THE PEOPLE SAY—ENOUGH!

PROTEST ERUPTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

INSIDE:

PEOPLE ACROSS THE GLOBE RISE UP FOR CPAC!

OPPRESSION AMID A PANDEMIC DISILLUSIONS DEMOCRACY

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATING A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE AND SACRIFICE

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MINNESOTA HAS RISEN UP: FIGHT ACROSS THE COUNTRY FOR COMMUNITY CONTROL OF POLICE!

On May 25th, George Floyd, an aspiring truck driver and current security guard, was murdered by four police officers responding to a "forgery in progress." The police pinned Floyd on the ground with a knee to his neck for many minutes, ignoring pleas from Floyd and bystanders to let him breathe. In this protracted, needless, and barbaric fashion, they took his life. The pigs originally claimed George Floyd had physically resisted orders to exit his car, but this has subsequently been proven to be false by surveillance footage. It is the latest example of a legal lynching, with retroactive, fraudulent justification.

Democrat Leaders Call for Passivity

Liberal state leaders have been quick to condemn the murder and give their basic, rhetorical calls for passivity and inaction. Democratic Mayor of Minneapolis Jacob Frey encouraged Minnesotans to "exercise their voice," that he "understood their anger," as if he could as a suburban Villanovan law school graduate, and finished by discouraging large gatherings because of COVID-19. Vice-president candidate to be and staff-abuser Amy Klobuchar called for a "thorough" investigation.

But we know what those investigations find. They take their time, wait for anger to wane. They look at Philando Castile being shot in front of his family while being calm, composed, and informative with police, and find that no one should be held responsible. Frey and the liberals can conclude as they have that these particular officers "breached department policy" by strangling an innocent man to death over several minutes. They may change the policy further, make officers go to a seminar with free lunch on how not to murder someone. In the end, we know the justice the capitalist state provides. We know how to a seminar with free lunch on how not to murder someone. In the end, we know the justice the capitalist state provides. We know how they are complicit in lynchings, so long as there isn’t video footage, like with the case of Ahmaud Arbery.

Power Concedes Nothing Without a Demand

It is for this reason that the American Party of Labor gives its full support and endorsement to the uprising currently occurring in Minnesota, that saw thousands march militantly against the 3rd Police Precinct, facing tear gas, rubber bullets, and pigs in riot gear. The fact that gun-toting reactionary anti-lockdown protesters, predominantly white, were faced with handshakes and smiles from the pigs across the country in the past month only further underlines the urgent need for militant, ceaseless action.

Those rising up against police have experienced the futility of reformism and the brutality of police self-management in their everyday life, year after year. They say with their actions, emphatically: enough with this system that preys on the skills, ambitions, and lives of black workers, that measures stock market gains next to death tolls, that puts children on trial, and that tells women that one sexual abuser is better than another. This system cannot be sufficiently investigated, reformed, or made right by policy. It is fundamentally, at its core, racist, sexist, and anti-worker. Amy Klobuchar’s investigations will not restore George Floyd’s life, nor meaningfully change in any way the racist heart of American society. Life may come cheap to the capitalists in this country, on both sides of the aisle, but it doesn’t come cheap to oppressed and exploited workers, and we should and will fight, by any means necessary, for a society that values every human life.

Maintain the Pressure! Demand Community Control of Police Now!

These next moments will be critical in procuring justice for George Floyd, and bolstering our movement to fundamentally remake police departments and their state. We must be students of the Ferguson uprising, learn from its victories and defeats, and tirelessly continue our work to build connections within the militant anti-racist and anti-capitalist movement. For the next series of days, our pressure must be ceaseless. Every police officer and city politician across the country must be made to feel the urgency of our demands for justice, that this is not business as usual, that this is not another murder swept under the rug of internal investigation, that things will fundamentally change in the wake of the power of a mobilized people. The temperature of the city must increase, such that all within it must declare themselves on this issue. Activists from all across the country must flock to support the movement in Minnesota, financially, in person, or by any means available.

The American Party of Labor, given this context and information, demands that:

1. All four officers responsible for the murder of George Floyd be immediately charged and arrested for murder, and that Derek Chauvin, Badge #1087, be charged with first degree murder.

2. That the Minneapolis Police Department immediately be put under direct control of a democratic body of community leaders, that will conduct the investigation and give direct future oversight.

3. That all four officers are sentenced to the maximum allowable sentence under Minnesota law, in the case of first-degree murder, life.

