By: X. STEPHENS

On a rainy, dreary day, dozens and dozens of teachers, and other workers in solidarity from 3 or more counties lined the streets of the capital and stood outside of the capitol building demanding better wages and conditions. Several speakers, including teachers and union representatives spoke passionately about what was going on with respect to the plight of the teaching force within West Virginia to abandon the blackboards and join the pickets. To answer this and provide a comprehensive look at this situation we must go back to the teacher strike of 1990 which shutdown 47 of West Virginia’s 55 counties for 11 days.

The year was 1990, the month was May and starting on the 6th, the familiar call of “STRIKE!” reverberated through these mountains once more. The teaching force, as represented by 47 counties, announced they were going on strike, prompting the then Governor and the West Virginia legislature to declare the action “illegal” and threaten the striking teachers with sanctions in the form of suspensions (without pay), outright dismissal and or the charging of teachers with misdemeanor crimes. Then-Attorney General Roger Tompkins while speaking to then-State Superintendent Hank Makorie, stated “There is no right to strike against the state. Thus, any strike or concerted work stoppage by public teachers of this state is illegal.”

The primary point of contention between the superintendents and state legislature and the teachers and public employees were wages; the West Virginia Education Association, which represented 16,000 of the state’s 22,000 public school teachers, quoted data from that time the average wages for teachers were $21,904, ahead of only nurses and other public employees; the West Virginia Education Association which we’re now seeing where there are 700 teaching vacancies all throughout the state. Additionally, on West Virginia teachers, public employees and so on do not have the same collective bargaining rights comparative to other states and very few trade unions providing representation.

Which leads up to the strike of 2018 - what caused teachers in all 55 counties to go on strike for 11 days and shut down the state? We see here again disputes between the teachers and public employees over wage raise percentages and better conditions and the state legislature and governor. By now a very familiar pattern continues on with Republican lawmakers continuously ranting and raving about how the state of West Virginia couldn’t possibly pay for any increased wages for teachers and public employees because the state “simply doesn’t have the money.” Mainstream media outlets while trying to provide a “fair and balanced” account of a story none of them actually care about, have parroted these narratives with no further explanation as to how, this could be or why this could be. The reason being that the state has, from strike to strike continuously drained the state coffers of public funding due to tax cuts for the corporations, businesses and the affluent at the expense of the ultimate West Virginian worker. Despite state legislature promises of a raised wages the cost of the teachers health insurance, PEIA or Public Employee Insurance Agency, would not only cancel out said wage increase but would also leave teachers in the negative effectively paying to teach. Several teachers throughout the pre-strike demonstrations talked about how they would work 2 to 3 jobs throughout the summer just to be able to get through another year of teaching. Again the state legislature would then again the teachers and again an ultimate agreement between the state and teachers would be reached with another wage increase of 5%.

Closely following this communication workers working for the largest cable company in the state have gone on strike, also demanding higher wages and better conditions. In response the Frontier company, according to the Charleston Gazette-Mail, had petitioned the Kanawha Circuit Court for an injunction to force the striking workers to return to work labeling the strike “rampant and unlawful behavior.” Through this verbiage we can see a continuance of these corporatizations of the working class to pursue our class interests. These policies/policy changes/policy terminations have come in the form reducing the corporate income tax from 9 to 6.5% starting from 2006 to date, the reduction of the groceries tax from 6% to 3% before stripping the tax all together, stripping of the corporate charter tax, alternative minimum tax, increased homestead exemption, and so on. Piece by piece, tax by tax, a bi-partisan (and I do stress, BI-PARTISAN here) picked away at virtually every tax policy in the state until the state went completely, and very literally bankrupt and to who’s benefit was all this done? Did any worker legitimately benefit from any of this? Or was this all for the benefit of the state and federal managerial-capitalist class and their transnational, corporate partners?

Learning from these very clear lessons, both with respect to the entire history of labor struggle within the state of West Virginia and within the last 2 or 3 decades in particular, the limitations for qualitative change from the political establishment is glaringly clear. We have no choice but to continuously push for radical change and continued organization among the working class to pursue our class interests because it has been demonstrated by all parties and personailities within the liberal parties and administrations that the plight of the West Virginia worker is of no concern and the state is nothing more than a point of resource and wealth extraction by members of the American managerial-capitalist class, within and without the state, as well the transnational corporate entities. Now, more than ever, workers must push forward to the revolution.

West Virginia more competitive with other states.” In effect this has no equaled to any measurable increase in business either coming to or continuing to operate within the state but rather has been exclusively observed to equate to the private wealth accumulation of political-financial leaders - nothing more, most of whom do not even reside in West Virginia and lives elsewhere.

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Beyond Boots and Bandanas:

By: M. PETRUCCELLI

Anti-fascism is not a particular organization or a group. It is an ideological position, and one which must be carried out in practice to be more than it has been in the past. We engage in street confrontations and counter-protests because, as you will hear often if you hang around anti-fascists, “we can never let fascists have the streets.” This is an absolutely correct thing to do, and under no circumstances should we see the fascists as an enemy to be endured or engaged in a public, outnumbering them, and forcing them to either engage us or hide behind a police line. There is no need to espouse the uselessness of this tactic, but we have to understand what fascism is and how to fight it before it reaches the point where we must engage with them in the streets. What fascism is and what it is not are key aspects of understanding and combating fascism.

There are many people defining fascism and attempting to obscure the class Basis of it. The most hostile and chauvinistic elements of the bourgeoisie against the working class is the most important. The tradition of combating fascism in the streets has always been a part of what must be done, from union battles against the American Legion [2], and that most distinctly American historical fascist group, the Pinkerton thugs [3] and their related organizations. We have traveled across the world to stop fascists whenever they arise, and we will not be stopped. But, we must also move to new methods.

Fascist organizations and youth rely on the harsh individualism of capitalism, the brutal reality of being alone in a society. They recruit from the proletariat and the lumpen to ensure that they have not just a base, but also loyal foot soldiers to serve bourgeois interests. They don’t care for these people, and would gladly throw them in front of a bullet to cover their own skins, often play acting courage and in the heat of the moment showing themselves. They prove themselves to be bosses, as they always were, and not leaders as we must be. They stand behind a police line giving orders and making speeches while their foot soldiers get routed again and again across the country. They know that this manipulation will continue to work because they promise something that was denied under capitalism.

Community, and this, my dearest comrades, is where our battle with fascism must begin, the streets are the final line. When they feel bold enough to take the streets, we must be bold enough to throw them back, but this is the last line of defense. We have to go beyond the boots and bandana method, incorporate it, and prepare to utilize it when necessary. But first, we have to absolutely begin by building communities. We have to build neighborhoods and cities that are inimical to fascism not because they are solidly proletarian, after all, our class has been turned against itself before, but because it is a place where people are not isolated. Where people do not have to go seeking community and finding fascists with open arms looking to welcome them. Modeling ourselves after the old left, and using the legacies of their legacy from the new left, the Black Panther Party we must strive to make this community programs both accessible and driven by needs which exist in our community. 

