald Trump over Sanders, a self-identified democratic socialist, in the White House. One must take a moment and ask why this is. By European standards Bernie Sanders would be an acceptable center-left politician. He would not be perceived as a danger to the existing social order. What is the American ruling class so afraid of? Why is the Democratic establishment trying to destroy the Sanders campaign?

The ruling class and both of its two political parties rightly fear that a new, truly radical and even pre-revolutionary mass movement can quickly sweep through the country as it did both in the 1930s and at the end of the 1960s. The Sanders electoral campaign itself is not that, but insofar as it is exciting and raising the expectation of millions who want to win substantive re-

forms by fighting the billionaire class, it presages what is to come. Sanders, the individual, may turn out to be an accidental political figure who spent a lifetime in the hallowed halls of the bourgeois Congress barely causing a stir, but whose presidential campaigns became a vessel and a catalyst for something more enduring — a movement of millions of people who are demanding radical solutions to the grievous injustices caused by plutocratic capitalism.

## **The ironies of history**

The country is badly in need of a mass, energized movement for radical change. It may be an irony of history that such a radical break from the established order could take shape from within arenas and institutions that constitute a center of ruling class political legitimacy. But history is filled with such ironies.

Nascent radical mass movements throughout the centuries have often first taken shape where the line of least resistance appears in the old order. Here, the path of least resistance is the elections. People in the United States are familiar with elections. The process, symbols and iconography of the elections are accepted as places for heated discourse and heated debate. It is the main political form that can imbue a political program with instant "legitimacy." In every school, it is where children are taught they must try to make change — a point reinforced every day in the media.

The notion of making change through other means such as workplace action and street protest, let alone more militant forms, is almost exclusively learned through interaction with people's movements and with radicals. From the standpoint of those fighting for radical and revolutionary change, a fundamental lesson is that the U.S. electoral form of government has functioned more than anything as a deception — a way of giving the illusion of choice that masks the dictatorship of the capitalist class. That is still its main function.

## **Socialist tactics**

But socialist tactics have to be considered and decided based on the state of class-consciousness of the entire working class, and appreciation of where we are in the historical process, and what is most essential at our current juncture. The firmly held convictions of small groups of revolutionary socialists — for instance, that the capitalist system is fundamentally unreformable and that the Democratic Party would sooner come apart than be transformed — is not sufficient to draw out a tactical orientation. The question is how to fight alongside and to an extent merge with masses of people who are in their

own process of struggle, so that such conclusions can be tested and proven in real life.

For our purposes here, the point is that it is unsurprising that the mass reawakening of anti-capitalist and pro-socialist consciousness would register profoundly in the electoral realm, the path of least resistance. For tens of millions, it feels more legitimate and more possible to identify as a socialist or promote a socialist candidate in an election cycle rather than at a militant street protest or barricade. Given the relative smallness and limited influence of the revolutionary socialist trends in the United States, with whom these tens of millions have largely never interacted, how could it be otherwise? That the form of this struggle is currently inside the Democratic primary contest in some ways obscures its potentially radical or even revolutionary next manifestations.

The ruling class and its “thinkers,” however, are keenly aware that such trends can morph quickly into a truly mass, militant movement against a system dominated by billionaires. The ruling class, because of its role in society, is more acutely class conscious than the classes over which they dominate. They fear more than anything a new consciousness arising from the mass of the people who, should they begin to first stir and then move together with new demands, could become an irresistible force.

The dynamic surge of the Sanders campaign both reflects the nascent mass movement for radical change and further stimulates this phenomenon inside the United States – at least so far. The last year has witnessed a wave of mass protests all over the capitalist world. The subterranean yearnings for radical change are starting to burst out into the open, above ground, and they are rattling the existing social order and the ruling classes from Chile and Ecuador to Sudan, France, Lebanon, Iraq and beyond.

This yearning for change hasn’t, in fact, come all at once. It has been developing for nearly a decade. The Occupy movement in 2011 showed the potential for it when it burst onto the political scene. It spread like wildfire before it collapsed under the weight of both state repression and the folly of anarchist tactics. The Arab Spring started with the same impetus and the same dynamism but it too collapsed for multiple reasons, including the absence of an experienced revolutionary leadership capable of circumnavigating such troubled waters, the inability to stir the countryside and the opportunist intervention of imperialism.

Three years later, the rebellion in Ferguson, Missouri, ignited another new national movement against racism and for Black freedom and equality. Rebellion and resistance are in the air once again in 2019-2020 in the United States and around the world – and the ruling class and its two political parties inside the United States

are scared. The billionaires and bankers don’t actually fear Sanders the person at all, but they do fear that his campaign is becoming a springboard for something much larger and more radical. The PSL believes that this is the primary characteristic feature for evaluating the Sanders campaign and determining socialist tactics to intervene in the current political struggle.

### **Sanders’ insurgency against the Democratic establishment**

Sanders is running against Trump but his main foes come from within the Democratic Party elites, and thus his campaign presents itself as an insurgency against the Democratic Party itself.

The adversarial relationship between the Democratic Party and the Sanders campaign is a widely recognized fact. Sanders himself said at his very large closing campaign rally ahead of the Iowa caucus, “We are taking on the entire political establishment, both the Republican and the Democratic establishment.” Failed presidential candidate and longtime leading imperialist John Kerry was overheard by an NBC news analyst talking on the phone about “the possibility of Bernie Sanders taking down the Democratic Party — down whole.” Rahm Emanuel, former Chicago mayor and Obama’s chief of staff, warns of “a rupture in the party that is irreparable.” Sources close to former president Obama say he will only intervene forcefully in the primary on one condition: if Sanders were to win in Iowa and start to gain momentum. Stopping Sanders is now their top priority.

Another issue that all socialists must consider is the extent to which this race is being shaped by both major parties as a referendum on socialism in the United States. Trump is organizing his 2020 campaign around the fight to save the country from socialism. He called Sanders a “communist,” who is “far beyond a socialist.” Of course he is not the first Republican to use false anti-communist attacks to attack the Democratic nominee. That was a characteristic of the right-wing campaigns against Obama too, despite him being a center-right neoliberal candidate. But what makes this year different is that for the first time in modern history, the Democratic Party is mirroring these talking points against its own candidate, emphasizing that socialism can never win in the United States.

The Sanders campaign is, at this moment, the vessel for a progressive, vaguely socialist insurgency within the confines of the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party has consistently acted against the interests of working people in the United States while trying to present itself as the only option for progressive values. It is a brake on the development of an independent and militant movement in the country. Socialists who understand that the

Democratic Party is an unreformable ruling class party should support this insurgency.