The American Party of Labor offers its full support for the militant action that took place on May 27th, and fully endorses the continuing uprising in its aim to fundamentally remake the police and the state they serve. We will not stop our tireless work until justice is done to George Floyd’s killers, and the petulant rot of racism lying at the heart of the American nation is excised with a hot knife, once and for all.

Don’t wait! Get involved, today!
THE MYTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY CAME CRASHING DOWN LAST NIGHT—
FIGHT FOR A WORKING CLASS ALTERNATIVE!

By J. Palameda On May 31, 2020

Last night saw the great mythology of the United States—of free expression, compromise, and democracy—come crashing down in fire, smoke, pepper spray, curfews, and police abuse. It became clear beyond any doubt that the only thing holding the American government in place is violence, of the police and military. In nine states and territories the national guard were called, and curfews were announced in 25 cities in 16 states. Across the country, from Huntsville, Alabama, to Fayetteville, Arkansas, to New York City, to Los Angeles, to Chicago, and beyond, protesters facing desperate economic conditions and ineffectual government raised their voices in unprecedented ways, and defended themselves from police aggression, looted stores, and generally lashed out.

Many pundits, like CNN’s Don Lemon, couldn’t believe their eyes. They couldn’t understand where the American national project had failed. Just five years ago, Barack Obama was president, civility, though taxed by republican extremism, was the political sentiment of the day. From their position in cushy urban apartments or suburban mansions, the upper-class political talking-heads of america thought that everything was on the right track. The working class of this country has known for several decades that this has not been the case.

Life in Post Cold-War America

That some lives are more important than others has been a universal american truth, from the genocide of native americans, to the exploitation of black slave labor to build the country, to profiteering off immigrant labor while stoking nativism. It is woven integrally into the fabric of the country. The vast palaces of the rich, the vaunted “middle class lifestyle,” and all those things many americans think separates them from the rest of the world, was built by hyper-exploitation at home and murderous imperialism and colonialism abroad. The murder and exploitation of immigrants and people of color is a matter of American historical record.

Yet, in the wake of Reaganomics, the New-Deal era mythos of an American nation made strong by its differences and compassion, placed over the simple truth of American brutality, began to erode even for “middle-class” whites. For several decades, the American government has rather openly murdered its own people, shipped jobs overseas, and committed widely documented atrocities condemned not only by the left but several bourgeois international bodies. The different value of life has become pervasive in nearly every aspect of our lives as workers in 2020, and is present at every interaction we have with state institutions. Police shake hands with women’s marchers, predominantly white, and rip children away from immigrant mothers. “Our” troops are to be supported, until they come back from imperialist war dealing with trauma. Some workers are full-time and have benefits, others, doing the exact same work, are part-time and face bankruptcy from minor health issues. White-collar jobs baloon, while blue-collar jobs disappear. We have all seen so many unarmed black people killed we can’t remember all their names and stories. Even reactionaries like Rush Limbaugh who are the first to defend police officers had a hard time defending Derek Chauvin. All this, in the backdrop of a pandemic in which national leaders have gaged re-opening strategies on how many lives they can trade for stock gains.

“No, the growing, popular understanding that the lives of those of color and working class people are worth less than stock options has been a bipartisan creation.”

Importantly, this has been a bipartisan effort. We cannot blame this open disdain for the lives of workers and people of color on Trump or even Reagan. Bill Clinton’s deregulation of derivatives was responsible for the 2008 collapse that saw millions lose their home, while Wall Street was bailed out (by Obama). Obama deported over 2 million immigrants, killed thousands of innocent civilians in the middle east with drones, and did little to curb the neo-liberal ruination of rural america and police brutality against African-Americans. It was Obama who resigned the patriot act, and enabled the executive branch to detain “terrorists” indefinitely without charge, a policy Donald Trump is now trying to weaponize against “antifa.” It was Obama who punished working class people with extra taxes if they didn’t buy a healthcare plan with a $10,000 deductible. It was Democratic mayors in Los Angeles, Atlanta, New York, Chicago, and more, that unleashed the brutality of their police departments on the people the last few days, issued curfews, and refused to hold the cops accountable. It was Democratic Mayor Lori Lightfoot in Chicago that called protesters “criminals” and arrested over 1000 after trapping them downtown. It was Amy Klobuchar that failed to prosecute the murderer of George Floyd.

No, the growing, popular understanding that the lives of those of color and working class people are worth less than stock options has been a bipartisan creation. This is why the Don Lemons of the world can’t believe their eyes—democratic party leaders and moderates around the country have spent the last few decades creating this anger that is now only beginning to manifest itself, faced with an old enemy: the law and order right.