We have proven time and time again that we outnumber them [5], that we are stranger than them in the streets, but we must counter-recruit. Every time we manage to remove a member from the fascist ranks and return him to a staunch defender of his class and our communities we have won a victory. After all, Sun Tzu told us two things. The first, “Supreme excellence consists of breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting.” This is the goal and obligation of anti-fascists as a whole. This is what the whole thing is about. We will break them before we ever take them to the streets, we will not risk ourselves and our bodies. If we are forced to the streets we will dominate but the objective is to avoid dangerous street battles. The second, and the only argument necessary for counter-recruitment, “a wise general makes a point of foraging on the enemy. One cartload of the enemy’s provisions is equivalent to twenty of one’s own, and likewise a single picul of his provender is equivalent to twenty from one’s own store.” [6] We will no longer be forced to fight fascists in a way that is narrowly devoted to street battles and displays of strength, after all, we don’t want them to know how strong we are ever. Instead we will make neighborhoods where they have no connection, no pull, an no way to recruit. We will make neighborhoods where every anti-fascist can meet them in the streets when we must, but also know that our community will have our backs during the battle.

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WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT?

By: L. ZORFASS

For most reading this, the resistance to the invasion of Iraq will be in fresh memory. In 2003, a new anti-war movement had spawned in response to the invasion of Iraq. Beginning 15 years ago thousands took to the streets weekly to protest the invasion. Due to the resistance this precluded against the then current administration bred a certain acceptance of radical politics. The invasion of Iraq was so viciously condemned that it was an exorbitant amount of open and harsh criticism. All around the country, it felt like dissent was around every corner and so was the encouragement to embrace heterodox politics. Ten years later, this massive movement which gathered such a regular abundance of the citizenry is gone. There is still American military presence in Iraq. Attacks on foreign lands have only increased since the Bush years. Foreign intervention remains as strong as ever but also more supported than ever, even when the call for interventions are usually based on deception and outright falsehoods. So we have to ask, where did the anti-war movement go? Should it not have grown under these conditions? Perhaps we even have to ask if there was an anti-war movement at all.

At 17, 10 years ago, I was young angry naive radical-minded youth but hopeful and optimistic. I came from poor working-class parents. My father was a construction worker while my mother sold beds at a mall. For the most part, the only Jew where I lived in Virginia. These two things combined made me quite the outcast during those youthful years as many of my peers were the upper-middle-class children of Christian military officers, FBI and CIA agents, and other higher-ups in the Washington D.C. bureaucracy. But I digress. I was just coming into radicalism and serious political reading. Before I had been very into the Beatnik movement, Abbie Hoffman, and the Yippies. It was around 17 that I had begun reading Noam Chomsky and Cornell West. I had not yet begun to understand the world scientifically, that is to say as a Marxist-Leninist but I knew I was radical on the left. The war was disgusting. Poverty and homelessness often brought me to tears. Not to mention my own scars of working-class life. It was also this time that I began to take up political actions which, in those days, were aplenty.

Living so close to Washington D.C. meant demonstrations all the time against the war. The climate was invigorating. Not only had I found myself surrounded by anti-war protesters but there was a radical feeling to it all. While many of the people who attended these rallies and marches were Democrats the connection between the war and profits were abound. Many will recall slogans like, “No Blood For Oil”. The industrial-war machine itself was being brought into question. To me, this coincided with the anti-capitalist literature I had been reading. As far as I was concerned the anti-war movement also meant anti-capitalism, it meant standing against the state apparatus that had built around capitalism as this state lied to the American people to go to war. As far as I was concerned the people who I stood side by side with so many times, who I saw get arrested, who were willing to give anything to fight against the war would always stand against the Iraq war and all wars the United States may take up in the future. I was proven wrong on both assumptions by the Obama presidency.

It was a funny thing when Obama got elected. The Iraq war never ended even though Obama had assured his voters on the campaign trail that it was at the top of his agenda to do so. The withdrawal of troops did happen in 2011. However, 4,000-5,000 defense contractors remained and three consulates with a staff 1,000 remained. The war continued to be fought on the ground not by US troops, but by private hired ones. Throughout the Obama presidency, as commander-in-chief, Obama dropped 12,095 bombs on Iraq. The had been ended but greatly privatized. The war was privatized to the same military-industrial complex that hundreds of thousands had been protesting during the Bush presidency. The anti-war protests, surely, were to continue given these conditions, right?

Wrong.

The hundreds of thousands who came out almost weekly to protest the Iraq war decided to stay home during the Obama years. When Obama began drone bombing Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Afghanistan the liberals decided that it was sad that people were getting bombed, thousands as a matter of fact, but that it was okay enough to stay in and rarely if ever mention it. “No Blood For Oil” now meant “out of sight, out of mind”. Now that this symbol, Obama, was the one doing the war-making, it was okay. The war was now a war by the Democrats. Instead of emails of upcoming rallies against the war or private war machine I received emails from Democrat fundraiser and Obama speech parties. Millions did not take to the streets when it was revealed through leaked documents that Obama and Hillary Clinton as secretary of state had lied to the American people about going into Libya. Gadaffi was planning no genocide against his own people. The reason for the utter destruction of Libya was because a Pan-African currency was being planned, using Libya’s massive gold reserves to back it up. When this information came to light during the end of the Obama presidency, which paralleled Hillary Clinton’s run for presidential office, most of those who stood ten years ago when the Bush administration took the same course of action to get into Iraq stayed home and continued support for Obama and Clinton.

While information on the tens of millions of dollars going into the destabilization of Venezuela came to light the liberals stayed home. When the Obama administration tried to coup Venezuela, the liberals stayed home. When Clinton oversaw the coup of Honduras, the liberals stayed home. The same liberal stance against war was against profit for profit that motivates it was now cheering it. American imperialism meant liberation, the intervention was to be a savior, and war could be very necessary. Now, as we live through the hell that is the Trump government, the liberals continue to support war and capitalism. Sure, the liberals will come out to march against Trump but, they do not march against the continuing and growing rate of drone attacks. They do not come out in the streets against the billions of arms sold to Saudi Arabia, a country leading a genocide against Yemen with those very weapons. Many liberals are near cheering, if not cheering completely, for a war against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The Obama years created a platform of normalized warfare for liberals, progressives, and other backhanded dealers.

Throughout all the Obama years, and now during the Trump years, the group of people in the United States who are always coming out to the streets against U.S. imperialism have been communists and workers. It was the communists who organized protests outside of the U.N., in D.C. and in cities across the country protesting the wars against Libya, Syria, and all other countries being destroyed by U.S. imperialism. When Obama came to speak at a Rutgers University graduation ceremony, the thralls of students who came out to protest Condoleezza Rice did not come out to protest Obama but cheered the invitation. It was only communists, The All Marxist-Leninist Union and the Paul Robeson/NJ Division of the American Party Labor who were to protest the imperialist speech. It has been the communists who face social ostracisation for defending the states and innocents destroyed by U.S. imperialism. It is the communists that protest the politicians who the politicians who call for war on behalf of the profits of the capitalist class, the ruling class. It has been the communists who protest and organize against the capitalist system that demands ever growing markets and profits, that demands war and imperialist conquest to fulfill this search of profits.

The liberals who once seemed so radical, left-wing, and revolution-mind now appear as pro-gay marriage neo-cons. Many defend the current neo-nazi movement that the United States has cultivated for itself. Imperialism has become massively supported. Like the neo-cons under the Bush years, the liberals now tote of imperialism bringing freedom and liberation. This is because the liberals, who now claim to resist Trump, have always been reactionary and bourgeois minded. The anti-war movement of the Bush years was just a tactic for a Democratic victory in 2008. For the liberals, this may as well be a sports game.