### **After the primaries**

If Sanders fails to win the nomination or has it stolen from him, he has pledged to support the party's pro-ruling class nominee in the general election. He did the same in 2016 when he campaigned for capitalist war hawk Hillary Clinton. If Sanders again abandons his own movement by supporting a ruling class candidate in 2020 the movement should refuse to follow him; it should refuse to be a tail to the kite of either wing of the capitalist political machine and the military-industrial complex. It should continue building its own grassroots base and promoting the socialist movement in confrontation with the reactionary Democratic Party elites. That would make it a genuine resistance movement not only to Trump but also his super-reactionary war-mongering foes in the Democratic Party leadership.

In response to the attacks against Sanders, his campaign has moved to the left on domestic issues and grown in popularity, consistently broadening its base of support among young people, working class voters overall, in Black and Latino communities, among women, the LGBTQ community and other sectors of society that seek radical solutions to the grotesque levels of inequality that are the fundamental feature of late-stage capitalism. One such grotesque feature is evident in the fact that Jeff Bezos "earned" an additional \$12 billion on January 29 — one single day — at the same time that the media reported soaring levels of homelessness among working families.

Simultaneously, in the face of the establishment's attacks and pressure, Sanders has either embraced the ruling-class narrative on Venezuela, China and Russia, or has offered little or very little real opposition to the dominant foreign policy positions of the imperialist establishment. Sanders undoubtedly hopes this will make him more "respectable" in the eyes of the corporate media, but the deeper effect is to lock the budding mass socialist consciousness to the imperialist status quo, keeping that potentially radical sentiment from moving too far left in the direction of internationalism.

### **What does critical support mean?**

Socialists can join the insurgency against the Democratic Party establishment without becoming Bernie Sanders' followers or uncritically parroting any and all positions adopted by him. Critical support to the Sanders campaign means that when Sanders takes reactionary positions there should be no holding back on open criticism.

Sanders' foreign policy positions are not anti-imperialist or socialist. Yes, he has a toned down, softer,

more liberal foreign policy than the other Democrats. Undoubtedly, governments in Cuba, Venezuela, Iran and among Palestinians would consider a Sanders presidency a big step forward by the standards of who his competitors are, and the conduct of previous presidents. But his foreign policy accepts and promotes the narrative of the empire and supports imperialist sanctions against targeted countries.

For instance, when Sanders was one of just two members of the Senate to vote no in June 2017 on a new sanctions resolution against Russia, North Korea and Iran, he made it clear that he was working within the Obama-approved framework and was not taking a radical departure from the ruling class consensus. He explained this in a video that his team produced to prove that his vote should not be considered an outlier or radical shift: "While I support sanctions on Russia and North Korea, I voted against the sanctions bill last week because it contains sanctions on Iran that I believe could endanger the Iran nuclear agreement. This agreement was President Obama's most important foreign policy achievement, and President Trump has made clear his intention to destroy it. Progressives must get mobilized to protect it, just as we did with the Affordable Care Act!"

### **The PSL's socialist presidential campaign & building a mass movement for change**

The Party for Socialism and Liberation is running its own socialist campaign for president. This campaign will promote a genuine socialist and internationalist program and thereby provide real definition to socialism. Gloria La Riva is running for president and her running mate is Native activist and political prisoner Leonard Peltier, who continues to be unjustly incarcerated 44 years after his arrest.

Our campaign is reaching out across the country to explain the urgency of the struggle for socialism as the only answer to the existential threat to life on the planet due to climate change, the growing war danger, and deepening poverty based on job destruction. These existential crises are all based on capitalism, a system that puts the insatiable quest for profits for a small ruling class over all else.

The PSL's program has similarities and differences with that of Sanders. We wholeheartedly support the far-reaching reforms he demands, including improved Medicare for all people, eliminating student debt, dismantling the system of mass incarceration, full abortion rights and more. Winning these much needed basic reforms will require building a mass, militant working class movement. Even if Sanders were elected president the capitalist centers of power would do everything, and we mean



everything, to prevent these reforms from being implemented.

Sanders as president would not succeed in implementing these reforms absent a large mass movement. Every significant reform in the capitalist system was won through the hard-fought struggle of the people. It was not a gift from Roosevelt that gave us unemployment insurance, social security or the right to unionize in the 1930s. It was mass strikes, general strikes, sit-down strikes and factory seizures and the building of mass organizations of the unemployed. Likewise it was a radical mass movement in the 1950s and 60s that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act in the mid-1960s, which ended the legal status of apartheid in the United States for Black Americans while also leading to the adoption of Medicare so that the elderly would have a right to health care. The ending of the Vietnam War, winning the right to abortion, the passage of marriage equality and the adoption of anti-discrimination measures protecting LGBTQ people — all of these were the consequences of determined movements of masses of people.

The PSL, like the Green Party and other independent campaigns, will not be allowed to participate in the presidential debates — no matter in how many states we get on the ballot. The electoral system is rigged to ensure that only the two ruling-class parties are given a competitive chance to win. The two parties also make ballot access extremely complicated, expensive and subject to expanding obstacles for third-party candidates unless they are a toy of one billionaire or another.

### **What to do now**

Although we are not Democrats, we encourage those voting in the upcoming Democratic Party primaries to vote for Bernie Sanders.

Members of the PSL will be going out to Sanders campaign events to connect with the most radical and committed layers of people drawn to his program and to build relationships that will last far beyond the current

election cycle. This is consistent with our Party's orientation to the 2016 election.

If Bernie Sanders fails to get the nomination, he says that he will campaign for whoever is the candidate, including Joe Biden, in the general election. The PSL will not follow that advice. We will urge people to vote for the La Riva/Peltier ticket instead wherever they have achieved ballot status either as PSL candidates or representing the Peace and Freedom Party in California or on other progressive third parties' ballot lines in other states.

If Bernie Sanders wins the Democratic nomination, in spite of the Democratic Party establishment's war against him by, the PSL will not run candidates in battleground swing states. If Bernie Sanders were to win the Democratic Party nomination and then shift his campaign stance and orientation to the right to appease sections of the ruling class and the Democratic Party leadership elites, we will retain our independent capacity to evaluate, criticize or condemn such moves. Appeasing reactionaries in the ruling class only facilitates the growth of right-wing and ultra-right politics.

In the event of a Sanders vs. Trump general election, the La Riva/Peltier campaign running outside of swing states will still make an important contribution to the radicalization of popular consciousness. In a period of intensifying class struggle, independent organization and clarity on the meaning of socialism — and how to achieve it — becomes more necessary than ever.

Tactics can never be absolute, designed for all situations or last forever. On the contrary, revolutionaries must combine a rock-hard adherence to core principles with tactical suppleness to advance the movement for socialism under varying conditions and on shifting terrain. For now, the Sanders campaign represents a dynamic insurgency promoting radical social changes in the face of increasingly stiff headwinds from a criminal ruling class that fears the loosening of its absolute grip over U.S. politics and the economy. We support the insurgency against the reactionaries.

