THE MEANING OF MAY DAY
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For the rest of the world, May Day has a rich cultural and political history. Originating in ancient Roman spring festivals, contemporary May Day customs were developed in the 14th and 15th century in England. A May Day Queen is crowned, children dance around the Maypole, and May Day baskets are exchanged. But even these quaint practices often bleed into working class rebellion, as May Day celebrations often turned raucous and anti-authority in nature, causing the Puritan government under Oliver Cromwell to ban the holiday under the auspices of “pagan influence.” The phrase “to go a-maying” taken from a Robert Herrick carpe diem poem published in 1648, means to be mischievous, to run outside social convention, to reject religious orthodoxy, to entertain ones fancies, and in the case of the poem, throw away the restrictions of a heavily gendered society.

Yet, while May Day in its traditional form does have political contexts and overtones, as all things do, for workers in the United States May Day is something different. Traditional May Day celebrations have always been less prevalent in the States, first because of the staunch protestant and puritan bedrock of the early American colonists, and later because the day become quite explicitly political. For, contrary to the common belief that May Day originated in tanks rolling down Red Square, it was in the United States that May Day become International Workers’ Day. In an 1885 convention in Chicago, Illinois, an alliance of labor groups headed by the AFL declared that the work day should be no longer than 8 hours, effective May 1st, 1886. On that May 1st, 1886, a massive general strike took place that led to the Haymarket Riot in Chicago on May 4th, where police and workers clashed over the right of workers to have “8 hours for what we will.”

Seeing the political power that May Day was quickly gaining given its synthesis of cultural spring festivities and openly anti-capitalist organizing, and after the 1894 May Day Riot in Cleveland, Grover Cleveland and moderate union bosses set the federally recognized Labor Day to its current date, far away from the a-maying rioters, to the first Monday in September.

Thus, for leftists and working class activists in the U.S., May Day is not merely a celebration of labor, the spring, and the red flag. For us, it is a declaration of political independence as workers, from moderate, compromising union leadership, from the political establishment and its holiday in September, and from leftist mentalities that tell us to wait for livable wages, decent housing, education, gender and racial equality, and fulfilling work. On May Day, we shed the Reagantite myths of the corrupt, criminal, and impotent union, and stand proudly beside our union brothers and sisters. We unearth the history of American Communists, civil rights leaders, suffragettes, radical musicians, poets, painters, and writers, who have been thrown in the dustbin of history by triumphalist capitalist historical narratives, or gentrified by the liberal establishment. We march together, across the wide spectrum of left ideologies, arm in arm, if only for the day.

On May Day, ultimately, we say openly that we are proud to be workers. We are not, as Steinbeck said, “temporarily embarrassed capitalists.” Nor must we be made to be middle class people, as reformist unions and democrats tell us, as if there is nothing to be proud of about being a worker, that a bartender can’t run the country, that teachers can’t decide policy. Today we are workers, who work long hours to support ourselves and our families, seek to better ourselves with education, strengthen working class bonds through workplace organization, fight against racist separatism and bigotry that divides us, and enjoy the off time we earn with our labor. And that is enough, more than enough, to demand better treatment, fair wages, and recognition as human beings with passions, interests, and unique perspectives that are worth more than $7.25 an hour. On May Day, we don’t settle for “better thans,” we declare without reservation that bosses should no longer exploit the true-hearted intentions of the workers. Bosses should not make billions off the need and desire of workers to buy textbooks for their children, to seek out an education, to raise children, to have a home they are proud of, or to have a job they enjoy doing.

So when we say today is May Day, that has special meaning for workers in the U.S.. In the heart of the anti-worker and anti-communist beast, we declare ourselves to be proudly both, and recognize the gains we are making politically in our unions, local elections, and in our political parties. On May Day, we celebrate those gains, dream of a future free of wage slavery and all its effects, celebrate and march with our friends, union brothers, and comrades, and on May 2nd, we return to our historical and essential duty to bring those aims to every American worker.

THE MEANING OF MAY DAY

Women workers in the May Day Parade in New York City in 1936. Tom Mooney was a labor activist fraudulently convicted of a bombing, who spent 22 years in jail before being pardoned in 1939.

EDITORIAL - By: A. CASAL

HOW NOT TO FIGHT LIBERALISM

The socialist critique was, basically, best encapsulated by the 19th century French socialist, Anatole France when he wrote “In our glorious republic, all are equally free to beg in the streets and sleep under bridges.” The socialist critique, philosophically, charges Liberalism with not going FAR ENOUGH. Liberalism’s vaunted individual political rights takes no account of social and economic rights, and serves as a smokescreen for capitalist exploitation. Freedom of the press, constitutionalism, and electoral politics puts no food on the table. And someone facing eviction, unemployment, and the fear of not being able to afford to pay for a doctor if they are ill, finds little comfort in the fact that they have a choice of two candidates to vote for.