But the communists stand strong against capitalism and imperialism. The communist numbers are growing. While the 17-year-old me who marched with liberals so many times over may never understand that I have studied the science of Marxism-Leninism and adopted it, that I will defend Stalin, or refuse pacifism, that 17-year-old would understand one thing: that imperialist war must be fought and brought to an end. To end it we must fight capitalism. And to end capitalism means standing against the Democrats and Republicans equally. It means fighting capitalism and imperialism to no matter what the political sitting in the Presidents seat. It means we need a party, as the so-called “anti-war” movement proved nothing more than a spontaneous advertisement for the Democrats.

We will not die for profits. We will not let others die for profits. We will always stand against imperialism. We will always stand against capitalism. We will organize. We will fight. We will win.
By: Q. Stafa

The following article expands on an earlier editorial written in the Red Phoenix nearly 6 years ago. In light of the recent white supremacist terrorist attack that claimed multiple lives in Parkland, Florida, it has become clear that further exploration on the subject of gun ownership in the United States is necessary.

The topic of “gun control laws” has become something of a grim and monotonous conversation in the United States. There is a practiced rhythm to the discussion, a waltz of rival idealisms stepping in sync through the same tired platitudes. On nearly every side of the discussion, including much of the radical Left, there is an unwillingness to engage on the subject in a concrete and material way. Because of this, progress has come despite theorizing and political development, and not because of it. It is my hope to better examine the material reality of firearms ownership and gun control laws in the United States with this piece.

At its most liberal ends, the gun ownership debate is largely framed through the lens of public safety against individual rights. Our piece here (link to piece) discusses the fundamental issues with the way liberals conceive of the struggle. The long and short of it is that the presentation is equally disingenuous on both ends. We know that public safety and health are more endangered by capitalism then by firearms. It is the social alienation and toxic masculinity that runs unrestricted in capitalism that encourages mass murder, and firearms are a simple and relatively effective means of carrying out that task. We also find hypocritical presentation is equally disingenuous on both ends. We know that public safety and health are more endangered by capitalism then by firearms. It is the social alienation and toxic masculinity that runs unrestricted in capitalism that encourages mass murder, and firearms are a simple and relatively effective means of carrying out that task. We also find hypocritical

The numerous contradictions in these positions have been covered by a great many Leftist publications. There is thus no need to hash them out here. What is actually needed is a way for the Left to discuss the legitimate concerns of the masses which the liberals manipulate with their discussion. Because without concrete solutions or methods of analysis, vague promises of violent revolution come off as no less like empty promises.

The Historical Alternative:

As Communists who proudly uphold the legacy of Comrade Enver Hoxha and the People’s Socialist Republic of Albania, our ideological forbears are a natural starting point for understanding the *correct* implementation of firearm policy. In socialist Albania, firearm ownership was not a right. It was an obligation. Nearly every home was given a firearm, and for reasons closely tied to the infamous so-called “bunkers” which dot the landscape of Albania.

The reasons for this were deeply political. Tiny Albania was an ideological powerhouse, but most certainly not a military or economic one. External military threats were a constant concern for the people of Albania. The Titoite revisionist clique in Yugoslavia were always eyeing Albanian land for an opportunity to expand and weaken their rivals. When Albania rose to challenge both Soviet social imperialism and Chinese social imperialism, it found itself in the cross hairs of the world’s most prominent military powers.

The solution to their primary weaknesses, the size of their economy relative to their enemies and their ability to manufacture weapons, was compensated for by relying on Albania’s greatest strength; its people and their political unity. By the mid 1960’s, Albania had abolished military ranks in its army. This was done in lock-step with its ongoing program to arm the populace as part of a broader effort to make the people and army one. The “bunkers” were no less a part of this project. Should invasion come from any of their numerous enemies, comrade Hoxha worked hard to prepare every citizen for self-defense and the defense of the nation.

Those less versed in Albanian history may find it surprising, however, that this campaign was carried out in a nation which, much like the United States, was at the time struggling with a culture of violent misogyny, toxic masculinity, and an unhealthy attraction to violence. Socialist Albania waged a long cultural campaign against its infamous “blood feuds,” the institutionalized reprisal violence which led to bloody spirals of murder. Revenge killings were seen as almost a pillar of Albanian justice in many places.

It was under the leadership of Comrade Hoxha that socialist Albania made tremendous headway in struggling against the blood feud practice. And this was due in no small part to the complete understanding of the blood feud phenomenon as a toxic part of Albanian culture, rather than reducing it to the issue of firearm ownership. Political education and correct political practice erased the roots of backwardness which encouraged the practice. The position of women in society was elevated. Women were brought into the workforce, men were ordered to do more domestic chores, social responsibility and the needs of the revolution were emphasized in day-to-day politics.

The active arming of the masses played into this. What the Albanian Party of Labor understood was that firearm ownership was not in contradiction with the health and safety of the people. Quite to the contrary, with so many enemies surrounding it, the spread of firearms was an integral part of building that safety. With this perspective in mind, socialist Albania turned firearm ownership into a vehicle for understanding civil responsibility and the interconnectedness of the working masses in socialist society. It was no longer rival clans building stockpiles. The Albanian working class were one, relying upon one another as comrades to defend themselves, their communities, and their revolution.

**Unlimited Ownership?**

Seeing this model presents interesting questions about some of the nuances with respect to gun control legislation. It’s become increasingly fashionable for factions of liberals to advocate for “common sense gun ownership laws” to restrict their access. The debate moves away from the “furthest ends” of the liberal ideological spectrum and into a debate about details and particulars that are most often resolved as patchwork laws passed at varying levels of government with varying restrictions.

The discourse is primarily divided into the camp concerned with things like gang violence and homicides relating to “economically motivated” crimes, and the mass shooting phenomenon. The former produces liberal-dominated discussions about economic progress and the need to “lift communities out of poverty,” a process we know is impossible under capitalism. The latter uses opportunistic to blame military, contributing to unhealthy stigmas our society already has towards mental health in general.

The results speak poorly of these unguided efforts to control firearms. Despite restrictive gun laws in Chicago, the inconsistent application across the state has resulted in more movement of arms across state lines and into the sections of “Chiraq” where firearm violence is most prevalent. The result is very little change in terms of firearm violence over time and further meandering conversations about drafting “better legislation.”

By contrast, Socialist Albania took a very different view of gun ownership and its regulation. Because it was not a “right,” the views of “earning” the privilege of gun ownership did not exist. Instead, it was a responsibility. Military training, usually held yearly, was a part of every Albanian citizen’s life. The training was to prepare the Albanian people for defense of the homeland and covered not only the mechanics of firearm usage and ownership, but its political aspect as well. Thus, the Albanian Party of Labor “regulated” responsible firearm ownership in a way that empowered and elevated the people rather than selecting those “worthy.”

This begs the question; if socialist Albania established a system that regulated firearms and ensured a level of responsibility, is such a system needed or desirable in the United States?

**Understanding the Principle Contradiction**

With all this in mind, we can review gun ownership issues in the Unit

In contemporary US society, guns typically represent a few key interests. Discarding for a minute the hobbyist shooters, the discussion around guns typically centers around self-defense and poverty. In both cases, the issue of firearms is one of power.

In places where poverty is rampant, firearms are one of the most accessible forms of power for those who are disenfranchised. Because firearms are material, real assets, they can be bartered and traded. That produces an incentive to distribute power. The gun seller wants to empower whoever wants to get the gun because they receive money in return for empowering the buyer. With access to an immediate form of power, those whose livelihoods are threatened by a system they are powerless to change suddenly have a form of power over others. They can then leverage that power to secure their material needs.