### *Comment:*

Obviously this article will provoke controversy, particularly among those who think one should never give any political support, even tactically, to any bourgeois candidate, including in the Democratic Party. We welcome any opposing views.

Also, in 2016, when I was a member of another party (that has now degenerated so far that it is not worth naming), we took a similar position, expressed in a leaflet: **“Vote for Bernie Sanders in the Primary, but...”**. It is available at: <https://mltranslations.org/US/sanders.pdf>

One should also note that in 2016 Sanders already showed that he would do what he said: support whomever the Democratic Party nominated. Finally, note that Bloomberg decided to run, not because he can defeat Trump in the general elections, but to defeat Sanders for the nomination.

## The Fight Against Wage Theft in New York State

It is estimated that workers in New York State lose about \$1 billion a year to wage theft. This is through bosses who pay them below minimum wage, refuse to pay the legally-mandated time and a half for overtime hours, theft of tips, etc. The great majority of these workers are immigrants, mostly undocumented, as employers try to intimidate them into thinking that they can be deported if they take the case to court. (Actually the courts in New York are not allowed to ask questions about a worker's immigration status.) Furthermore, when workers win a case, it is up to the worker to provide the court information about the employer's location, bank account, etc. Employers frequently evade fines by transferring assets to the name of a spouse, changing the name or official location of the business, etc.

A bill was passed last year in the New York State legislature that would freeze the assets of a business found guilty of wage theft. The bill was vetoed by New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, claiming that he wanted to put forward his own version of the bill.

Meanwhile, workers' and immigrant rights' organizations have been organizing to force Cuomo to sign a

new bill known as S.W.E.A.T (Securing Wages Against Theft). A spirited demonstration of over 100 workers, almost all Latino, Chinese and Caribbean workers, the majority women, was held in front of Cuomo's New York City office (633 Third Ave, by 41st St.) at the end of January. The next demonstration will be held on Monday, March 2, at noon, and then April 1 and May 1 (International Workers' Day) unless Cuomo signs the bill.

There were a total of three members of left groups there, and only two identifiable members of unions (CWA). Most of the union bureaucrats will not endorse a demonstration against Cuomo, another Democrat phony "friend of labor." But it would be good if rank-and-file union workers could show up, especially with union insignia. Since the demonstrations are called for noon, it would be good if workers who have different shifts or retirees could come. It is also an alternative to May 1 Coalition's demonstration, which has degenerated to a pathetically small number of people.

Remember the great slogan of the workers' movement: **"An Injury to One is an Injury to All!"**





## Critique of Article “The Use of Identity Politics to Undermine the Left”

Dear Journal Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity,

In the [second] issue’s article “The Use of Identity Politics to Undermine the Left”, Anna Coco attacks “trans ideology” as division politics whose aim to harm and fracture “genuine” working women’s and LGBT movement. “Trans ideology”, to Anna Coco, is a tool on behalf of the bourgeoisie which exists to “shut women down” and prevent open discussion of ideas. I believe this to be a mere expression of right-wing cultural deviations rather than concrete political analysis by the author. It’s very clear from the beginning that most of the article is based on the author’s *circumstantial* experience and personal interaction with transgender people and outdated outlook on what gender is. While claiming not to attack trans people individually, she attacks “trans movement” in general as “anti-nature” identity politics. Maybe Coco needs to re-read Marx’s writings on nature and the fact that men interact with nature at all times and, while changing it, we also change with it, and so do such constructs as gender. Anna Coco’s article is written to produce harm for working people’s (which also includes trans people) movement for the common goal of abolition of private property. The article seeks to sow separatism between workers, and deny the existence of trans workers who are disproportionately victims of suicide, wage disparities, and poverty.

So what is “identity politics”? It is an opportunistic liberal trend that seeks to dissolve fundamental class problems with personal and individual reflections, “representation”, and introspection rather than movement building. While the US state and the bourgeoisie have and will continue to sow division between activists by any means, Coco offers no real proof that so-called “trans-ideology” is one such campaign.

Highly alienated and specialized work, and the glorification of anecdotal and personal narratives over collective experience has empowered the perspectives of identity politics. It perfectly fits into the framework of American liberalism and its obsession with freedom (i.e. freedom in form, while the content is determined by the ruling class) and private property as inseparable rights from

being a Man. The author and those who generally fall within transphobic trend, ironically, fall into these very bourgeois patterns, generalizing their experience to the left at large.

The author puts this in bold font: “Transgender ideology has set a dangerous precedent by referring to feelings rather than biology, which ultimately allows discrimination not just against women, but people of color including native people.” First of all, such terms as “transgender ideology” is a right-wing term rhetorically suited for the dismissal of any trans politics and valid expressions of trans workers’ concerns. Second, ‘biology’ that the author refers to interacts with social conditions at all times and by reducing all gender politics to “but there are only two” penises and vaginas, she sweeps under the rug concerns such as workplace discrimination, lack of medical care for and constant fear for life due to increasing number of hate crimes targeting trans people. Those are facts, not trying some whimsical appeal to emotion, as she -- ironically -- claims to be. We, as Marxists, do not fetishize science. Such positivism brings up science to the level of church thus killing any scientific method at its root.

Putting a fixed “biology” against an inconsistent “emotion” is fundamentally anti-materialist and anti-Marxist. While gender fluidity existed under primitive communism as well, there is a need under any class society to perpetuate binary gender to maintain the inheritance of private property. This negates man’s natural state without class and socialism aims to negate this negation along with the others which exist under class society.

After all, we are all being oppressed in the same way. American Marxist-Leninist movement must build its thorough theoretical backing in order to avoid articles that lack real theoretical analysis.

Thank you. Concerned worker and reader of your journal,

Polina B

### Comment

We appreciate the comment by Polina B, though we disagree with much of it. The journal will only serve its purpose if there is discussion and debate between opposing views.

I will only comment on one aspect of the question that Polina does not deal with. The rules in New York City allow anyone who claims to be transgender to use the bathroom or locker room of the gender that they identify with. If the purpose of this was to provide non-discriminatory



conditions for transgender people, wouldn't it be easier to provide unisex facilities, together with male and female facilities, for those who want to use them? That would allow women to have the privacy they deserve (or even men who might feel uncomfortable using the bathroom or changing in front of women). It seems clear that this rule is not meant to protect transgender people, but to try to use them to undermine women's rights.

George Gruenthal

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From the January, 2020, issue of *Scintilla (Spark)*, organ of the Communist Platform of Italy

## **The Danger of the 5G Network in Factories and in the Area**

Below is the speech made on behalf of the Lombardy Communist Coordination during the Assembly-debate on the anniversary of the Thyssen massacre [from a fire leading to the deaths of seven workers in a Thyssen-Krupp plant in Turin, December 6, 2007 – *translator's note*], held in Turin on December 7, 2019.