The “Law and Order” Threat

As workers, we have to be students of previous struggles for civil rights and reform in the United States. In 1968, when riots rocked the country, Richard Nixon responded by crafting a presidential campaign for “law and order,” to “return to normal,” ironically similar to Biden’s current platform. But it is Trump who is positioning himself as this candidate in the last few days, fantasizing about shooting looters, designating antifa has a terrorist organization, and attacking “trouble-makers” in Washington, DC. It worked spectacularly for Nixon, who won the election easily, despite flagrant racist George Wallace cutting into republican territory and getting 13% of the vote.

“There is a strong fascist-leaning undercurrent in this country, that will defend white supremacy at any cost to basic democratic rights.”

Two years later, in 1970, over 60% of Americans per a gallup poll at the time supported the killing of innocent students at Kent State, one who was simply walking to class. Fred Hampton was murdered that year in cold blood, and the Black Panthers were destroyed by FBI infiltration and COINTELPRO-intensified infighting. There is a strong fascist-leaning undercurrent in this country, that will defend white supremacy at any cost to basic bourgeois rights. They will with one breath fly a Gadsden flag, and with another defend police pepper-balling people sitting on their own porch. Last time, this law and order current was successful, and disintegrated the popular movement.
The Red Phoenix  Page 4  May / June 2020 - Issue #14

...Continued from Page 3

When the power of the people rises, as it did in the late-1960s, these forces in America, empowered by their president, will strike against the people's movements with lethal force. We have seen already that American fascist movements have moved to “defend businesses” and stop looting, positioning themselves not as open Nazis, but as simple Americans who crave a return to the normalcy of “law and order.” We must prepare to fight them by any means.

Once Again, for Working Democracy

But history is not a circle, though it should inform our struggles and lines of dialogue. In 1964, Malcolm X argued in his famous speech “The Ballot or the Bullet” that civil rights activists should use the ballot if authentically useful, and fight for a useful ballot if it wasn’t. In an election of two sexual abusers, with 40 million unemployed, facing environmental disaster and disease, the people of the United States, from Fayetteville to New York City, have started this process. In so doing, the workers of this country have shown their immense power, bringing entire cities to a halt, as martyred IWW activist Joe Hill knew they could.

“What all of us have been fighting for across the country, at grave risk, is a society in which all human life is valued equally—one in which all people’s voices are heard equally, where murderers go to prison, where people are bailed out before banks. For this, we have been beaten, tear-gassed, and shot with all sorts of ammunition.”

We are in the early stages of that process, and movements and ideological trends rise and fall in hours on the streets in cities across the country, and the power of the people is often raw and disorganized, as Frank Chapman, chair of the NAARPR, said of the lessons of the Chicago action on May 30th. The popular movement, as it continues, will have to contend with anarchic and reckless individualist violence. It must not alienate itself from the working class and communities of color, or seem as foreign invaders in neighborhoods and movements, a situation the 60s anti-war movement often found itself in. It must clearly identify itself as working class, for working class interests, and clearly identify its enemies. The movement must target its militancy against police installations and exploitative establishments, and bring a political message against white supremacy and for workers rights to their workplaces and any place of contact with fellow workers—union halls, sports clubs, music scenes, the classroom, etc.

What all of us have been fighting for across the country, at grave risk, is a society in which all human life is valued equally—one in which all people’s voices are heard equally, where murderers go to prison, where people are bailed out before banks. For this, we have been beaten, tear-gassed, and shot with all sorts of ammunition. But we know, despite what democratic mayors, police installations and exploitative establishments, and bring a political message against white supremacy and for workers rights to their workplaces and any place of contact with fellow workers—union halls, sports clubs, music scenes, the classroom, etc.

The Murderers of Ahmaud Arbery Have Been Arrested. It Isn’t Enough.

By J. Palameda On May 8, 2020

The father-son family of lynchers in Brunswick, Georgia have been arrested and charged with the aggravated assault and murder of Ahmaud Arbery. A national campaign to see the men arrested grew rapidly in the wake of recently release video of the murder that proved with little doubt that the action was a premeditated contemporary lynching conducted by a police-connected family.

It is right to feel relief in this moment, particularly the appallingly low rates at which police and police affiliates are charged with the murder of unarmed black people going about their everyday life, in the case of Ahmaud Arbery, jogging, an activity he loved, and curiously looking at a construction site—making him a “suspect” in recent burglaries for the citizen-arresting racist killers. But it’s clear, without our national, surging movement against police violence, Ahmaud Arbery would’ve been another lost statistic amidst those tens of thousands lynched in the United States, often with police participation and complicity. Local police authorities in Brunswick, many of them buddies with the two murderers, were already quite successfully sweeping the killing under the rug. It was only due to the resources and rigor of the movement against police brutality that Ahmaud’s story reached the nation and forced the hand of law-enforcement.