Where such exercise of individualist power is common, the response is usually to arm up in equal measure to protect one’s self. If robberies are common where you live, arming yourself is understood as a natural response to the need to protect yourself. But the same characteristics of firearms that make them desirable are still at play. There is a sizable chunk of evidence to suggest that households with more firearms are more likely to be robbed. More assets that create individualist power are a natural attraction, as they can either build up one’s own personal power or be traded for money.

At its core, the problem remains individualist. It’s about people who have no power that feel they need to hold on to whatever power they can. And this remains true for both the perpetrators of economic crimes and its victims, who are often rendered powerless by capitalist society.

With respect to mass shootings, the issue of individualist power is at the heart of the phenomenon as well. The motivations of mass shooters are somewhat varied, but there are several...
common threads which tie them together. They are predominantly white and entirely male. Anti-social behavior is quite common, as is a fiercely individualist outlook.

More interestingly, the divergences say more about the political orientation of the phenomenon than about specific communalities. Yes, there were all white males. But the Columbine shooters and Sandy Hook didn’t openly espouse white supremacy the same way Anders Breivik or Nikolas Cruz did. And yet the tactics used by the “apolitical” school shooters would find themselves discussed as legitimate tactics by figures on the far right such as Tom Metzger and James Mason. Thus we see that fierce individualism is something catalyzed within the far right, which is inherently opposed to the collectivist views of the radical Left. It becomes self-evident here that the concerns over mental illness downplays one of the major issues of liberalism with respect to the gun ownershipe debate. Namely that it is primarily being employed to defend individualism, the true culprit.

The First Steps

Understanding the necessity for a collectivist view of gun ownershipe sheds light on the issues and gives us the ground to correctly analyze the options currently presented to us. Are there “common sense gun laws”? What does that term mean in contemporary US society? Can it be achieved?

In theory, yes there are “gun control laws” which could dramatically reduce the incidences of violence in the US. But as it stands, the US is unequipped to deal with them. The US legal system with respect to firearms, at the moment, recognizes only a few sets of distinctions; legal kinds of firearms, legal kinds of ammo, and qualifications for ownership. The qualifications for ownership proposed center around things like mental health and criminal background checks. The issue of mental health has already been discussed as a political red herring. The criminal background checks produce a different kind of problem. Namely, that criminal background check requirements do not deal with the political content of the crimes as we understand them.

By this we mean that usually firearm ownership is controlled by vulgar, simple criminal viola tion classifications. Felons can’t own guns, for instance. The felonies themselves don’t matter. Rarely are specific kinds of crimes targeted for firearm ownership bans. This is a problem for anyone who wishes to organize against the state. There is a very fine line of political con venience between “resisting arrest” and “assaulting an officer,” and the difference in many states determines whether or not you are legally allowed to carry a firearm. The radical Left is then at something of a disadvantage under the current legal system.

In reality, if we wanted to ban firearms we would want specifically to look at the kinds of criminal infringements and pass judgments on those grounds. We would want to target those guilty of hate crimes and prevent them from owning firearms. We would want to target racists and domestic abusers from owning firearms.

But the means to achieve this do not exist in the United States. Our criteria, the criteria which would explicitly target certain groups of people with certain ideologies, is directly at odds with the liberal system and what it represents. They would rather distort free speech to mean allowing any ideology to be expressed, however dangerous it may be to public safety. It bears repeating that according to liberalism, mental illness is sufficient grounds for not allowing firearms usage. The liberals too have particular targets in mind when it comes to disenfran chising rights. The difference is our targets actually are perpetrators of violence, unlike the mentally ill.

Additionally, the issue of power remains one of the major motivators of crime. As the capitalist system is the leading driver of disenfranchisement and poverty, it stands to reason that any amount of effort spent trying to pass laws which the system itself is opposed to would also not address deeper needs of the people. The needs which drive them to violent crime in the first place.

In short, while there are some firearm control regulations that in theory would control violence, none of the ones that could be implemented in the United States would actually improve our situation. The primary motivators remain. The perpetrators of the worst violent crimes will find new, more insidious means of achieving their goals, whether it’s driving cars into protests, bombing buildings, or stabbing. All of which have tremendous precedence in the United States.

The Real Politics of Firearms

The sensible politics of Left policy towards firearms begins with understanding what the US Left is capable of. In this instance, we have no means of realistically initiating a national fire arms policy or understanding what a collective view looks like at the national level. Simply put, the United States is far too individualist, and the radical/collectivist Left too fragmented, to enact sweeping change.

Nor can gun policy simply be ignored. The pervasive culture of violence in our society is a concrete factor of life. The frequency of mass shootings, the prevalence of gun violence in poor and working class communities, and the realities of police violence and police brutality make ignoring guns idealistic and outright lethal.

Instead, we succeed by subverting firearms to the cause of transforming people from individ ualists to collectivists. This is done at the individual collective level, which is where gun policy must be created and enforced. Each collective, having engaged in the task of working alongside the masses and understanding their needs, can begin to understand what role firearms and individualism both play in their immediate community. From there, the collective can take stock of their own capabilities and start to establish policies in their own work that demonstrate collectivist implementation of firearm ownership, if relevant.

What this looks like differs from place to place. This speaks to both the nature of the struggles the collective is engaged in and the material conditions already present wherever they work. For instance, gun policy for Chicago collectives will have a very different character than gun policy for collectives in rural Texas.

The trick, however, is not to let gun policy drive politics. The correct line is to let the material conditions and needs of the masses guide the collective’s view on firearms.

For example, in places where violence between members of the masses is more common, collectives need to establish what role their mass orgs play in combating the conditions that lead to violence. If their mass work programs lead to initiatives that combat drug addiction, the collective needs to examine and understand the role of firearms in their work. Are they treating people who rely on firearms to acquire or sell drugs? Are they operating in places where gun violence is more common? Are they protecting victims of violence at the hands of addicts? These factors all require a deep understanding of the collective’s resources and will begin to shape what kinds of policy the collective needs to enact with respect to firearms.

Material reality and the needs of the masses, however, should not be conflated with “what sections of the masses feel about guns.” Tailism begins where Leftists organize their firearms around liberal political sensibilities instead of the objective material conditions of their work. This can create sites of struggle at times where feelings are particularly strong, such as places where recent shootings occurred.

And struggle can often go both ways. In one example, a Leftist collective may organize in an area where mental illness is known to be widespread, or have received threats of violence from Fascists. If the collective has sufficient experience and is prepared to use force, firearms may be a necessary form of deterrent against the threat of violence from Fascists. Though this may result in some struggle with some sections of the masses, it is a necessary struggle. Ignoring the material reality of the threat of Fascism only gives the Fascists a material advantage which could kill innocent people, the very thing which motivated liberals to push against open firearms in the first place.

By contrast, in areas where firearms violence is pervasive, collectives may have to create safe spaces where individuals are not allowed to enter with firearms. In this case, the safety of the masses is also primary, and may result in struggle from sections of the masses who feel they need firearms on their person to keep themselves safe.

In both instances, struggle is won and unity is achieved with a proper collectivist position. To appeal to their individualism is to concede principle, and thus failing in your primary goal of developing a collectivist method of analysis.

These struggles can build up on further struggles to continue to build and foster a collectivist understanding and analysis among the masses. With safe spaces established, with the masses defended against the most egregious possible sources of violence, it can become possible to discuss the role of proactive use of firearms. Open-carrying at rallies as a deterrent, for instance. Or at a food serving to deter police from harassing the mass organization. All the while examination of firearm policy abroad, like in the Mexican state of Guerrero or in Northern Ireland, can be explored less in theoretical, abstract terms and in concrete terms. It is here that a more comprehensive understanding of what a socially responsible gun culture can look like in the United States.