Today we are gathered here on the occasion of the massacre of Thyssen workers in order to build the unity and organization the workers need to oppose the subordination of health to the logic of profit and the market and to claim the right to safety at the workplace and the area.

As the Lombardy Communist Coordination we want to bring our solidarity and support to this important initiative by emphasizing what will almost certainly be one of the next frontiers to combat danger in the factories and urban centers.

We are referring to 5G technology, i.e. the fifth generation mobile communication network, whose harmful effects on workers and the general population are deliberately discussed very little by the authorities and institutions. However, there is much confusion even among the most advanced workers who are fighting for health protection.

One of the technological requirements of the new production model called Factory 4.0 is precisely the existence of an extremely fast communication infrastructure capable of simultaneously supporting millions of transmissions, each with a large amount of data.

In fact, in order for the Factory 4.0 production model to achieve the maximum possible capability, it is expected that every single elementary component in the finished product will incorporate a microchip that controls the production process by communicating with other microchips present in robots and machines, with computers that manage the workshop stocks, with computers that provide the external components, with computers that plan production, etc.

Without going into technical details, the 5G mobile communication network, in order to respond to these technological requirements, must use with very high-

frequency microwave transmissions (i.e. millimeter waves); however so far these are reserved for the military to develop new generations of weapons mainly intended to repress the population (such as the United States Department of Defense's Non-Lethal Weapons Program).

Millimeter waves are limited in their ability to transmit beyond a short distances and their signals blocked by obstacles such as walls, trees, etc.; therefore, the 5G network needs countless transmitters placed at a maximum distance of 50-100 meters from each other and at the height of a human being in order to function.

This means that, in 4.0 factories, the departments will be filled with transmitters that will continuously expose workers to millimeter-wave radio frequency radiation; this is only the start, however, because the next phase of 5G will expose the population at mass level, to make it possible, for example, to implement self-driving vehicles or the "Internet of Things." Just think that within a few years, the installation of millions of transmitters are planned in the area, as well as the launching into space of over 20,000 dedicated satellites, over 200 billion objects that will incorporate transmitting microchips. This means that if the 5G network is completed, no human being, no animal, no microorganism and no plant on Earth will be able to avoid exposure, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year, to radiation levels at radio frequency thousands of times greater than those that exist today, with no possibility of escape.

What is the problem? We are not against progress if this benefits the workers and population in general!

The problem lies in the harmfulness of radio frequency radiation. As early as 2011 the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) classified radio frequency radiation as potentially carcinogenic to humans. Since then thousands of independent scientific studies, ignored by governments and discredited by biased counter-research, financed directly or indirectly by the industries in that sector, have shown harmful short-term effects, such as alterations of heart rhythms, alterations of brain

function (dizziness, nausea, headache, memory loss and inability to concentrate) and long-term effects, which often appear only 20 or 30 years later, such as cancer, heart disease, collapse of the immune system and neurological problems.

The causal link between exposure to radio frequency radiation and the harmful effects have been emphasized, among others, by two agencies that together represent the world's leading authorities in the field: the United States government's National Toxicology Program and the Ramazzini Institute of Bologna in Italy. The latter analyzed radio frequency radiation exposures a thousand times lower than those used in the study on cell phones conducted by the National Toxicology Program and yet found the same types of cancer.

Both studies have found statistically significant increases in the development of the same type of malignant heart tumors in exposed male rats and brain tumors in female rats. Therefore, as stated by the Ramazzini Institute, **Lombardy Communist Coordination**

tute, the observation of an increase in the same type of tumors, however rare, thousands of kilometers away, in rats of the same strain exposed to the same radio frequency radiation is not coincidental. It is also very important to emphasize the fact that epidemiological studies (i.e. population studies) have found same type of tumors in heavy cell phones users.

If these are the health risks associated with the use of 5G technology, the analogy to the tragic history of asbestos, the harmful effects of which had been known since 1906 but which was only banned in Italy in 1992, cannot fail to come to mind, and still continue to cause deaths.

Being aware of the threats to the health of workers and the population in general from modern technologies that support the new Factory 4.0 production model allows us to organize more effectively to resist the destruction of life and the environment and to begin building of a society free from danger and profit.

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<https://www.ueunion.org/ue-news/2020/us-labor-against-the-war-colombia-national-strike>

## Colombian Workers Fight Anti-Worker Economic Policies, Despite Repression

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By John Ocampo, UE Field Organizer



From November 24th to December 4th, 2019, United States Labor Against the War (USLAW) and the Alliance for Global Justice (AfGJ) led a joint labor delegation to Colombia. The delegation was timed to coincide with the third anniversary of the signing of the peace accords that ended more than five decades of war be-

tween the Colombian state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP). Participants included union members and staff from UE, National Nurses United, UNITE HERE, the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, the United Steelworkers, and the National Writers Union. The delegation



also included a member of About Face: Veterans Against the War and Latin America solidarity activists.

As a board member of both AfGJ and USLAW, I helped lead this delegation and served as an interpreter. When we planned and began organizing the delegation, we had no idea that we would arrive in the country in the midst of the largest and broadest popular mobilization seen in Colombia since the national Civic Strike of 1977. On November 21st, 2019, two days before most of us arrived, Colombians took the streets nationwide as part of a National Strike called for by the country's three main labor confederations (CUT, CGT, CTC) along with farm worker, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, student, fem-

inist, and retiree organizations. That one-day National Strike, launched as a response to President Ivan Duque's anti-working-class economic policies, systematic killings of organizers and social movement leaders, and refusal to respect the 2016 peace agreements, has now gone on for weeks and promises to continue into 2020. Sadly, on the day our delegation arrived in Colombia an 18-year-old protester named Dilan Cruz was intentionally shot at close range with a tear gas canister by riot police, just two blocks from our hotel. Cruz, who was just days away from graduating high school, died less than a week later.



Colombia was supposed to have entered a new “post-conflict” era after several years of negotiations between the guerrilla army of the FARC and the Colombian state led to a peace agreement in 2016. However, since then about 1,000 civilians, including union members and leaders, have been murdered for their political convictions and for their defense of Colombia's poor and working-class. University students have had to protest and go on months-long strikes to force the government to increase spending on public education by \$1.4 million, and the current administration is following through on its threats to “shred” the peace agreement.