We know from recent history that we cannot put our faith in police departments to reform themselves and alter arresting practices, or even in electing progressive DAs. We can arrest every killer, but we cannot arrest juries that consistently see white killers as troubled and black workers as suspects, nor can we arrest judges who care more about white second chances than black lives. As Stokely Carmichael famously remarked, non-violent movements for reform only work when your enemy has a conscience, and the lives of Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Philando Castile, Eric Garner, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, Sandra Bland, Alton Sterling, Walter Scott, and many others throughout the centuries, prove that American law has none. It is truly a relief that Ahmaud Arbery’s killers will at least face the bare minimum of justice, but that won’t bring Ahmaud back, nor prevent more incidents like this.

Yet, in reckoning that we cannot hope for the system to reform itself, and cannot consider individual arrests as sufficient, we understand and see the solution—our movement for community control of police and a revolutionary remaking of law to protect working people of all kinds, not the rich and white supremacists. That movement will now turn its attention to agitating at every level, and with all available means, to see the two murderers charged and given fair sentences of life in prison to continue the momentum of the campaign to see them arrested and tirelessly maintain our campaign to see the killers of Ahmaud Arbery punished. We do so not because we believe the American legal system is fair and democratic, but the opposite—we know from experience that it isn’t, and only the movement of the people, the kind of movement we build when we organize for justice, can change that.
LETTER FROM HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA: MINUTES AFTER MAYOR KNEELING PHOTO-OP, THE POLICE ATTACKED US

Editor's Note: A peaceful protest of over a thousand people gathered on Monday in Huntsville, Alabama where they were attacked by police with no provocation. This is that story.

Submitted by Xiao Long, June 2, 2020

I was there very nearly the entire time, the protest officially started at 3 pm, I was probably there around 3:15. For the first part of the event, it was just 4 or 5 speakers making speeches in the park, then after that, a very organized march around our downtown square. There was probably a little over a thousand people, although I haven’t looked up to see if there’s any official numbers out yet.

At about 6 pm, the people that organized the event told us that our time was up and told us that another demonstration was planned for Wednesday, and that we should come to that. But the people weren’t having that, so we stayed and protested outside of our court house, right in front of a confederate monument. The protest consisted of nothing else but people chanting, and occasionally we would chant for the cops standing in front of us to take a knee as a show of empathy. For me personally, I know if the cops did this it would simply be for show, to appease people, but nevertheless, it is a very simply thing to do, just to show some shred of humanity or empathy. The cops didn’t move a single muscle. They couldn’t even do the literal easiest thing in the world just to show us that they disagree with the brutal murder of George Floyd, and that made people even angrier. In all honesty, if they had just done that simple thing, I truly believe most of the crowd would have dispersed.

A little while into this segment of the protest and Mayor Tommy Battle appeared. At first, it seems like he might actually be on our side, but he’s a snake. He kneeled (to uproarious applause) for about 2 or 3 minutes, then got up. It was all a photo op for him, nothing more. After a few more minutes, he stood in front of us, as if he was about to start giving a speech, maybe telling us some empty but soothing words like “he feels our pain” or “we can protest as long as we want” but within seconds of him starting to speak we noticed riot cops were lining up behind us. As soon as the people noticed the riot police, Mayor Tommy Battle immediately left the scene. His being there was just a disgusting display of false empathy.

We stayed and chanted for a while longer, until the police decided they’d had enough. Now even though I personally do not and would never condemn riots or violence in these protests as I see the violence as totally justifiable, I do feel it’s important in this context to note that there was not one single bit of violence at our entire demonstration. Not a bit. That’s important to say because then the police decided to start pushing us off the steps of the court house. At one point people linked arms to show that we would not be moved, and a cop pushed in a pressure point on my throat. Then not long after that, after they had pushed us back a bit, they threw a smoke bomb. That did little in the way of intimidating us, we just kept asking them why they were doing this when we had done nothing to them.

Then they threw a tear gas canister. I kicked it back at them and one of them raised their shotgun and aimed directly at me. Fortunately, he did not shoot, but my body was on an extreme adrenaline high anticipating the feeling of getting hit by a rubber bullet. They then kicked the canister back at us, and my partner kicked it back at them, at that point the gas had become too much for me, and I was forced to back off.