But in all instances, the nature of firearms must be clearly understood and put into the service of politics. Because for a collective to enact policies, it must have the power to do so. If it seeks to disarm individuals to create safe spaces, it must be prepared to both defend its people and deal with those who have firearms, something that rarely can be accomplished without the threat of force on one’s own side. If it seeks to use firearms to discourage violence, it must be prepared to answer to possible escalations from enemies.

Conclusion:

Absence concrete means of enforcing meaningful, pro-working class policies, it is ultimately the responsibility of active collectives to adopt a leading role in responsibly engaging with our violent culture. Doing so means dispensing with its liberal views on gun control and gun ownership, forsaking the established idealist narratives on what should be done, and instead taking concrete steps to create the necessary change. By advancing a collectivist view through correct leadership, correct material analysis, and correct practice, individual collectives can start to have an impact on gun culture in their immediate locales and improve conditions in their communities.
INTERVIEW: THE HOMELESS HOME BUILDERS OF AMERICA

By G. BOSHCKA

Imagine nearing retirement age after decades of hard work and chasing fruitless opportunities, growing up in a working class family with 7 siblings, mastering your trade young, and building the family house with your father by the age of 13; with more house additions from there.

Born and raised in Wisconsin, but having traveled all across the country to find work, he tried for the American Dream. From Texas to Michigan, Washington to Illinois, building houses with living areas that would become show pieces for the home owners and talking points of neighborhoods. Countless jobs performed on countless homes; dozens worth over a million dollars, with business initiatives in construction started, and dismantled, trying to make a living through the turbulent housing market of the 90’s-2000’s.

But these days he scrounges and tinkers; repairing electronics or small engines in effort to get by. Sometimes he sets enough money aside to buy enough broken electronics, or a motor for a bicycle, to produce something worth selling to purchase necessities. He has no home of his own, and over the decades he has seldom found friends generous enough to offer a roof while forced to live in a tent.

Time and again, despite making timely rent payments, a situation would unfold whereby hostilities develop: the lease expires, the remodeling he has done changes the value, and a personal storm of finance negotiation breaks loose with increasing month-to-month leasing until the final eviction. Or perhaps there’s simply a change in the market making rent unaffordable.

In Wisconsin, there exists a 5-day eviction notice, but protest to unfair treatment has left this former leader in a construction company, journeyman, trim carpenter out in the cold. A broken verbal agreement over remodeling and an unfair eviction would usually mean finding housing - but this is impossible when your only references refuse to comply, you have no transportation other than a bicycle, you spend all your money on food without refrigeration, and “urgent” letters for public benefits are piling up at the post office, sometimes getting sent back demanding “proof of address.”

Mastering your trade does little good when the trade leaves your body broken with barely anything to live on. Imagine reflecting on ruptured spinal discs, nerve damage, and calloused hands while being discarded by family for your work-induced disability, sleeping in a tent with your partner who suffers equal medical neglect and misfortune. This is just one situation faced by one American worker – there are millions of others facing similar struggles.

So, what does this worker think about the “ideal capitalist American system?”

Q: How long have you had problems working, or finding work due to chronic pain? (page 6)
A: Around thirty years, but I always dealt with it. Muscle and back pain is part of the trade. It got bad around ten years ago, a wall fell on me, ruptured discs in my back – haven’t been able to work like I used to, y’know?

Q: What kind of difference would nationalized public housing be for you? (page 6)
A: It would make a world of difference! Basically half my stress would be gone! Those rich f***ers would live in a swamp and have every house empty if they could make a buck off it! They’d suck the scum out of the gutters and eat it to save a dime - and let everyone else go hungry!

Q: What is the “ideal capitalist American system”? (page 6)
A: “IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO IMAGINE WHAT “PERSONAL LIBERTY” IS ENJOYED BY AN UNEMPLOYED HUNGRY PERSON. TRUE FREEDOM CAN ONLY BE WHERE THERE IS NO EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION OF ONE PERSON BY ANOTHER; WHERE THERE IS NOT UNEMPLOYMENT, AND WHERE A PERSON IS NOT LIVING IN FEAR OF LOSING HIS JOB, HIS HOME AND HIS BREAD, ONLY IN SUCH A SOCIETY PERSONAL AND ANY OTHER FREEDOM CAN EXIST FOR REAL AND NOT ON PAPER.” - J. V. STALIN
LET US BUILD THE PEOPLE’S MOVEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY!

By: THE RED PHOENIX

Today is a day of solidarity. Across the globe women of all nationalities, races, and creeds find themselves being massively exploited and abused at the hand of ruling class patriarchy. The world must recognize the continued oppression of women. Century after century passes and women continue to be under the boot of patriarchal ruling class oppression. Year after year we continue to suffer while the ruling class divides us and destroys our movements with the enforcement of ruling class ideology and values.

In oppressed countries, the capitalists both domestic and foreign abuse women on a scale unforeseen. In sweatshops women and children are worked to the bone for for almost no pay, producing a surplus value of over 350% on average. While working as near slaves to capitalist production, women are constantly and openly sexually abused and assaulted without hope for justice. In some countries working women in who are raped are often forced to marry their rapist or suffer jail time for speaking out against a man. Sex trade and slavery are at an all-time high. The term “women’s rights” can hardly be uttered. Between the never-ending drive for higher and higher profits and an unrestricted brutal patriarchy, our sisters in the international working class need our solidarity more than words can describe.

Here in the developed capitalist countries, women continue to face exploitation and abuse as well. Women continue to make less than men for equal work. The rise of the fascist right-wing, the “alt-right,” has targeted women as an enemy that has made too much progress. Toxic masculinity, machismo, etc., which is cultivated and culturally distributed by the ruling class, continues to drive misery into the life of women. Domestic abuse, sexual assault, and high levels of exploitation go on without justice. Representation is on the terms of the ruling class and women are treated as an automatic inferior class values. The relative freedom of women in the developed world is tied to the tether of ruling class patriarchy.

Yet, in the face of these oppressions, the ruling class continues to interfere with the women’s movement. Liberal feminism drives a stake into the heart of the women’s liberation. Symbolism and money are seen as the means of liberation. The protest is reduced to standing naked in public, covered in paint, to be mocked at by the misogynists that are supposed to be protested. Freedom is seen as the image of the woman capitalist, who abandons women in the same way that male capitalists have. The liberal feminist movement is often found to be exclusive to upper-middle-class white women. Women of color time and time again are ignored. The fact that women of color are often exploited and abused at higher levels than white women are ignored by the liberal “feminists.”

The time for a real movement of working women is needed. The hypocritical symbolism of liberal feminism has deterred the women’s movement. It has replaced action with symbolism, replacement for a check, and freedom for the right to exploit as ruling class men do. We emphasis today on Working Women’s Day because it is labor that unites us. While in different parts of the world women may face harder conditions, it is labor that allows us to connect. While women of color are in a more destitute position than white women, it is labor that unites us. It is also labor that unites us with the advanced elements among working men, it unites us with the struggles of the LGBTQ+ community. Wage-slavery is the uniting force amongst all strata of oppressed people. It is by uniting against the capitalist-imperialists that we will see true liberation. The division and exploitation created and distributed to the population by the ruling class, these capitalist-imperialists, have been created and distributed to maintain their power while keeping us powerless. To defeat sexism, misogyny, toxic masculinity, and inequality we must defeat their parent: capitalism.