That’s the socialist critique.

The problem today is that more and more supposed “Leftists” are ignorant of this critique and, in their hatred of Liberalism, are making common ground with reactionaries and fascists who are pursuing a retrograde agenda of anti-semitism and conspiracy theories, and a socio-cultural world view that seeks to place women in the kitchen and LGBTQ+ folks at the end of ropes. In short, there are too many so-called “Leftists” who, in their eagerness to "Combat Liberalism," are abandoning the core Left values of egalitarianism, rationalism, tolerance, and modernity.

Call themselves what they will, mention Debs, Foster, and Newton, as much as they want, and “Combat Liberalism” the live-long day, these people have brown shirts hanging in their closets. And it’s only a matter of time before they go fully over to the other side.
The American Party of Labor sends its firmest solidarity and support to the families of the victims of the fascist massacre at Christchurch, New Zealand, to those wounded, to those survivors suffering with the horrific events, and to all Muslims around the world living in the shadow of fascist Islamophobia.

In this era of escalating fascism, it is essential that all progressive forces avoid the liberal trap propagated by the media that these incidents of fascist murder, from Charleston to Charlottesville to Christchurch, are the product of “lone wolves,” or insufficient gun control. In all of these cases, the murderers were radicalized by an online fascist collective, and nations and cities with strong gun control still see fascist violence.

While liberals propose half measures, the American right wing led by Donald Trump stoke racial, religious, and ethnic strife on a daily basis. Children and immigrant families are brutalized on the American border, Trump endorses open Nazis as “very fine people,” virulently Islamophobic imagery catalyzed by Trump’s campaign was brought to the West Virginia state house and cities across the country by the bigoted ACT for America movement, and the president targets those with disabilities with mockery. Online right wing pundits from Ben Shapiro to Lauren Southern, who routinely target Muslims as “corrupting” western civilization, the very ideology behind this attack, have been quick to wash their hands of responsibility. Economically, public education is under attack, Medicare and Medicaid is facing massive cuts, corporate profits soar and tax rates decline while working class wages decrease and tax rates increase, and the cost of healthcare remains a boundary for many in receiving treatment.

The shooter in New Zealand claimed in his manifesto to be from the working class, his actions in support of working class interests, a defense of working class values. The experience of working people around the world in the 20th and 21st century proves that these fascists serve instead as racial separatists who victimize oppressed nationalities for the benefit of finance capital. Everywhere fascists fight against unions, infiltrate and corrupt them, and oppose campaigns for higher wages and better working conditions. They do not serve the interests of the working class, they coerce working class frustration with liberal capitalism, and seek to turn solidarity between workers into racial, ethnic, and gender hatred in the service of free market capitalist exploitation. The American fascists make “don’t tread on me,” their motto, while supporting the impunity of police officers who murder black Americans, endorsing cuts to healthcare and education, committing murderous atrocities against working class communities, and supporting these atrocities online. Such is the nature of the fascist “working class” politics.

Fascism from its earliest days under Mussolini seeks to divide the working class for the benefit of capital, and to do so, as Georgi Dimitrov argued in his 1935 analysis of the growing fascist movement, with the openly “terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist, and most imperialist elements of finance capital.” Lacking a centralized movement in most countries, fascists have turned to exacting this terrorism, a fundamental aspect of their ideology, as individual terrorists. If their growing international movement, watered by the failure of reformist bourgeois liberalism, attains state power, there can be no doubt that this terrorism will be state sponsored, generalized, and made normative.

With this truth in mind, and with the lives of all those lost to fascism in the 20th century up until this very day in our hearts, progressive forces must renounce the liberal fetization of free speech and advocate, enforce, and fight for no platform for fascists in our towns, cities, and countries. Enough is enough. Fascism is based on an illegal conspiracy to murder and oppress working people, to bring terror and horror to every neighborhood. Those countries that have already suffered the most under fascism, France, Germany, and others, already have laws restricting the free speech of fascists.

As working people, we know the fight against fascist speech is only the beginning of the struggle, particularly given the growth of fascist politics in countries like France and Germany. The true and final answer to the problem of fascism can be seen in the international response to the Christchurch massacre. People of all religions, all nations, all identities, across our differences, must build a movement that supports working people and actively dissolves the boundaries fascist movements seek to create. Already, the Tree of Life Synagogue, itself the victim of a fascist mass shooting, has begun a fundraising campaign to support the victims of the Christchurch massacre, a response from the fundraising Muslim groups did for the Synagogue in the aftermath of the shooting there.

As it was before, so it must be again. During the first fascist scourge of our world in the 20th century, people from around the world, across ideology, religion, ethnicity, race, and culture came together to destroy fascist terrorism. In the Soviet Union, a diverse collection of all the Soviet peoples, men, women, Russian, Ukrainian, Kazak, Armenian, threw down the fascist barbarity that claimed the lives of 20 million Soviet citizens.