A smaller group of us were still together, and had been pushed down the road. We thought at that point the cops were satisfied with where we were, but we were wrong. After a few minutes they came up to us again, this time with those large pepper spray bottles. I was fortunate enough to not get hit with the pepper spray, but a man standing next to me got absolutely doused. I will yet again add that we had done nothing to provoke the police.

That’s about where it ended for me, but the cherry on top of this story is that, as they were forcefully asking us to leave, many people were telling them “my car is back the way you just pushed us out from” and the cops told them “tough shit, you’ll have to come back for it tomorrow” effectively stranding people there.

At one point, I said to a cop “honest question sir, if in the middle of a completely peaceful protest, we threw a tear gas canister at the police, how would you feel about that?” and all he could say was “I’m not sure how to answer that” which is complete BS. He knows as well as I do, that if we had been the aggressors, and maced them, or threw tear gas at them, they would come down on us with all the force in the world. It’s complete and total hypocrisy.
SPENDING A NIGHT IN A FREEZING, CRAMPED CELL: A STORY FROM A HUNTSVILLE PROTESTER

Editors Note: The following statement was submitted to the Red Phoenix by a protester in Huntsville, AL who was arrested after being attacked by local police there. In it, they describe their experiences in jail, with extortionate bail, and general mistreatment.

I will say this, I am not somebody that thinks violence automatically delegitimizes protests. I think there is only so much people can be pushed by an evil and violent system before they must push back. However, in order to highlight just how wrong the HPD were, I will say, our protest on Wednesday night was entirely peaceful. There was no hint or trace of violence or rioting or looting. After and ONLY after the police started lighting us up with tear gas, and rubber bullets, did SOME people start throwing water bottles. Which, barely will hurt someone in a normal circumstance, but will definitely do nothing to an officer in full riot armour.

The police specifically targeted the people that were there solely to give medical assistance to those who needed it. This in any other context would be a horrific war crime, and likely would be used as an excuse by our imperialist government to intervene and try and gain more power on the world stage, but since it’s our police force doing it, they are praised as heroes and the protesters demeaned as nothing more than violent agents of chaos.

I was only in jail for about 16 hours or so, but in that short time I was exposed to horrible and inhumane conditions that no person should ever be put through, and my heart truly breaks for those who are locked up for months and years.

In jail, you are nothing. They treat you as an animal. You are let outside at certain times. You are fed at certain times. They don’t want to give you any information. There are hardly working clocks anywhere, so most of the time you have no idea how many hours have passed. The officers are stubborn and will give you next to no information about your situation, or what is happening in the outside world. You are given an “inmate code” to put into a phone that allows you to call people, but you only get a few minutes before you need to put in more money or you cannot talk on the phone anymore. Half the time, it doesn’t work at all. The cops offer no assistance with phone issues, they basically tell you “tough shit” if your code does not work. Some of the phones themselves are broken, and have been for years according to others who have been in that jail before. I know personally of multiple people who when we were “dressed out” from our normal clothes to the orange jumpsuits, they left the sheet of paper with their phone code in their regular clothes, and the cops had no sympathy. They would knock on the door and say “I left my code in my clothes, can I get it” and the cops would literally just walk right by, as if we were not even there. I was lucky that I remembered my code, I let some other people use my code to call out to people. But if you cannot call anybody on the outside, you are just lost in this soulless time vacuum, you have no idea if anybody on the outside even knows you’re in there, or if anyone is trying to get you out, or if they care.

There were about 9 of us crammed in to one holding cell, overnight. It was freezing cold, and there was nothing in the room but concrete benches and a disgusting floor for us to sleep on, if we could even manage to fall asleep. They gave us thin, tattered blankets, then later joked that “we shouldn’t even be giving you blankets at all after what happened tonight!” as they enjoyed a boisterous laugh.

It is absolutely soul crushing, and again I was only in there for about 16 hours.

And on bail. If you cannot make bail, you are just stuck in jail until the time of your court date. Most of the protesters had a court date set for October. Imagine being stuck in that place for 4 to 5 months, simply because you cannot come up with $135. This is a reality for a lot of people. We ended up using our group bail to help out another person in jail who was unrelated to our protests, just because we could not stand to see him stuck in this horrible place for 4 months simply because the system had forced him in to poverty.

I will in no way equate my experience to those who have suffered much worse in our system, this was my first time being arrested and in jail. But it was just a small glimpse into the horrors of our broken system of “justice”

Any calls for police reform (or abolishment) must be partnered with the same or greater calls for reform or abolishment of our jail system.
Editor’s note: Three workers from Orlando, Florida submitted the following accounts to the Red Phoenix about their experiences facing unprovoked aggression from the militarized police in the city over the past few days. Find them unfiltered below. For more, please follow the Orlando Workers League on Facebook and Twitter.