Despite being ranked the 7th most unequal country on the planet by the World Bank, Colombia's government intends to reduce the minimum wage for young workers by 25 percent, raise the retirement age, privatize the national pension system, cut corporate tax rates, and do almost nothing to raise a minimum wage that stands at US \$267.27 a month (a sum deemed “ridiculously high” by Finance Minister Alberto Carrasquillo) for 48 hours of work a week. The government also intends to

expand the number of items, including food, that will be subject to the 19% sales tax, while excluding the sale of real estate assets and fielding proposals from congress members of the ruling Democratic Center party to eliminate the sales tax on plastic surgeries, among other “important” things.

On our delegation we met with an array of union members and labor organizers who form part of what they call *clasista* unions. These are politically independent, class-struggle-oriented unions that fight not just for strong union contracts and the immediate interests of their own members but for all workers even if not members of their unions. These unions are rooted in the workplace but also in the wider communities in which workers live. Their union halls serve as meeting spaces for building social movements and every one of the unions we met with runs labor schools which train workers on the mechanics of trade unionism and provide a comprehensive political education to help them understand why the world is as it is and how to change it. Not sur-

prisingly, all of these unions are actively participating in the National Strike.

In the capital city of Bogota, we met with leaders of USO (Oil Workers Union) who told us about the strike the union led in 1948 against Tropical Oil (formerly a subsidiary of Nelson Rockefeller's Standard Oil). That strike helped lead to the establishment of the country's first publicly-owned company, Colombia's national oil

company Ecopetrol. Painted on one of the walls in the union hall is a mural of members of the union who have been imprisoned and murdered over the decades. Despite the repression, the USO remains one of Colombia's strongest and most militant unions. (Though it represents oil workers, the union is conscious of global warming and fights for a transition toward an energy model that is not dependent on fossil fuels.)



We also met with Fensuagro, which is the union for Colombia's rural workers. Fensuagro has had hundreds of its members kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by the state and right-wing paramilitary death squads funded by business interests since its founding in 1976. It is quite likely the most persecuted union in the world. Its courageous members, including coca growers, brave death to fight for the rights of those who work the land and to change the system of land ownership. According to Oxfam, 0.4 percent of the richest landowners control 67.7 percent of all the land in Colombia. A million farmworker families have less land to work and live on than the typical Colombian cow has to graze.

In the city of Cali, on Colombia's Pacific coast, Sintraime, which represents workers in the mining, metalurgy and rail sectors, hosted us for a talk with other local unions and students from the Universidad del Valle. We met members of the municipal workers union, Sintraemcali, whose successful decades-long resistance has protected the city's public water, electricity and telephone services from being sold to the highest bidder. A few days after our delegation ended, we received word that one of the Sintraemcali union leaders we had met with, Juan Carlos Ordoñez, was approached on the street

by armed men who warned him and others in the union to stop their involvement in the National Strike.

We visited workers in the nearby city of Buga who have been living in a tent outside a Cristar glass factory, a subsidiary of Owens Illinois, a Fortune 500 company based out of Ohio, for eight years now. They are protesting being fired when they organized a union in 2011 in order to be recognized as permanent workers. Their union, Sintradit, organizes temporary and contract workers, who are robbed of their full rights and benefits by being classified as independent contractors.

In the port city of Buenaventura, through which 60% of all of Colombia's foreign trade passes, we met with fishermen, stevedores, and other residents whose citywide civic strike in 2017 shut down the port and served as a precursor to today's National Strike. Despite the riches that are transported through Buenaventura daily, the majority of its people, who are Afro-Colombians, live in poverty and misery. Our meeting with residents there took place on a road literally made out of garbage.

On our return to Bogota, during the final stretch of our delegation, we met with Sinaltrainal, a small but scrappy union that was behind the international Killer Coke boycott campaign of over a decade ago. When I



introduced myself as a UE organizer and stated that our union has 35,000 members the Sinaltrainal workers were amazed to hear the number. Their union, which represents workers at Coca-Cola, Nestle, and Sodexo, has less than 3,000 members nationally and the majority of them do not enjoy the protections of a collective bargaining agreement. This is due to the shell games used by national and international employers to evade their responsibilities, the corruption of professionals in the legal system who act as servants of the rich rather than as defenders of the rights of people, and the campaign of extermination waged against the union by hired paramilitary killers. Over 30 Sinaltrainal members have been murdered since the union's founding in 1984. (In total, over 3,000 trade unionists have been assassinated in Colombia since 1977, more than in the rest of the world combined.) Despite all of this, the union refuses to give up and continues organizing and fighting for a better future for Colombia's poor and working-class majority.

Our final meeting of the delegation was with members of Asotrecol, an association of injured ex-GM workers whose members have spent the last 8.5 years living in a tent across the street from the U.S. Embassy. They were fired after sustaining workplace injuries inside the GM factory in Bogota and have yet to receive medical benefits or severance and are demanding their jobs back. Though the ex-workers have not yet won their demands, workers inside the Colmotores GM plant have seen an improvement in working conditions thanks to the struggle of those on the outside.

Throughout our stay in Colombia, we kept hearing two things from those we met. First, they distinguish between the American people and the government of the United States, and harbor no ill will toward the people. The reason Colombians made this distinction is that U.S. government policies toward Colombia are much to blame for the state of crisis that the labor movement and

workers find themselves in there. Through Plan Colombia, and using the so-called war on drugs as a pretext, the U.S. provided the Colombian state with more than \$12 billion from 2000-2015 in mostly military "aid." These funds went to Colombia's military, which has the worst human rights record in the Western hemisphere, and have served to maintain the ruling elite in power by repressing unions and the political opposition.

Furthermore, in 2012, with workers in Colombia having been bloodied and beaten down with the help of the U.S. government and transnational corporations, the United States entered into a "free trade" agreement with Colombia that harms the interests of workers in both countries. As with other such schemes, the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement allows foreign investors virtually free reign to do as they please in Colombia and enables them to blackmail and hold national governments hostage by threatening to move their capital elsewhere if workers demand more (or basic) rights and a dignified standard of living.

The second thing everyone we met with emphasized was how important international solidarity is for those involved in the labor movement and social struggles in Colombia. In many cases, support from unions and other peoples abroad has saved lives and allowed organizations to survive despite all the challenges. Our delegation allowed workers from the United States to meet (and be greatly inspired by) workers in Colombia and forge bonds that can serve to support one another's struggles in the future. To help ensure continued international delegations and worker-to-worker exchanges, please make a donation to UE's Research and Education Fund by going to <http://www.uerf.org>. The powers that be seek to divide workers in order to conquer the world. Workers should respond by uniting in a common front on a global scale.

*More photos from the delegation are available on the [UE Research and Education Fund Facebook page](#).*



## **Editorial: The social movement is not done with the pension reform and Macron's policy**

This government is deceitful; it lies, cheats and wants to force through a reform, a system of point-based retirement, rejected by a majority of workers, women and men, young and old. Some of E. Macron's supporters worry about his stubbornness and especially the immense anger it has caused. But the oligarchy, which put Macron in place to defend its interests, wants this reform to pass, because it allows it to get its hands on billions directly by impoverishing the pensioners of tomorrow, both public and private. It wants to put an end to what remains of the system of solidarity and intergenerational distribution to push further the individualization and the precariousness of the greatest number.