We in the American Party of Labor carry the flag and lessons of that first generation of anti-fascists, and the memories of every individual killed in New Zealand, towards the end of destroying all platforms for fascists, and securing a world based on equality, respect, safety, and dignity, with healthcare, housing, jobs, and education for all. To create, in opposition to the corrupt fascist claim to support working class values, an authentic working class movement that makes solidarity, diversity, and camaraderie between all people its core.
The crowd was a diverse collection of anti-war activists. People of various races and religions came together to fight for a common cause. My experiences there certainly challenged the right wing notion that the anti-war movement has historically been constituted only of privileged white, out-of-touch leftists defending tyrannical governments in the so-called third world. There was a large Spanish speaking presence at the rally, and many of the chants were in Spanish.

After a few hours of rallying at Lafayette Park, we finally hit the streets. I lagged toward the tail end of the march. This position also gave me a sense of scale, as I could see a trail of protesters extend far beyond where the eyes could see. The beautiful sunny day also gave us greater visibility. The sun was on our side, but the gusting winds sided with Guaido.

There were many onlookers, many of whom were snapping pictures on their phones. Among them, I could see some scoffing faces, but others seemed to be nodding along with our chants and statements made over our sound systems. Witanek was using his sound system to persuade observers to join in, arguing that’s it’s in all of our interests to resist imperialism. He was not entirely unsuccessful in his efforts.

As the march concluded, we gathered inside of a church and met at an auditorium on the top floor. Here, we listened to a variety of speakers. First on the list was whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, who released the Pentagon Papers which exposed the lies surrounding the Vietnam War. He could not be there is person and instead joined us via live video.

Another speaker was Honduran activist Lucy Pogoada, who blasted the hypocrisy of the US government demanding Venezuela accept American aid, while at the same time refusing to help Honduran refugees. She argued that the United States bears some of the blame for the plight of these refugees, because the Obama Administration helped overthrow their democracy in 2009.

Max Blumenthal also spoke, describing his recent trip to Caracas, and how his own observations contradict the American media narrative. Former Green Party presidential candidate, Jill Stein, joined us by live video. She stressed that imperial aggression against Venezuela is not simply a Trump policy, but part of a bipartisan consensus of Democrats and Republicans.

Among our New Jersey contingency, we had one speaker, Shaka Zulu, of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party. He delivered a powerful speech about the interconnectedness of imperialism, militarism, and racism. He stressed that people power is needed to overcome these problems, and that relying on institutions like Congress and the World Bank is a mistake.

The protest received coverage from media outlets such as RT, Telesur, and The Real News Network. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro even shared a video of the protest on Facebook and thanked protesters for standing up for Venezuelan sovereignty.

Marches like this one are crucial for the anti-war movement. As it currently stands, the movement is much weaker than it was in prior decades. This is largely due to the deception of the Obama Administration and the false perception that the United States was moving away from interventionism. However, leftist thought and anti-war sentiments have been on the rise in recent years. Trust in mainstream media outlets who pedal pro-war propaganda has been eroding. Organizations like NJ Anti-War Agenda are a crucial part of this change.

Despite illusions of its omnipotence, the US government cannot carry out its functions without the consent of the governed. That is why we must take to the streets and resist, particularly in light of the most recent intensification of the US government’s attempt to topple the democratically elected government of Venezuela. To resist this open imperialism is in all of our interests as working class people. The same forces that push an imperialist foreign policy are working against us domestically. They drive white supremacy, deregulation, and austerity. At the same time that factories close down and job prospects disappear, and the social safety net is being slowly stripped away, the US government puts its eyes on oil-rich nations like Venezuela, and seeks to create enmity between international working people. Thus, when we as marchers said “Hands off Venezuela,” we openly acknowledged, as Shaka Zulu argued in his speech, that we face one enemy—and it is not Nicolas Maduro or the Venezuelan people.
STATEMENT OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST COMMUNIST PARTY OF ECUADOR ON THE JULIAN ASSANGE AFFAIR

Translated by MLtranslations.org

To the workers, youth and peoples of Ecuador, to public opinion:

The case of Julian Assange reveals another element of the real nature of the regime of Lenin Moreno, of total submission, of open and covert agreements with the imperialist circles of powers such as Great Britain and the United States, trampling on national sovereignty, human rights and the right of diplomatic asylum for the politically persecuted, and of retaliation against those who oppose government policy.

Indeed, the government has willingly authorized the British police to enter the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to arrest Julian Assange, an Australian hacker who remained in political asylum in the embassy of our country. It is worth remembering that Assange, through his computer portal, published hundreds of messages, communications and emails showing how the United States mainly exerted pressure, plots and diplomatic blackmail to sustain its hegemonic political domination worldwide; that is why he is suffering persecution and serious threats to his life.