**From Delilah:** When we arrived to the demonstration the police station (which is a brand new huge building located right in a low-income, primarily black and brown community) was surrounded on two sides with protesters. All of the demonstrators were standing outside of a barricade chanting and holding signs. Inside the barricade were at least 40 cops, all dressed in riot gear and with riot shields at the ready. Shortly after we arrived, another large group marched up Orange Blossom Trail, a large main road, and joined the rest of the demonstrators while we all cheered. As the event went on, many of the protesters tried to engage with the officers directly, pleading with them to stand with them against police brutality. The cops did not engage back and just stood silently. Eventually protesters began playing music and dancing. Tracks included the Boosie Badazz classic “Fuck the Police”, which protesters began singing toward the cops.

Both groups of protesters eventually formed a line and began moving through the intersection. Some people in the front got on the sidewalk while others continued to march down the highway. Some of the counter protesters continued to watch the marching protesters. As the marchers continued, we heard the helicopter. All of the protesters on that side stopped to watch as the helicopter hovered and then a loudspeaker played. The cops yelled over the megaphone and then protesters began moving down the highway again. The groups continued to march slowly down the highway as the cops continued to watch. At one point, a cop on a motorcycle went down the road and then continued to move down the highway with the protesters.

Eventually, the protesters began moving. The crowd of 300-400 people began marching down Orange Blossom Trail toward one of Orlando’s many toll roads that serves as a major artery for transit in the city. We all walked past the cop cars and officers blocking the road with our hands up. As we approached the intersection, many of the protesters began running toward the on ramp. The police tried to cut the protesters off, but we got ahead of them. Bicycle cops went zooming past protesters and cars also tried to pass us, but many protesters physically blocked the vehicles with their bodies. One officer in a vehicle drove so close to me almost to hit me. Another got out of his vehicle to scream at a black male protestor that if he didn’t move he was going to jail. Even though they tried to stop us, it was already too late as enough protesters made it up the ramp to form a line. The protesters quickly locked arms to form a line to defend their position. The line stretched across both sides of the 408 toll road and was composed of all races and genders of people.

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Myself and my comrades noticed the cops putting on gas masks behind most protesters and started yelling out warnings. As people turned around and saw the cops behind them with gas masks on, the cops on the otherside put on their masks. We continued to yell out warnings that tear gas was imminent. Myself and my comrade moved to the sidelines at this point to be able to provide care for those might have gotten caught in the gas as it was deployed. At this point we did notice one of the cops pointing directly at us, possibly to target us, but there was no way to confirm.

“It was maybe two minutes after this that the tear gas canisters flew. Protesters ran down the sloping hill to escape the gas, many tripping and getting caught in the fumes. As protesters ran, the cops continued to fire canisters down the hill, sending a sparking canister sliding fast on the slick grass close enough to burn many of the protesters.”

The cops announced a few more things over the loudspeaker while one empty water bottle went flying through the air in the general direction of the cops striking no one on its way down. It was maybe two minutes after this that the tear gas canisters flew. Protesters ran down the sloping hill to escape the gas, many tripping and getting caught in the fumes. As protesters ran, the cops continued to fire canisters down the hill, sending a sparking canister sliding fast on the slick grass close enough to burn many of the protesters. As we continued to retreat, the cops continued shooting the tear gas. Even as protester made it to the street below the highway, canisters continued landing on the pavement.

Shortly after this, it started to rain heavily. Most of the protesters got separated into smaller groups, but most reconvened at the police station. However, the cops blocked us from even taking to the street outside the station at that point, and many of the demonstrators took refuge under the roof of a 7 eleven gas station across the street from the station. While we were hiding out from the rain, the cops drove multiple large SUVs into the parking lot and very close to the protesters. In response, some threw bottles and rocks at the cop cars hitting the sides and windsheilds but causing no damage. As the cops continued to drive through the lot, the protesters retreated down a side street and reformed downtown.

The second night of protests started at Lake Eola, a large park in the middle of an upscale downtown residential area. We were a bit late and had to catch up to protesters, and ended up joining them in a march down Orange Avenue, the main strip of the downtown Orlando area. The march was massive, and echoes of “Black Lives Matter” and George Floyd’s name bounced off the tall buildings. Protesters continued the march back to the Orlando Police Department building and again made appeals to police. At one point, protesters took to their knees. At this point, Orange County Sheriff John Mina and Orlando Police Chief Orlando Rolon both took a knee alongside protesters long enough to get a photo snapped. However, myself and some other comrades continued to chant “quit your jobs” at the cops, as the only way for them to truly show solidarity would be to give up on the racist police force they work for.