It is the same logic that is at work when the government and the financiers decide to lower the yield of Livret A [passbook savings accounts] to 0.5%, "a historically low level", below the level of inflation, and that Minister Le Maire encourages small savers, the vast majority of holders of this type of passbook, to turn to individual or corporate "retirement savings plan" put in place before the reform!

It is the same class logic that galvanized Macron when, on the 47th day of a strike against the point-based retirement system, he received in Versailles 200 bosses of the biggest world companies, in order to encourage them to "choose France", which he presents as the land of plenty for investors, thanks to his reforms which have reduced the "social contributions" to almost nothing, set up a legislation and taxation favorable to the employers and who today wants to set up a retirement system inspired by what is "best" from the point of view of capital.

This is why the opposition to the implementation of "point-based retirement system" is part of the larger fight: the fight against a society at the service of the wealthy, big business, investment funds, and the police state which clubbed those who oppose it, this "society that we do not want, and that we are fighting". This is

expressed in multiple ways by more and more workers, strikers and demonstrators participating in the big days of inter-professional mobilizations, whether of public transport (SNCF [French National Railway Company], RATP [Paris public transport system], etc.), education, culture, young high school students, university students, not to forget the retirees.

The bill presented by [Prime Minister] Philippe, which contains 29 orders (!), has been criticized by the Council of State, not on its merits, the principle of point-based retirement, but on the forecasts of financing and other legal and institutional considerations. It is "good enough" for all of us who continue to oppose this reform, but we know that the government has other means to achieve its ends "legally".

The government has undoubtedly lost the battle of public opinion –the majority remain opposed to the reform – and it will certainly be punished during the municipal elections, especially as the cheating of Castaner [currently Minister of the Interior] to try to distort the way of presenting the results in municipalities with less than 9,000 inhabitants has been rebutted.

The strike movement in transport has ended, though it can be restarted, but the rejection of the reform that it brought is still there and it is enriched by new fronts of mobilization, which came together during the days of inter-professional mobilization, and which also have their own dynamics.

The 9th Congress of our party has just taken place during this great social movement, with its effervescence and determination. The struggles of the workers and peoples around the world, on all continents, have also nourished our thinking and determination. Among the aims that we have defined, there is: "transform social anger into consciousness of the need to break with the imperialist capitalist system". We're in the middle of it. This is what we are working on, in today's struggles and mobilizations, and more of us must commit to it.



<https://www.france24.com/es/20200218-rep%C3%BAblica-dominicana-protestas-y-repetici%C3%B3n-de-las-elecciones-municipales-tras-suspensi%C3%B3n-por-falla-t%C3%A9cnica>

## **Dominican Republic: protests and repeat of the municipal elections after suspension due to technical failure**

Andrea Rincón, February 18, 2020, together with EFE [Press Agency of Spain]



Hundreds of young people protest demanding the resignation of the members of the Central Electoral Board (JCE) in front of the agency's headquarters this Monday, in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic). © Orlando Barría, EFE [Sign reads: "Let the people decide"]

The unprecedented interruption of the elections on February 16 in the Dominican Republic due to a "technical failure" led the Central Electoral Board to reschedule the municipal elections for March 15. The decision not only led to protests but also raised suspicions only three months before the presidential elections.

In the streets of Santo Domingo the resignation of all the members of the Central Electoral Board (JCE) was demanded, due to the fiasco of the municipal elections on Sunday. "Where is the democracy?" or "Let the people decide," were some of the signs held by the protesters, who demand answers from the electoral authorities.

On February 16, four hours after the polls opened and when people were lined up to register their vote, the elections were canceled. The authorities alleged that there was a problem in the electronic voting system that was used for the first time in the country. The "technical failure" was that the list of parties or candidates did not appear on the voting machines, which, immediately led

to the rejection and demand of the movements that had disappeared on the virtual ballot.

Although the error occurred only in 18 of the 158 municipalities of the Dominican Republic, including the capital, Santo Domingo, those are precisely the areas that include more than 60% of the citizens qualified to vote.

Therefore, in the midst of the turmoil, the JCE said in a statement that the March vote will be carried out manually. "With this statement, the electoral process remains open at the municipal level in the Dominican Republic... and the candidacies and covenants of alliances or coalitions that were agreed on and approved for the elections of February 16, 2020 are maintained," said the electoral agency.

**What is chosen in these municipal elections and why are they important for the presidential elections?**

In these elections, 158 mayors and vice-mayors will be elected, as well as 1,164 councilors and their alternates, who will take office on April 24 for a period of four years.

About 7.5 million citizens are qualified to vote on this day. The important thing here is that these elections are decisive both for the ruling Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), which together with its allies controls 107 of the 158 mayors, as well as for the opposition Modern Revolutionary Party (PRM), which is in charge of 30, including that of the National District, center of the capital.

The result of these municipal elections will show the pulse for the presidential and legislative ones in May. But with this failure of the municipal ones as precedent,

the Electoral Observation Mission of the Organization of American States met with the president and other political leaders and proposed to hold a "comprehensive audit of the electoral system."

In any case, there is a bitter taste in the air. The electronic system should serve as a trial for the presidential election, but with this precedent, uncertainty is taking hold of the citizens and distrust of the country's electoral institutions is breaking out three months before the presidential elections, raising suspicions about how legitimate and transparent the electoral process will be.

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## **The History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R., in 2 volumes**

These volumes are edited by a similar collective to the one that edited the History of the C.P.S.U.(B.), though they are less strictly ideological. Volume 1 deals with the period from the beginning of World War I to October of 1917. It contains many political details of the period leading up to the revolution. Volume 2 deals with the period of October to November 1917, and includes many details of organizing in the army and navy. It also has dozens of photos, paintings and cartoons.

Volume 1 is 500 pages and sells for \$12. Volume 2 is 700 pages and sells for \$16. Both are available from Red Star Publishers at [www.RedStarPublishers.org](http://www.RedStarPublishers.org), which also allows for free downloads in pdf format.



## **Ecuador: The Indigenous and Popular Uprising, a Victory over Neoliberalism**

By Pablo Miranda

In October of last year, a popular uprising in Ecuador led by indigenous people forced the neo-liberal government of President Moreno to withdraw the counter-reforms imposed by the IMF. This 66 page pamphlet includes dozens of pictures of the uprising. It is available from Red Star Publishers at [www.RedStarPublishers.org](http://www.RedStarPublishers.org), which also allows for a free download in pdf format.