Handing over the defenseless hacker to the imperialist authorities effectively violates human rights, the right of asylum, which the government now conceals with the fact that the Australian had breached the protocols, at times when he showed that President Moreno and his family are involved in shady businesses that have been criticized in the country by various sectors of public opinion.

No doubt the government is “rid of a big problem,” as the president stated, yielding meekly to the pressures of the powers, through agreements some of which have been publicly known and others concealed, which show the true nature of this regime.

Rafael Correa immediately sought to make use of the episode to cover his tracks, hypocritically assuming the supposed defense of principles and rights that were grossly violated and trampled upon in his decade-old government. The head of the corrupt Correa mafia does not have either the moral or political stature to appear as the defender of the freedoms and rights which his government attacked.

We, the workers, youth and peoples of Ecuador should better understand through these facts the nature of this government, which is more clearly seen at the service of imperialist interests. We must continue to deepen our unity and organization in order to denounce it and fight it for its anti-popular and anti-national measures.

Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador
April 13, 2019

RAFAEL SURÍ, AN IMPORTANT CUBAN LGBTQ+ ACTIVIST, HAS DIED

By: J. PALAMEDA

Rafael Suri, an important Cuban LGBTQ+ activist has died from illness at the age of only 31.

According to the most recent reports from Cuba, “Rafa was facing a difficult health situation that had become complicated in the last 3 months; therefore he was admitted to the Pedro Kouri Institute of Tropical Medicine (IPK) to undergo a thorough investigation that would result in a diagnosis of his ailment. Unfortunately, time was not in his favor, and he died on the night of March 29.”

Reactions from the CENESEX network and the LGBTQ community were fast coming, with “Activists and friends paying tribute by sharing photos in his company and reaffirming the commitment to continue the work he defended in life.”

Rafa, as he was affectionately known, began his life as an activist very young in his home province of Placeteño. Along with other activists in the Cenesex network, he helped create the movement that is currently fighting for legal equality and recognition for the LGBTQ+ community in Cuba.

It is a movement that has grown substantially and is revolutionizing the place of LGBTQ people in Cuba after years of isolation and mistreatment, something Fidel Castro called a “great injustice” in his autobiography My Life. Every year, CENESEX holds the Cuban Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia, a festival of marches and events across the country, aimed at building the movement for marriage and legal equality for all LGBTQ people.

While the constitutional amendment to legalize gay marriage introduced by Castro Espin was ultimately scrapped, a blow to the movement, sex reassignment surgeries are covered under Cuba’s outstanding national healthcare service, a transgender woman sits on the National Assembly of People’s Power, and Cuba has strong codes against discrimination based on sexual orientation. The new constitution also includes, due to the advocacy of Castro Espin and activists like Rafa, stronger language against discrimination based on gender identity.

Mariela Castro Espin said the following on Rafael Suri’s death:

“It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of Rafael Suri, a young activist from the Community Social Networks linked to CENESEX. We will never forget that emotional encounter with mothers and LGBTQI people during the tenth Cuban Days against Homophobia and Transphobia, in his beloved Placentas. In each one of our achievements he will be present, because the efforts of each activist enhance the collective work we are forging. The family has my sincere condolences.”

While Rafael Suri’s death is a significant blow to the CENESEX network, the robustness of the movement he helped create, that centers itself around community support, sexual education, and material aid, assures his work will continue, and gives LGBTQ activists around the world an example to follow.
Today is March 8, 2019 and today we celebrate International Working Women’s Day. Our enemies derisively ask why this day should be marked, as it seems like on the surface women in the modern United States enjoy the same freedoms as men. Surely the working conditions in the United States are better now than in the past, they say. But they often do not say why these changes occurred over time. The capitalist class has only allowed progress when faced with the danger of their own demise, in moments of radical struggle by women’s rights activists for centuries across the world. There was a time not so long ago that women did not even have the right to vote, and lacked basic legal recourse outside of the control of their husband, from opening a bank account to owning their own property. What won them these rights? The organization of the masses of oppressed women. This is why we celebrate International Working Women’s Day—to celebrate the past, and continue the fight for gender equality today in this era of heightening institutional sexism and bigotry.

Outside of the well established gap in wages between men and women doing the same work, women also suffer under various arbitrary forms of male authority. Even though women have freed themselves from their barbarous mistreatment in eras past as outlined above in a legal sense, women everywhere still feel the effects of these social practices—every single day, in every aspect of their life. In their personal lives, women are still pressured into marriage, still relegated to domesticity, moral purity, and many other Victorian notions. A married woman is also still relegated only a secondary role in the home, and domestic labor equality is a distant dream in most capitalist societies. Most of the time, in addition to her daunting job, she also has to do housekeeping and child rearing chores, as if a man cannot do it himself, as if women also don’t have more important things to do than clean bathrooms and taking their kids to doctor. But this is a paradox. We, women, are considered to be “reproductive machines,” because we are in the central role of nurturing and taking care of children. And working children are the future laborers, they are the ones who will be producing wealth for their bosses in the future.