“In any case, multiple protesters were maced, including a young man who was so covered in it that his sign and his whole jacket was covered. He could barely breathe.”

Eventually, the protest moved again, mirroring the actions from the day before. As the march approached the 408 toll road again, it was clear the cops had it blocked off. Bike cops and vehicles blocked every ramp. Eventually the protestors confronted police blocking one of the ramps and pled with them again to stand with us and allow our march to pass. Some of the cops smirked at protesters. The group then split, with some of the marchers continuing on down a side street and others staying behind to continue to confront the cops valiantly protecting a toll road. I was part of the group that stayed behind. At one point, bottles of water in various states of being filled were thrown at the cops, with only one actually striking an officer on their helmeted head. It’s unclear if this happened before or after protesters in the crowd were maced. Some demonstrators reported it was before, others that it was after. In any case, multiple protesters were maced, including a young man who was so covered in it that his sign and his whole jacket was covered. He could barely breathe. I treated him and took him to the side to sit down. In the process, I also became contaminated and my entire arm was covered with mace and began to burn. Another medic treated me with baking soda, which helped temporarily, but my arm continued to burn well into the night.

Once this altercation occurred, the protesters in this group moved back to the police station and yelled at the cops stationed there for a few more moments. During this day’s demonstrations, they had nearly doubled the number of cops in the vicinity, including calling on mutual aid agreements with neighboring Osceola county, and also had cops in military fatigue on the roof of the police station peering at us through binoculars.
...Continued from page 7

The protests eventually moved again down Church street back toward downtown. Our group was attempting to converge with the other. We marched peacefully down a street with very rundown houses and housing projects (this is what they put an expensive new multi-story police station next to). The people living in these homes came out and most of them cheered us on. We also passed a truck for sanitation workers, who expressed their solidarity with our action.

Eventually we all converged again downtown in a cacophony of both rage and joy. Rage at the injustices, and joy at our unity in our fight for eachother and our community. People in their cars honked to show support and others played loud music, including the NWA’s “Fuck the Police”. Others parked in the street as we walked by them and got on top of their cars to dance and cheer. Bike cops followed the pack.

I let the crowd pass me to meet up with my comrades from whom I had become separated. At this point we lost the protest and with the burning in my arm, we searched for the crowd for a bit but then eventually decided to go home so I could decontaminate myself. We later heard from our comrades that protesters were kettled onto I-4, another major artery through Orlando, and indiscriminately shot with tear gas and rubber bullets.

“Do not believe the media telling you protestors are getting aggressive and that’s why police are using this violence. They had masks and riot gear on from the very start. They were ready and they had goals and they were pointing us out like targets not to mention no badge numbers or visible ID on them.”

Last night in downtown Orlando as we peacefully protested and made our way to shut down the heart of the City I-4 the police first cut our group in half on the ramp using rubber bullets on anyone trying to continue with us up the ramp. Once we got on the highway amidst all the cars with windows open the police came up behind us and began throwing tear gas canisters at us forcing us into traffic and harming unarmed folks and civilians in their cars. They gassed almost everyone and continued blocking us into traffic to where we had to jump off sides of the highway to get out because cop cars came thru the traffic. This was not the first time they came at us with sprays and gases. Earlier in the daylit while the cops blocked off the 408 they pepper sprayed a bunch of people myself and my friend included in the face for someone in the very back of the crowd throwing an empty water bottle. Almost everyone they sprayed was women who were standing up front peacefully protesting. I’m not even mad at the person who threw the water because water should never justify mace to the face. Throughout the night they continued to follow us through the city as we attempted to meet up with our other group. Again they maced some innocent girl for no reason as we were walking and tried blocking off almost every exit we had. I want to thank all the street medics who have been out because y’all are truly a godsend. Do not believe the media telling you protestors are getting aggressive and that’s why police are using this violence. They had masks and riot gear on from the very start. They were ready and they had goals and they were pointing us out like targets not to mention no badge numbers or visible ID on them.”

The Red Phoenix  Page 8  May / June 2020 - Issue #14

By The Red Phoenix Team On June 8, 2020

Following the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis Police Department, militant protests have broken out across the United States around the issue of police brutality against Black people. From California to New York, there have been hundreds of rallies condemning police brutality and many have turned into local militant uprisings against the system that keeps the jackboot on the neck of the American people. St. Louis, Missouri is an area which has been a hotbed of activism and uprising over the past decade, most notably after the 2014 murder of Mike Brown by the Ferguson PD and the not guilty verdict given to St. Louis pig Jason Stockley in the 2011 murder of Anthony Lamar Smith. Since the days of the Ferguson uprising, certain elements of the Black Community have sought to lead the movement locally. This organization is known as Expect Us and while starting out as a radical group focusing on building a movement against police repression, it is now working directly with the very same pigs who must take a stand!