## The people look at socialism as an alternative to capitalism



The ideological-political action of the international bourgeoisie to keep the workers and peoples from the ideas of scientific socialism is enormous, and there is no doubt that it is successful. There is no other way to explain that, despite the fact that every day the material conditions of the people's lives deteriorate, the political actions of the bourgeoisie have the support of millions of people in the world. This in no way ignores the fact that, in the face of this reality, millions of workers, young people and women are standing up all over the world for their rights and demands, against the anti-popular policies of the governments.

There is no doubt that the desire for economic, political and social change is present among most of those who are part of the working classes. For the most advanced sectors of the masses, the need for the revolutionary transformation of society is present in their minds, but not in the rest. We Marxist-Leninists understand that if revolutionary consciousness, socialist consciousness does not exist among the workers and people, they will continue to be victims of the siren songs of the bourgeoisie, their politicians and intellectuals who invent and recreate theories that seek the stability and perma-

nence of capitalism, at the same time as they launch attacks against what socialism and communism really is.

Why do they do this? Undoubtedly, because the sure possibility of the establishment of Marxist-Leninist socialism leads to nightmares in the owners of capital. Some years ago, especially at the end of the 1980s, when the fall of the Berlin Wall took place, the bourgeoisie orchestrated a brutal offensive whose guiding principle was the idea that socialism had failed and that it was buried forever. We Marxist-Leninists said at the time that this phenomenon facing humanity was transitory and that what had happened in the former USSR was not the failure of socialism, but the failure of regimes that had carried out processes for the re-establishment of capitalism, after having betrayed the ideals of socialism-communism.

History has proved us right. Millions of workers in the world once again see socialism as the alternative to capitalism. In the more developed capitalist countries, including the US itself, the ideals of socialism are gaining ground. At the beginning of last year, a survey conducted by the Gallup Company among millennials, the generation born between 1981 and 1996, showed that 51% of young people have a positive view of socialism.



The question of whether these young people are clear about what socialism really is deserves a particular discussion, but the important thing is that even in the capitalist marketplace a large sector of the youth has broken with the taboo on socialism, and have done so because they understand that capitalism does not offer them options of well-being, because this system paints a dark future for those who are not the owners of capital.

This fact leads us to state that for the people to understand what socialism is, they must know what capitalism really is. The bourgeoisie, the intellectuals and the bourgeois politicians call it a society of freedom and democracy, in which individual efforts allow one to accumulate wealth. None of this is true for the overwhelming majority of the people; it is only for a few.

These days in some newspapers information circulated about the salary received by presidents of several countries. Sebastián Piñera, president of Chile, has the highest salary of his counterparts in the region. He receives \$ 15,000 a month, which means he earns 30 times more than a Chilean worker with a basic salary. It is outrageous to know that this is happening, but it remains a minor issue when we observe how wealth is concentrated in a few hands worldwide.

The previous week, Oxfam International announced that in the world there are 2153 billionaires, who have more wealth than 4,600 million people, 60% of the world's population. The number of billionaires has dou-

bled in the last decade, and has taken place at the expense of the exploitation of the collective labor of millions of workers in the world. Individual effort, as can be seen, does not open the vaults of wealth; these are reserved for the owners of capital, for those who exploit and appropriate the labor of others.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, 20% of the population accounts for 83% of the wealth. The number of billionaires in the region has increased from 27 to 104 since 2000. In great contrast, extreme poverty is increasing. In 2019, 66 million people, 10.7% of the population, lived in extreme poverty, according to data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). It is easy to see that the marked social differences are deepening under capitalism and no capitalist "model" has been able to solve this phenomenon, because it is inherent to its own existence.

Let us look at two more facts that uncover the mechanisms of capitalist exploitation. Women and girls dedicate 12.5 billion hours to unpaid care work daily, which is a contribution to the global economy of at least \$10.8 billion dollars a year, a figure that triples the size of the world's industry of technology. Care work has been described by some sectors as the "hidden engine" that keeps economies, businesses and societies running. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 49% of the women employed earn less than the minimum monthly salary for their country.

### **Socialism will put an end to these enormous injustices**

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<https://www.france24.com/es/20200218-rep%C3%BAblica-dominicana-protestas-y-repetici%C3%B3n-de-las-elecciones-municipales-tras-suspensi%C3%B3n-por-falla-t%C3%A9cnica>

### **República Dominicana: protestas y repetición de las elecciones municipales tras suspensión por falla técnica**

Andrea Rincón 18/02/2020, Con EFE [Agencia de prensa de España]



Cientos de jóvenes protestan exigiendo la renuncia de los miembros de la Junta Central Electoral (JCE) frente a la sede del organismo, este lunes, en Santo Domingo (República Dominicana). © Orlando Barría, EFE

La inédita interrupción de la jornada electoral del 16 de febrero en República Dominicana por un "fallo técnico" llevó a la Junta Central Electoral a reprogramar los comicios municipales para el 15 de marzo. La decisión no solo generó protestas sino que elevó las suspicacias a solo tres meses de los comicios presidenciales.

En las calles de Santo Domingo se exige la renuncia de todos los integrantes de la Junta Central Electoral (JCE), por el fiasco de las municipales del domingo. "¿Dónde está la democracia?" o "Dejen que el pueblo decida", fueron algunos de los carteles que levantaron los manifestantes, que exigen respuestas a las autoridades electorales.

El 16 de febrero, pasadas cuatro horas desde que las urnas se abrieron y cuando la gente hacia fila para registrar su voto, los comicios fueron cancelados. Las autoridades alegaron que se había presentado un problema en el sistema de voto electrónico que se utilizaba por vez primera en el país. El "fallo técnico", hizo que no figurara en las máquinas para votar la lista de partidos o candidatos, lo que, de inmediato, generó el rechazo y reclamo de los movimientos desaparecidos en el tarjetón virtual.

Y aunque el error se presentó únicamente en 18 de los 158 municipios de República Dominicana, incluida la capital, Santo Domingo, esas son precisamente las zonas que reúnen a más del 60% de los ciudadanos habilitados para votar.

Por ello, en medio de la agitación, la JCE precisó en un comunicado, que el sufragio de marzo se realizará de manera manual. "Con la presente proclama el proceso

electoral se mantiene abierto en el nivel municipal en la República Dominicana (...) y se mantienen las candidaturas y pactos de alianzas o coaliciones que fueron consensuadas y aprobadas para las elecciones del 16 de febrero de 2020", precisó el ente electoral.

**¿Qué se elige en estas elecciones municipales y por qué son importantes para las presidenciales?**

En estos comicios se elegirá a 158 alcaldes y vicealcaldes además de 1.164 concejales y sus suplentes, que asumirán el cargo el próximo 24 de abril por un periodo de cuatro años.