In their political lives, women face misogynistic law enforcement when seeking justice in sexual assault and domestic abuse cases. One in five American women are raped in their life time, with only one percent of rape cases leading to a felony conviction. Immigrant mothers have their babies ripped from their arms and put into unsafe and inhumane holding facilities. Trans women are denied basic human rights from healthcare to simply being acknowledged by state entities to being written out of school curricula. Even some sectors of the left, which has been and should be the leading edge of the fight against sexism, have protected abusers, delayed in dealing justice, and minimized working women’s voices.

The idea that there is no such thing as patriarchal hegemony and persistent, daunting inequality both in the workplace and on a social level is one of the biggest lies which misogynists seek to normalize. It is normal, even for women themselves sometimes, to think that they are not exploited (as if we don’t have statistics and experience to prove otherwise). Well, that’s only the surface which is usually propagated by reactionaries who try to dismiss any kind of fighting for one’s rights as infantile, irrational outbursts by “liberal” cry babies. Even in their attack on our movement for civil rights, they resort to sexist stereotypes from the 19th century. Women nowadays continue the long and difficult but nevertheless fruitful fight for decent wages, healthcare for themselves and their children, and against discrimination and sexist bigotry. They organize in their workplaces and communities like never before, create beautiful meaningful art for the masses, they attend protests to have their voices heard by the public, and continue to fight for legal equality and justice for abusers, rapists, and gaslighters. The American Party of Labor calls for women to be even more militant in their demands as we move into an era of a more open misogyny from above.

Today it is important to remember that we stand together in solidarity with working women around the world of every race and identity. Let us remember not to be mired in the rhetoric of liberal mudslingers who would divide us. Working women of the world, we have a power greater than we know!

Why We’re Communists on International Women’s Day:

In 1897, a man in the Russian Empire was 3x more likely to be literate than a woman, this disparity was completely eliminated by 1939. Between 1962 and 1964, 40 percent of the chemistry PhD’s awarded in Soviet Russia went to women. At that same time in the United States, that number was five percent. In 2006, that number was still lower than the Soviets’ from the ‘60s.

Women in the Soviet Union were the first to receive paid maternity leave. After the fall of the Soviet Union, women’s wages in the region decreased to a mere 40% of their male counterparts.
A NEW MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANIZATION IN PUERTO RICO, COMUNA ANTILLA, HAS DECLARED ITSELF

By: J. PALAMEDA

The quoted material is from Comuna Antilla's declaration, which is attached at the end of this article.

On February 21st, 2019, a group of students and workers released a statement declaring a new Marxist-Leninist organization in Puerto Rico called Comuna Antilla. The new organization is the product of two years of participation in the International Camp of Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Youth, and is a new development out of the October Brigade group, a “community recovery” initiative that sought to rebuild neighborhoods and lives in the wake of Hurricane Maria. After these struggles, and accumulating “experience and learning” at home and abroad, the group now seeks to elevate their organization and fight for a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist future for Puerto Rico.

Comuna Antilla established in their declaration a dedication to “dialectical and historical materialist analysis,” and, using the Bolshevik method as their “guide,” envision a free Puerto Rico with a communally beneficial planned economy. Comuna Antilla, for these reasons, declared their intention to refuse to collaborate with “colonial judicial entities,” and will not participate in “cosmetic colonial elections.”

The group also underlined their steadfast support and place within the struggles against racism, patriarchy, and colonialism, and for the rights of the disabled, the LGBTQ+ community, women, people of color, and oppressed peoples around the world. In their words, the Puerto Rican experience in recent years demands a “revolutionary organization” that can “take the prosperity that has been denied us.” In the face of American colonialist violence, the Comuna Antilla has declared itself for the purposes of, “closing ranks in the face of our shortcomings and needs,” for “all the working classes of Puerto Rico.”

The American Party of Labor sends its solidarity and best wishes to Comuna Antilla in our shared battle against American imperialism, colonialism, and austerity, and hope the long-standing solidarity between the Puerto Rican and American Communist movements continues towards a revolutionary, collective solution to the problem of American colonialism.

Respect the right of nations to self-determination!

Down with American colonialism in Puerto Rico!

Money for Education, Infrastructure, and Workers, Not Corporations!

Declaration of the Comuna Antilla: (Translated by Red Phoenix Staff)

TO OUR COMRADES:

This serves as a way of presenting the Marxist-Leninist organization, Comuna Antilla. During the last two years a group of university students, workers, and the unemployed have been working on the creation of a political organization with revolutionary principles and positions that serves as an organizing option.

During this two-year period we have focused on learning from revolutionary international models. The participation of this group in the XIV and XV International Camps of Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Youth has been crucial for this task. From these organizational efforts came some of our goals, and during this period the October Brigade was created, an effort focused on community recovery after Hurricane Maria. We thank the collaborators who helped make all these exchanges and efforts possible. So today during this long period of the accumulation of experiences and learning we bring to light the foundation of our organization.