Working women unite! Working people unite! Death to capitalism! Death to the imperialists! We have nothing to lose but our chains!

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY 2018

By: THE RED PHOENIX

Of “The entire party and country should hurl into the fire and break the neck of anyone who dared trample underfoot the sacred edict of the party on the defense of women’s rights.” — Enver Hoxha, 1967

Possibly the first example of class stratification and exploitation in human history was the subjugation of women. Women were divided into social class distinctions, and women typically enjoyed the same respect and rights as men. The dawn of agriculture led to the subjugation of women and the rise of patriarchal society. Along with this came the division of humanity into classes, exploitation, and class struggle. Hundreds of years, and in many parts of the world today, women have been, and often are, considered to be property. Even in some of the most progressive bourgeois nations, women face discrimination, super-exploitation, and oppression. Whether we speak of arranged marriage in those countries still languishing in near-feudal relations, or sexism in the most advanced nations, one fact remains, a fact which stands as an indictment of capitalist society for its utter failure to bring about equality and justice. That fact is simply that in almost any part of the world, being born female is to be born at a disadvantage, not a disadvantage decreed by nature, but by society.

Those who live in the liberal democracies of the West have often been guilty of focusing on the sexism which occurs in developing countries while ignoring their own faults, and apologists for some of the stricter varieties of Islam have often pointed out that the West does not respect women, instead it strips them of their dignity and turns them into commodities. In reality, both of these arguments are true.

In the West, open sexism seems even more prevalent than instances of open racism, and what is worse is that it is more likely to be tolerated. There are many people fighting and even risking their lives to bring about female equality in their own countries, and while we express solidarity with many of them, we Americans must also look to our own society and root out sexism wherever we may find it. Should we fail to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our working sisters, we will have given up at least half of our strength.

In the interests of creating an environment of gender equality within the Party, the American Party of Labor has issued the following statement:

1. The Party strongly condemns discrimination against women in any form.
2. The Party also strongly condemns misogyny and the use of misogynistic language in reference to women.
3. The Party recognizes International Women’s Day, the 8th of March, and seeks to have it recognized as a national holiday of a socialist America.
4. We demand women’s rights to organize militant feminist caucuses in the trade union movement, for the right of all our working class sisters to defend our interests as a class and as women.
5. We demand that women's right to organized self-defense be respected and strengthened in the light of the rise of fascist paramilitarism.
6. We demand that all attacks on women community leaders cease immediately and that all political prisoners be freed, including, but not limited to, the cases of Chelsea Manning, Assata Shakur and Rasmea Odeh.
7. We fully support the movement to defend and expand access to women's healthcare, including, but not limited to, the defense of Planned Parenthood, maternity rights and LGBT health centers.
8. We demand an end to police violence against queer women and oppressed nationality women; we support the defense and extension of democratic gains including, but not limited to, the defense of the Civil Rights Act and the struggle for community control of the police which has its roots in the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.
9. We demand a withdrawal of all U.S. military bases in foreign countries in the interests of all peace-loving women of the world. We stand in unconditional solidarity with the revolutionary women of Palestine, Colombia, the Philippines and all other communities besieged by U.S. imperialism. We demand the liquidation of all “visiting forces agreements,” “labor export policies” and all other policies that facilitate imperialism, occupation, human trafficking and the domination of monopoly capital over the working women of the world.
10. The American Party of Labor wholeheartedly reaches out to working women from all over the world to join us in the struggle for the liberation of all humanity. The struggle for justice is inherently bound up with the struggle for gender equality. Our goal is a world in which we can stand shoulder-to-shoulder in equality, working for the common good of humanity.

Long Live International Women’s Day!
The crack cocaine epidemic, which was facilitated and perpetuated by the United States government at many different levels, ravaged American inner cities throughout the decades subsequent to the advent of crack cocaine is due largely to dramatic increases in the abuse of prescription painkillers as well as heroin and fentanyl. Along with those who suffer in the grip of addiction to these powerful substances, families, friends, and entire communities have borne the agony of the public health crisis known as America’s “opioid epidemic.”

The reality of the situation—the reality of addiction—is that it is capitalism laid bare. The formalities and pleasantities behind the creation of capital are laid to rest and all that is left is the most simple capitalist idea: consume until you are destroyed. This is effectively the core contradiction of capitalism. Rosa Luxemburg famously provided the option of socialism or barbarism, but in our era of addiction and environmental ruin, for ourselves, family, friends, comrades, and world, the proposition is socialism or death. The capitalist uses, breaks, and destroys the body until those who are afflicted are left with only one choice, and that is death.

At the core of the addiction problem is the capitalist belief in the commodification of everything. Whatever is valuable, and it is not an idea ultimately, it is simply fact. Planned obsolescence has nothing on a capitalist product which once used is ultimately going to be replicated as it is needed immediately again. The expenditure of the product beg for a new usage of the product. This reproduction allows for super profits on a scale that a legal business could scarcely imagine, and yet, we know that those who are most often attacked are not the black market bourgeoisie. Those profiting off of dime bags and twenties sold on a corner are not the root of this. Profiteers in drug cartels in distribution schemes work hand in hand with imperialist governments to maintain a stranglehold allowing them to inflict violence and environmental ruin, for ourselves, family, friends, comrades, and world, the proposition is socialism or death.

The capitalist core of addiction is the simple fact that products must be constantly reproduced in order to make them valuable, and it is not an idea ultimately. It is simply fact. Planned obsolescence has nothing on a capitalist product which once used is ultimately going to be replicated as it is needed immediately again. The expenditure of the product beg for a new usage of the product. This reproduction allows for super profits on a scale that a legal business could scarcely imagine, and yet, we know that those who are most often attacked are not the black market bourgeoisie. Those profiting off of dime bags and twenties sold on a corner are not the root of this. Profiteers in drug cartels in distribution schemes work hand in hand with imperialist governments to maintain a stranglehold allowing them to inflict violence and environmental ruin, for ourselves, family, friends, comrades, and world, the proposition is socialism or death.

We do not seek to moralize or to judge, we are not a puritanical religious organization. The ultimate understanding we must come to is that drugs are turned to as a result of capitalist alienation. Drug dealing is turned to as a result of poverty. When survival is on the line, decisions must be made and families must be fed, we must stop treating victims of class war as its perpetrators. When we decide that Reaganite lines are correct we effectively abandon our position as revolutionaries and will fail to revolutionism at best, and at worst, mayhem and death on a grand scale.

Common Errors in Thought: The Lumpenpolitics Line

The lumpenpolitics line tells us that drug dealers are in fact proletarian, and while this is often true, there is a reality which underlies this and this line ignores. We should not embrace every reactionary idea that a worker holds because they are a worker. We are not proletarian fetishists; we are revolutionary socialists and understand the root cause and development of why these things happen. We do not seek to integrate incorrect ideas into our correct ones. We seek to correct incorrect ideas through struggle.

This line comes from a sense that the only people actually taking care of their neighborhood, putting food on the table and keeping the lights on must be a good person as long as they take care of their neighborhood. It’s centered upon an idea that “protecting me and mine” is good. This development is logical and easily defeated through correct lines and careful application of Service to the People. We know that this idea is incorrect as destruction of another community for the benefit of your own is never going to be more than mutually assured destruction. What you do to protect your community at the expense of others will see itself replicated in your own.