Para esta jornada están habilitados cerca de 7,5 millones de ciudadanos. Lo importante aquí es que estas elecciones son decisivas tanto para el gobernante Partido de la Liberación Dominicana (PLD), que junto a sus aliados controla 107 de las 158 alcaldías, como para el opositor Partido Revolucionario Moderno (PRM), que está al frente de 30, entre ellas la del Distrito Nacional, centro de la capital.

El resultado de estas municipales medirá el pulso para las presidenciales y legislativas de mayo. Pero con este fallo de las municipales como antecedentes, la Misión de Observación Electoral de la Organización de Estados Americanos se reunió con el presidente y otros líderes políticos y propuso realizar una "auditoría integral al sistema electoral".

En todo caso, queda un sabor amargo en el ambiente. El sistema electrónico debía servir como un ensayo para las presidenciales, pero con este precedente, la incertidumbre se apodera de los ciudadanos y la desconfianza en las instituciones electorales del país estalla a tres meses de las presidenciales, elevando las suspicacias sobre qué tan legítimo y transparente va a ser el proceso electoral.

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De *En Marcha*, Órgano Central del Partido Comunista Marxista-Leninista del Ecuador

## **Los pueblos miran al socialismo como alternativa al capitalismo**

La acción ideológico-política de la burguesía internacional, para apartar a los trabajadores y los pueblos de las ideas del socialismo científico es enorme, y no hay duda que tiene éxito. No de otra manera se explica que, a pesar de que cada día las condiciones materiales de vida de los pueblos se deterioran, sin embargo, las acciones políticas de la burguesía cuentan con el respaldo de millones de personas en el mundo. Esto de ninguna manera desconoce que, también, frente a esa realidad millones de trabajadores, jóvenes, mujeres se levantan en todo el planeta por sus derechos y reivindicaciones, en contra de políticas antipopulares de los gobiernos.



Es indudable además que el anhelo de cambio económico, político y social está presente en la mayoría de quienes forman parte de las clases trabajadoras. Para los sectores más avanzados de las masas, la necesidad de la transformación revolucionaria de la sociedad está presente en sus cabezas, no así en el resto. Los marxista-leninistas entendemos que si la conciencia revolucionaria, la conciencia socialista no está presente entre los trabajadores y el pueblo, estos continuarán siendo víctimas de los cantos de sirena de la burguesía, de sus políticos e intelectuales que inventan y recrean teorías que buscan la estabilidad y permanencia del capitalismo, al tiempo que lanzan una serie de ataques en contra de lo que realmente es el socialismo y el comunismo.

¿Por qué lo hacen? Sin duda, porque la posibilidad cierta de la instauración del socialismo marxista-leninista genera pesadillas en los dueños del capital. Hace algunos años, concretamente a fines de la década de los años 80 del siglo pasado, cuando se produjo la caída del Muro de Berlín, la burguesía orquestó una brutal ofensiva que tuvo como eje rector la idea de que el socialismo había fracasado y que había sido enterrado para siempre. Los marxista-leninistas dijimos entonces que el fenómeno que enfrentaba la humanidad era transitorio y que lo que había ocurrido en la ex URSS no era el fracaso del socialismo, sino el fracaso de regímenes que llevaron adelante procesos de re-instauración del capitalismo, luego de haber traicionado los ideales del socialismo-comunismo.

La historia nos dio la razón. Millones de trabajadores en el mundo vuelven a ver el socialismo como la alternativa ante el capitalismo. En los países capitalistas más desarrollados, incluyendo los mismos EEUU, los ideales del socialismo ganan terreno. A inicios del año pasado, un sondeo realizado por la empresa Gallup entre los *mileniales*, la generación nacida entre los años 1981-1996, arrojó que el 51% de los jóvenes tiene una visión positiva del socialismo. El tema de si esos jóvenes tienen claridad respecto de lo que en realidad es el socialismo merecería un debate particular, pero lo trascendente es que en el emporio capitalista un gran sector de la juventud ha roto con el tabú del socialismo, y lo ha hecho porque entiende que el capitalismo no les brinda opciones de bienestar, porque este sistema pinta un futuro oscuro para quienes no son los dueños del capital.

Este hecho nos lleva a plantear que para que la gente entienda lo que es el socialismo, debe conocer qué es en realidad el capitalismo. La burguesía, los intelectuales y los políticos burgueses lo ponderan como una sociedad

de libertad, democracia y en la que los esfuerzos individuales permiten acumular riqueza. Nada de eso es cierto para la aplastante mayoría de las personas, lo es solo para unos pocos.

En estos días circuló en algunos periódicos una información respecto del sueldo que perciben presidentes de varios países. Sebastián Piñera, presidente de Chile, tiene el sueldo más alto de sus homólogos de la región. Recibe 15 mil dólares al mes, lo que significa gana 30 veces más que un trabajador chileno con salario básico. Es indignante saber que eso ocurre, pero queda como un asunto menor cuando observamos a nivel mundial cómo se encuentra concentrada la riqueza en pocas manos.

La semana anterior, *Oxfam Internacional* dio a conocer que en el mundo existen 2153 milmillonarios que poseen más riqueza que 4.600 millones de personas, esto es un 60% de la población mundial. El número de milmillonarios se ha duplicado en la última década, y ha ocurrido a costa de la explotación del trabajo colectivo de millones de trabajadores en el mundo. El esfuerzo individual, como puede verse, no abre las bóvedas de la riqueza, estas se hallan reservadas para los dueños del capital, para quienes explotan y se apropian del trabajo ajeno.

En América Latina y el Caribe el 20% de la población concentra el 83% de la riqueza. El número de milmillonarios en la región ha pasado de 27 a 104 desde el año 2000. En grave contraste, la pobreza extrema está aumentando. En 2019, 66 millones de personas, es decir, un 10,7% de la población vivía en extrema pobreza, de acuerdo a datos de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). Es fácil deducir que las marcadas diferencias sociales se profundizan en el capitalismo y ningún “modelo” parido por este ha podido ni podrá resolver este fenómeno, porque es consustancial a su propia existencia.

Miremos dos datos más que descubren mecanismos de explotación capitalista. Las mujeres y niñas dedican al trabajo de cuidados no remunerado 12 500 millones de horas diariamente, lo que supone una contribución a la economía global de al menos 10,8 billones de dólares anuales, una cifra que triplica el tamaño de la industria mundial de la tecnología. El trabajo de cuidados ha sido calificado por algunos sectores como el “motor oculto” que mantiene en funcionamiento las economías, empresas y sociedades. En América Latina y el Caribe, el 49% de las mujeres empleadas ganan menos del salario mínimo mensual correspondiente a su país.

**El socialismo se propone poner fin a estas enormes injusticias.**