Comuna Antilla is a communist organization, which integrates dialectical and historical materialist analysis for the understanding of capitalist society and its destruction. We accept at this moment the teachings of the Bolshevik Party for its great deeds and also its errors, as a guide for our own actions. We believe that Puerto Rico should be a space led by its popular, working class, in a participative way (participation based on the understanding of the world and our role in it as political entities). For this we believe that Puerto Rico should be independent and enjoy a planned economy in favor of the people. For this reason, we do not collaborate with colonial judicial entities nor do we participate in colonial elections because of their cosmetic role, disinformation, and appeasement of the working and marginalized Puerto Rican classes. We fight for the cessation of political persecution in all parts of the planet and we aspire to internationalize the workers’ struggle for world change.

We humbly present ourselves, expecting only the strengthening of the bonds that lead to victory over the common enemy: colony, capitalism, racism, and patriarchy. It is time to close ranks in the face of our shortcomings and needs. For the working classes of Puerto Rico and the world we call for revolutionary organization. It is time to organize for justice and build a Puerto Rico that is led by its working class. It’s time to take power, it’s time to revolutionize and start thinking collectively. It’s time to take the prosperity that has been denied us.

ONWARDS TO REVOLUTION!

(Our projects: Community Art Workshop (TAC), Jose Rafael “Fefel” Varona Training School)

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER ON PUERTO RICO: AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN (1948)

In 1948, CPUSA National Chairman William Z. Foster visited the island of Puerto Rico. Upon his return, he made the following speech in the form of an open letter to US President Harry Truman.

It was quite in line, Mr. President, with American reactionary resistance to the demands of the Puerto Ricans for the most elementary economic and political reforms that you made your cold-hearted statement that “Too often we had our attention directed towards Puerto Rico’s problems. That cynical remark should haunt you every time you think of Puerto Rico. Overfed American businessmen and tourists go their ways in the island unconcerned over the Puerto Rican people’s woes. And why should they be disturbed in their pleasures? . . . True to the interests of American imperialism, all you had to offer was a petulant complaint that you had heard more than enough about Puerto Rico’s problems. Did not Marie Antoinette reply once in this manner to an impoverished people demanding bread? Remember?

American reactionaries make much of the fact that the Puerto Ricans, after long struggle, were grudgingly granted American citizenship (in 1917) and the right to elect their own Governor (in 1947). But the plain reality is that, hedged about as they are by a colonial type of legal restrictions, the Puerto Rican people now have less political freedom than they had under the Spanish charter of 1897, instituted one year before the American occupation. Our American Declaration of Independence might well have been written to express the complaints and aspirations of Puerto Rico, except that the grievances of the Puerto Rican people are more numerous, more deep-cutting, and more devastating than were those of the American colonists against King George III.

Puerto Rico, a sub-tropical land of eternal summer, is one of the most beautiful islands in the world. It could be a veritable paradise, but American capitalist exploitation has turned it into a green hell for its people. That’s why, in recent years, about 350,000 of its citizens have fled to the United States. . . .

What we should do about this whole Puerto Rican matter, Mr. President, can be said briefly, under three heads. First, there must be unqualified national independence granted to the Puerto Ricans, who are a nation of over 2,000,000 people. Second, we should at once withdraw our military forces from the island. . . . And third, we should make all necessary financial grants to enable the Puerto Rican people to build up an industrial system and a diversified agriculture in the island that will provide them with a developing prosperity. . . But then, I am very well aware, Mr. President, that neither you nor the reactionary Congress will do voluntarily any of these things. To get them done will be the task of the Puerto Rican people and of the growing labor and progressive movement in the United States. The Communist Party will continue to give its full support to this liberation struggle.
DECLARATION BY THE COMUNA ANTILLA (PUERTO RICO) ON VENEZUELA AND HAITI

Whereas, the United States of America has reinforced its colonial presence in Puerto Rico with the increase of military personnel on the island, FBI agents, and the creation of the Fiscal Control Board in 2016. They are now seeking to use the island as a channel for military intervention in Venezuela.

Whereas, the Fiscal Control Board has deprived the people of their rights and essential needs (such as education) since their arrival on the island; it has shown that the U.S. Congress shows no interest in the welfare of Puerto Rican citizens.

WHEREAS, Ricardo Roselló’s government attacks Nicolás Maduro’s government in the media while his own government keeps Isla Nena (Vieques) in inhumane conditions and this is also ignored by Donald Trump himself.

WHEREAS, Ricardo Roselló’s government is rooted in a colony and therefore illegitimate (under international rights and UN agreements).

THEREFORE, we declare ourselves against any intervention by the American nation in Venezuela and any other country.

THEREFORE, even with our ideological differences, we recognize Maduro’s government as one that has been endorsed by the people in national elections.