We do not seek to supplant this line simply through revolutionary theory but to do so directly by attacking its cause, to make it so that this line is no longer one that can logically be held in any neighborhood because the necessity does not exist for drug dealers to provide for a community. Workers’ parties must become not only social institutions, but friends to the community. We are here to ease the burden of workers and show them our sincerity not through our words but through the fact that we can effectively supplant capitalist institutions. Our dual power will not come from some sort of soft speech and no action. We absolutely must put into practice our lines.
Continued from page 8

The Proletarian Line

If revenge fantasies and blind acceptance are not the solution, then what is it? In the immortal words of Comrade Che Guevara, “I am not interested in dry economic socialism. We are fighting against misery, but we are also fighting against alienation.” We seek not to fight simply the economic systems that exist currently but to implement a system that allows not for survival but for thriving. We know that the end of capitalism is not the immediate end of alienation and we know that all efforts will have to be expended to end capitalist alienation. So what does that mean?

Proletarianize the lumpenproletariat. The lumpenproletariat is, in its current form, a threat to the working class. The immediate solution is full and gainful employment for all people. A guaranteed means of survival, not through a market economy that will invariably fail people but through a socialist economy organized under the power of a workers state, community spaces built on the success and survival of the community, and easily accessible and meaningful treatment for addicts. We seek to make the dope dealer a worker and the addict to be safe. We seek not to allow simply for a person to survive by whatever means they have to but to have a meaningful life free from capitalism and capitalist alienation.

A Way Forward

As Marxists we recognize that survival must come before everything else. There is no point to the eradication of addiction if the only eradication of addiction is through the death of the last addict. We don’t seek to shame addicts or to replicate the capitalist War on Drugs through nonsensical, costly, and frankly useless combat with street dealers. We must work alongside needle exchanges, detox centers, and facilities that would seek to provide safe injection sites for addicts. We must work alongside medical professionals to provide Narcan and rehabilitation to addicts.

Our most fundamental goal in this particular struggle is to help all those afflicted to become free of addiction. As Lenin declared on many occasions, it is of utmost importance for us to move forward with “clarity, clarity, and again clarity.” As long as large numbers of our brothers and sisters remain within the grip of mind-numbing and destructive chemicals, the full revolutionary potential of the working class cannot be realized.

The other important consideration when discussing this is what do we have to gain from a move forward with “clarity, clarity, and again clarity.” As long as large numbers of our brothers and sisters remain within the grip of mind-numbing and destructive chemicals, the full revolutionary potential of the working class cannot be realized.

The process of social change must be based both on the historical experience of the working class and on the uniqueness of the present economic and political situation.

Notes

2. Harvard Business Review, “To Combat the Opioid Epidemic, We Must Be Honest About All Its Causes.”
3. Karl Marx originally used the term “lumpenproletariat” in The German Ideology (1845) and expounded on its definition in The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852). The term refers to a swathe of society that is entrenched in criminality and vice and can be easily manipulated by the ruling class.
4. Alienation is a Marxist concept which depicts the separation between a person and their labor. The loss of community and culture specifically because of the way labor occurs under capitalism.
5. Commandism is a practice in which communists force changes within communities rather than encourage the change through genuine struggle with incorrect ideas.
6. Lumpenpolitics focuses upon radicalizing criminals within society without encouraging a return to the proletarian class and abandoning of criminal activities which harm workers.
7. Dual Power is the development of community based power outside of current institutions, with the intention of undermining them.
8. Quoted by Paul Hollander (among others) in The Many Faces of Socialism: Comparative Sociology and Politics.
10. Case management services complement therapeutic interventions, assisting individuals to obtain important needs including disability income, food, medication, and housing.

INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC, ANTI-FASCIST AND ANTI-IMPERIALISM YOUTH CAMP

Let our voices be heard around the world!

This is a call to the progressive young, rebels, democratic, revolutionary, anti-fascists and anti-imperialist struggling in all continents for better living conditions, conquered rights defenders and seek a chance in the background of this unfair system.

To the youth of the world which has said Stop war! Stop corruption! No more racism! No more exploitation! No more women oppression! And today at the arrival of Donald Trump to the White House is coming out to the streets to oppose imperialist and fascist policy that advances in the world.

Today, the capitalist system is unable to secure work, education, health and other rights; on the other hand grows the destabilization of economic, political and social; millions of human beings live a terrible world reality of wars in the Middle East; of mass migration to Europe; famine in Africa; unemployment; ecological disasters and excessive increase of physical and economic violence against the working class.

Therefore, we, young men and women being solidarity with the cause of our people, willing to organize to build a democratic society, without social classes, men and women call to youth in every corner of the world to unite, to fight; We are one voice, a fist against exploitation and oppression, decisively say Freedom and peace with social justice for our people!

At this historic moment in which the people of Mexico still fighting against decadent regime responsible for the massive repression against the people of Nochixtlán Oaxaca and the disappearance of the 43 normal school students of Ayotzinapa detention; Now it gains strength the need for unity and the call to take to the streets in presidential election of 2018, is why we raise this call for the XXVI International Camp of the Democratic, Anti-fascist and Anti-imperialist Youth from July 31 to August 5, 2018 in Mexico City.

Build our struggles in a single front together with workers, peasants and indigenous peoples.

For peace and social liberation, we raise the unity and struggle of youth!”
The last several weeks saw two major victories for the emerging anti-fascist forces in the United States. First, on March 5th, Richard Spencer’s talk at Michigan State University faced overwhelming opposition, with elements of the Traditionalist Worker’s Party being driven off from the event, leaving a paltry audience of approximately a dozen people for Spencer's hour-long reflection on the victories of the tiki torch rally and the “bit of a disaster,” in his words, that took the life of Heather Heyer in Charlottesville. The complete failure of the Alt-Right to secure a platform for speech at Michigan State elicited Spencer’s now widely circulated admissions that “anti-fascism is winning,” and that spreading genocidal rhetoric on college campuses was no longer “fun.” Days later, on March 13th, Matthew Heimbach, leader of the Traditionalist Worker’s Party, after failing to support Spencer at Michigan State, was arrested for a sordid brawl involving his top spokesman, father in law, and former TWP member Matt Parrott. The two got into an altercation over Heimbach sleeping with Parrott’s wife that spilled out into a Wal-Mart parking lot. As of March 14th, the Tradistionalist Worker’s Party website has been taken down, and there are numerous reports that the party is beginning a “rebranding” campaign much like Vanguard America after their member, James Fields, murdered Heather Heyer in Charlottesville.

These victories provide an occasion for anti-fascists in America to reflect on the course of our movement against fascism, white supremacy, and Nazi apologetics, and on which approaches and tactics work and which do not. From Berkeley and Austin to Chicago and Charlottesville, anti-fascists across the country have made impressive progress in consolidating, expanding, and developing diverse movements. Alongside a physical removal, anti-fascists have built community support programs, aid programs, and educational initiatives, methods the APL has endorsed previously on the Phoenix. Antifa is “winning,” in Richard Spencer’s words, because this diversity in tactics is united by a shared principle across anti-fascist crews, parties, and sects: that fascists should be given no platform for speech and growth on college campuses or anywhere else. If anything can be taken from the defeat of Spencer and the Traditionalist Worker’s Party in Michigan, it is that there can be no debate with fascists. Communists must reject the liberal and revisionist notion that dialogue or public debate with fascists provides any positive benefit for our movement against capitalism and fascism. Richard Spencer and the TWP withdrew under a no-platform campaign, but as these forces reorganize themselves, adapt, and reemerge to threaten our communities once again, it is essential that anti-fascists continue to build the anti-capitalist movement side-by-side with a strict dedication to no-platforming fascists.