THEREFORE, we demand that the United States cease using Puerto Rican territory as a military base to carry out attacks or gather intelligence from sister Latin American countries for imperialist profit.

THEREFORE, we demand the cessation of the recruitment of impoverished youths who have been offered no other recourse but to become paid gunmen in the U.S. Army.

THEREFORE, we demand that the forces of oppression headed by the FBI and the CIA in Puerto Rico be withdrawn, given that, contrary to popular opinion, these intelligence forces have shown themselves to be disinterested in acting against the true criminality that has prevailed in this country: that of the political class and the corrupt banker.

THEREFORE, we call for real and revolutionary international solidarity with the Venezuelan people.

We take advantage of this communiqué to denounce also the living conditions suffered today by our Haitian sister people. We request support and information from all parties and related organizations in order to carry out any solidarity and necessary action. We call on the Caribbean peoples to unite in anti-imperialist and antifascist efforts.

ONWARDS TO REVOLUTION!

Translated by Red Phoenix staff
February 25th, 2019

Official Declaration
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Due to the clear interference by the US government in Venezuelan politics, through the use of the territory of Puerto Rico and its people; The General Secretariat and Secretariat for International Relations of Comuna Antilla declare the following:

WHEREAS, President Nicolás Maduro won the last elections (2018) because of a higher turnout than that which elected both Ricardo Roselló in Puerto Rico and Donald Trump himself in the United States of America (both elections in 2016), and equally capitalist governments such as those of Emmanuel Macron in France (2017), Sebastián Piñera in Chile (2017), Mauricio Macri in Argentina (2015).

WHEREAS, the Venezuelan country enjoys a constitution and organization as independent as any other country existing today.

WHEREAS, The United States of America has spearheaded military and soft interventions in Latin American countries for its own benefit throughout history.

WHEREAS, The United States of America blocked the entry of supplies to Puerto Rico from Venezuela and Cuba after Hurricane Maria, in a clear demonstration of its dominant position, and now intends to provide humanitarian aid to Venezuela without the endorsement of the Venezuelan government, as a media strategy with the aim of military infiltration.

WHEREAS, The United States of America has reinforced its colonial presence in Puerto Rico with the increase of military personnel on the island, FBI agents, and the creation of the Fiscal Control Board in 2016. They are now seeking to use the island as a channel for military intervention in Venezuela.

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MONEY, EDUCATION, AND THE FARCE OF JUSTICE

By L. ZORFASS

At the beginning of March, headlines of American newspapers were studded by an announced investigation into the bribing of colleges and universities for admission consideration. It was never a secret that having money increases one’s chances of getting into a good school. Even the most ardent supporters of capitalism and socioeconomic stratification would acknowledge that money is power. America declares the freedom of opportunity as part of its working system and uses the ever-present rhetoric of the American dream. It is being proclaimed that since all are treated equal, the matter of whether one fails or succeeds to get into a particular college is measured only by merit. The system of the ruling class, the capitalist society we all live under, is being called a “meritocracy”. But! The investigation into the 50 people who used their money to get their children into reputable universities not only exemplifies the impossibility of meritocracy under capitalism, but also the very idea that people are chosen to take part of prestigious institutions is based solely on their work. The nature of this investigation also reveals something else, something that the corporate media outlets won’t talk about. It reveals that the ruling class, whose children are “legacy admissions” and have much greater chances of attending the Ivy League than anyone else, remains untouched.

This investigation which exposes the connection between wealth and education on many a person’s lips is quite simple. Following a report from the District Court of Massachusetts, the Department of Justice launched an investigation into the “college admission fraud”. Their findings stated that just over 50 people were guilty of attempting to bribe those with power in college admissions: deans, sports coaches, admissions officers, and the like. The most noted of the 50 were a few Hollywood actors and actresses. Among the others were capitalists of new money, mostly from Silicon Valley.

Those reading this who went through the application process to get into college may remember the stress and exhaustion involved. The hoops that were to be jumped through just for the application to be considered. Since this false meritocracy is officially touted as the system of admissions, competition has become cutthroat. The unethical, vulgar, and brutal system of competition in the market exists for college admissions sometimes even leading to suicide over the stress. That children today have their childhood ripped from them because they have to have activities going back 15 years to put on their college application to give them a competitive edge.

What is the result of all this hard work? To be a number. To be considered only after those with a large pocketbook have laid their claim to admission. No matter how hard a student has worked their entire lives to make it into the school of their dreams, their hard work only has a chance of paying off after the children of the rich are considered. Many applicants aren’t considered at all simply because “the pile of that demographic of student has been reached”. College admission is a game of money, from private donations and from the state of which the rich control.

Of course, one may raise the question that if the Department of Justice is prosecuting these 50 some individuals, is not justice being served? Is not the fraud of college admissions being dealt with by our dominate social and state system?

No. It is not.
The New York City construction worker protest scheduled for 3/15 has been officially cancelled, as CountMeIn leaders announced on March 8th that a deal had been reached. In a statement released on their Facebook and Twitter, CountMeIn leaders stated that abandoning the way of “strife” for a more “peace(ful)” method “is the best for the future of our industry and our unions.” The statement also commended the “commitment of rank and file activist(s) that showed up and made their voices heard.”

The statement received mixed reactions from rank and file members of the movement on the Facebook post announcing the decision, with many commenters stating their dedication to protest on March 15th regardless, and to see a contract that guarantees 100% union labor in opposition to the open shop model creeping into New York City.

A construction worker in the movement shared a statement we publish on the condition of anonymity. In it, the worker praised the journey the CountMeIn movement has undertaken, moving from demonstrations of “fifty people” to “tens of thousands.” The worker declared their trust in “union organizers whom I have seen fight tooth and nail for us, many of whom I was arrested alongside while fighting for the cause.” They expressed their vigilance as well, saying “If the negotiations don’t go as hoped I’ll be ready to hit the streets,” concluding ultimately that the long-term strength and takeaway from the CountMeIn movement has always been “moving together even when we don’t agree on everything.”

As the CountMeIn movement enters a new stage, the construction worker urged fellow CountMeIn activists and labor activists to “never lose sight of the longer war” against open shop and anti-union “rat businesses.” Despite frustration with the recent deal, the worker also underlined how that longer war will be waged by labor veterans who have been “taught... how to think, how to fight, in this struggle.” The full statement is attached below.

“A lot of people are asking me about 3/15. The posts on the official Count Me In page have already said it. But as of now there is no rally occurring on that day. In all my years as an activist I have never seen a movement last so long, sustaining weekly rallies and growing from fifty people to tens of thousands. Because of the power we have shown for a year and a half, Related Companies is now negotiating with the Building Trades. I trust the seasoned organizers whom I have seen fight tooth and nail for us, many of whom I was arrested alongside while fighting for the cause. If the negotiations don’t go as hoped I’ll be ready to hit the streets, but our strength has always been in moving together even when we don’t agree on everything.

The movement to beat back open shop and take back our entire industry from non union employers doesn’t stop with the Hudson Yards; these rat businesses are exploiting non union labor all throughout the outer boroughs, and fighting to take away hard earned rights like prevailing wage, safety rules, etc. The Hudson Yards battle has already taught many of us how to think, how to fight, in this struggle.

We need to be ready to take that energy to wherever this abomination called open shop is. Be ready to fight at a moments notice, but never lose sight of the longer war over one battle.”

We will keep reporting on this struggle as it develops on March 15th and beyond.

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The Birth of Lenin (4/22)

"People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be, until they have learned to seek out the interests of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises."

103rd Anniversary of the Easter Rising (4/24)

"The Cause of Labour is the Cause of Ireland."

The Birth of Alexandra Kollontai (3/31)

"If I have attained something in this world, it was not my personal qualities that originally brought this about. Rather my achievements are only a symbol of the fact that woman, after all, are already on the march to general recognition—Only the fresh revolutionary storms were strong enough to sweep away hoary prejudices against women and only the productive-working people are able to effect the complete equalization and liberation of women by building a new society." - The Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Communist Woman, 1926

The Birth of Vilma Espin: (4/7)

Vilma Espin was born on April 7th, 1930, and has been celebrated for the last few days in Cuba, particularly by Cenesex, a sexual education and LGBTQ rights organization led by Espin’s Daughter, Mariela Castro.

Espin was an early joiner to the July 26th Movement, later abandoning her training and career in chemical engineering to join the rebel army in 1958. She played a key role in several actions in the Sierra Maestra.

She became a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party in 1960, where she served until her death in 2007. She led the Federation of Cuban Women, and successfully advocated for the world’s first domestic labor equality law.

Remembering Allison Krause (4/23)

ALLISON KRAUSE (04-23-51 to 05-04-70)
Murdered by Ohio Army National Guard, Kent State University.

Assassination of Emiliano Zapata (4/10)

"The land belongs to those who work it with their hands."

"I want to die a slave to principles. Not to men."
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.

Legalize Workers - No More Detentions, No More Deportations, Abolish ICE!
Guaranteed Work and a Livable Income!
Socialized Healthcare For All!
Nationalized Healthcare!
Free Education For All!
Equal Rights, Pay, and Housing For All!
End All Wars of Aggression!
Abolish Private Prisons, Free All Political Prisoners!
No Platform for Fascists!
Abolish Profit Made By The Exploitation of Labor!

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Labor donated.

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 restructuring 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 Soviet 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.

If you tremble with indignation at every injustice, then you are a comrade of mine.
- Che Guevara

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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 the 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 of labor power by consumers has only their labor power to sell for their daily sustenance, therefore making 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 serves as 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 colonialist 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 under neocolonial 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 Marxist-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 subsistence 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.