The APL and other anti-fascist organizations’ dedication to no-platforming is not shared by all elements on the left. Dugin-sympathetic “anti-imperialists” often highlighted perceived shared grievances between “populist” movements and socialists, and claim that open discourse between the Alt-Right and Left might produce a positive coming together. Caleb Maupin’s “Students and Youth for a New America,” co-sponsored one such event in the summer of 2017, in which Maupin “debated” virulent Charlottesville fascist Augustus Invictus. The shared ground Maupin and Invictus had for such a debate, per the SYNA post announcing the event, was an opposition to “the pseudo-left of middle class activists who obsess with identity politics” which “is off putting to many working class Americans.” There is a principled, Marxist critique of identity politics as a liberal corruption of liberation struggles, but Maupin and his supporters instead attack it in reactionary terms and in the same way as fascists. Maupin openly states that the left “panders to blacks,” and “what pronouns people are called” is not identified as such by him because for both fascists and Duginites, “identity politics” is used exclusively to attack minority groups while they pursue an identity politics that normalizes and glorifies white american chauvinism.

Such debates and the ideology behind them also reveal a fundamental misunderstanding about the goal of fascist discourse in socialist spaces. As identified by Palmiro Togliatti, the famous Italian Marxist-Leninist, and several other critics of fascist development, fascists enter left discourse to corrupt it and reorient it towards a Strasserite opposition to capitalist hierarchy down racial and ethnic lines. The history of fascism tells a story of violence against the left and corruption of class analysis when that violence fails. There can be no uncaptured common ground with fascists, and those who continue to attempt to find it only amplify Nazi voices for no substantive gain for the movement against capitalism and fascism. It is not an error only Maupin and other Duginites make, the PSL’s Brian Becker invited noted antisemite and holocaust denying fascist Alberto Garcia Watson (and several other far right guests) to speak on his podcast and openly shared common ground with him, and others have encouraged more open dialogue with fascists.

Opposition to such staged debates, interviews, and dialogues with advocates for genocide is not a question of purity, but of what tactics work and what tactics do not. A remarkable event on the ground in Michigan on March 4th revealed with little doubt the function and honesty of fascist rhetoric, and why we as activists must refuse to interact with it in any way. Moments after assaulting leftists and failing in their objective to reach Richard Spencer’s talk, Heimbach entreated a liberal urging calm to debate (at about the 5:20 mark and onwards in this video). Heimbach can be heard preaching about the right of his community to oppose capitalists, that he did not hate the man he was talking to, and that the disagreement could be resolved peacefully. In moments, Heimbach went from roman-salute throwing fascist Nazis toouting the theAtomwaffen Division, a group of violent Nazis responsible for multiple murders, similarly have resorted to Strasserite, “anti-capitalist” rhetoric in the wake of several damning articles from mainstream media outlets and public bans from popular social media. This has been the strategy of the alt-right on college campuses across the country as well: violence if possible, poorly attended events protected by police if it is not. Anti-fascists have found success not in engaging the alt-right on these terms, but in silencing them before that rhetoric can produce enough fascists such that common ground debates are no longer necessary.

The failure of Spencer’s college tour, the Traditionalist Worker’s Party’s turbulent fall into rebranding, and the growth of anti-fascist forces after the election of Donald Trump and the events in Charlottesville are encouraging developments. But these fascists, as history tells us, will come back in new and more deadly ways. The fight is far from over, as TWP and Alt-Right elements retreat to muster their forces to emerge once again as threats to all progressive people in the United States. These fascists use debate as a platform to pursue violent campaigns against people of color, LGBTQ+ communities, leftists, and countless others. If the first few months of 2018 show us anything as anti-fascists, it is that no-platforming works, and to prevent the further spread of fascist violence when they emerge once again to prominence, we must double-down on our commitment to implement it alongside a growing movement for peace, equality, and socialist democracy. The American Party of Labor calls for all left forces within the United States to continue their campaign to deny all platforms for fascists, reject the liberal and revisionist myth of the shared space or “marketplace of ideas,” and join or support militant efforts to silence fascist events across the country.
EXAMPLES OF MARX’S WORDS AROUND YOU TODAY

By: M DERUITER

Many of the things that Marx and his followers have given us in their various works can be seen happening today in the world around us. A person just has to look no further than the daily headlines of the many news outlets to come face to face with these examples.

“In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity – the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.”

- Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto

Traverse City farmer: Dumping perfectly good cherries is rotten

A Traverse City tart cherry farmer is leaving 14% of his crop this year to rot on the ground to comply with an industry marketing agreement intended to keep cherry prices stable. And he’s not happy about it.

A frustrated Marc Santucci, who grows about 30 acres of cherries on his 80-acre Traverse City farm, put a photo of the dumped cherries, thick on the ground, on Facebook Tuesday — and the photo had been shared nearly 30,000 times as of Thursday afternoon.

Santucci posted with the photo, “But, we have to dump the fruit ground to rot. Why? So we can allow the import of cherries overseas it just doesn’t look right.”

And limitations on the amount of cherries he can sell are nice of cherries.”

America’s Dairy Farmers Dump 43 Million Gallons of Excess Milk

Spilled milk hits highest in decades, as prices drop and supplies bulge; putting more butter in McMuffins and cheese in tacos

U.S. dairy farmers are dumping tons of millions of gallons of milk in the midst of a supply glut which has also resulted in warehouses full of cheese. WSJ’s Kelley See explains how restaurant chains are stepping in to help farmers on Lunch Break with Tanya Rivers. Photo: Sean Proctor for The Wall Street Journal

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Markets | Commodities
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PEACE, EQUALITY, SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

All Power To The Working People!
AMERICANPARTYOFLABOR.ORG
The American Party of Labor is a revolutionary working class organization. Our aim is to abolish the capitalist system and all its horrors by replacing it with socialism, a system based on the principle laid out by Marx, “from each according to his ability, to each according to his work.” This is the first phase toward the higher phase of communism, defined by the principle “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

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, but who are generally considered to belong to the working class by Marxist-Leninist ideology and principles. Such individuals are exceptions to the general rule, as they have in effect transcended their class through conscious application of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

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

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

4. The American Party of Labor demands that all oppressed nations within the context of the American Empire, including, but by no means limited to, Indigenous peoples, Native Hawaiians, Guamanians and Puerto Ricans (within the context of Puerto Rico), be given national self-determination as to whether or not they wish to remain in the American capitalist 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 enable the extraction of wealth from them.

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 neo-colonial regimes. We call for the end of foreign aid to Israel, Colombia and other outposts of capitalist and imperialist aggression.

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

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

9. The American Party of Labor stands fully against the militarization of the U.S.-Mexican border. It supports the rights of immigrants and the ending of neo-liberal policies in other countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, that drive sustenance farmers off their land, 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.

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

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

Nowadays, ideas such as “21st century socialism” would have us do basically the same thing, if not less - regulate capitalism, nationalize some industry, and try to maintain a welfare state - without expropriating the ruling class, without giving the nation a clear direction for the future, and worst of all, without putting the working class in power. This kind of idea can only lead to temporary gains for the workers.

Legalize Workers, No to Raids & Deportations! Jobs & Income Now! Increase Access To Education & Services! Nationalized Healthcare! End All Current Illegal Wars Of Aggression! Equal Rights, Pay & Housing For All Regardless Of Race, Religion or Sexual Orientation! Abolish Profit Made By The Exploitation Of Labor!

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

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

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

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, who lives in the United States 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 corners 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.