In the early days of Expect Us there were both radical-minded and liberal-minded individuals involved. Over the years since the Ferguson uprising, most of the radical leadership has been purged from the group, leaving a very liberal core and many from this core have used their activism not against the system but instead to jockey for local office thus entering the system themselves. Time and time again, history has shown that a corrupt and exploitative system cannot be reformed from the inside, and that the broad masses of the people must make change on the streets. The liberals ignore this message and seek to exploit the very real anger that this community feels to catapult themselves into the limelight. Furthermore, because of the very nature of the political struggle that has and is currently happening, these leeches must maintain the State's version of order. They know that if these protests were militant and radical that they could no longer use their involvement in these events to pad their resume. They use the timeworn arguments of “Why burn down our own cities?” and “We only defame the movement when we are not peaceful!” but working-class people already know the answers to these. These are not “our” cities, these are the cities built by elites to purposefully exclude and segregate the people in order to keep the poor and working class in terrible conditions only giving us enough to be useful to them so they can further exploit and berate us. The only real way that the Establishment listens to us is through militant action. When we march by the thousands no one in power cares and that we ourselves must take the reins and move our cause forward.

So the question is no longer, why do they put a lid on the boiling pot of public outcry but how? The answer is plain to see for those who have been to protest after protest organized by Expect Us. Many organizers have been spotted talking with police officers on the outskirts of the protest, making deals and ensuring that they will force the protest to follow carefully planned routes laid out by the police and not to challenge the pigs in any meaningful way. Anytime that protestors take militant action against police violence they are immediately singled out by the “leadership” and publicly shamed before being thrown to the riot cops. The narrative is that the police can gas, beat and arrest us but if we so much as throw a brick back the Expect Us crowd will giftwrap us for the police. Every time the crowd begins to chant more militant slogans and becomes very clearly agitated by the police, these “organizers” halt the march and make everyone take a knee for 5-10 minutes to ensure that they regain control and stop any real militant action from occurring. With protest leaders like these the state doesn’t even need the pigs. Soon they will have us all sit in a circle, sing Kumbayah and say that they took a real stand against this system of injustice that is eager to murder us all!

Recently protestors have begun to speak out against these actions and in Ferguson on the night of June 4th there was a massive protest with hundreds of protestors flocking to the event. Leading the action were several members of the Expect Us group, and as we descended on the Ferguson precinct they started with their same old tactics of forcing protestors to be calm and collected even after the riot police began harassing the protestors. They had everyone kneel for George Floyd but then as is all too common today asked the police to kneel as well. This trend is nothing but disgusting and shameful pig propaganda. In fact, one of the cops who took a knee is an officer well-known for targeting members of the trans community and who has had several complaints against him for harassment and assault. Many young working-class Black members of the crowd sprang up and condemned this action on the spot and a fight broke out between them and the Expect Us leadership. Afterwards the group split up with half going on a march and the rest staying to confront the riot police at the precinct. Once the Expect Us crowd left, the pigs immediately opened up with tear gas, rubber bullets and batons attempting to disperse the crowd. Because of new radical leadership, the line held and the battle with the police ebbed back and forth allowing enough time for militants to storm the precinct and bust it up. This is the sort of action that the masses are calling for, not respectful approaches to the very people we are protesting against. After this, the police routed the militants and small-scale looting ensued. Unfortunately, Expect Us leadership has utilized the local press to vilify any sort of militant actions using the same narrative that anyone can get on Fox News. Firstly, they claim all the militants are white antifa types from outside the St. Louis area. This is a barefaced lie; in almost all footage of these events and from the accounts of hundreds of eyewitnesses, it is clear that those taking militant action are almost all Black people from the area. Secondly, they cry about broken shop windows and are mad that some of these windows belonged to Black-owned businesses. We all know that some shops were looted, yes, but most of the damage was actually done by some shops were looted, yes, but most of the damage was actually done by some of the riot cops who has had several complaints against him for harassment and assault.

The future of this movement seems dim when we have leadership more concerned with their public image than with forcing real change, but there is something to be hopeful about in that many radicals are realizing that we can no longer depend on the whim of liberals to organize protests and that we ourselves must take the reins and move our cause forward. The majority of people are in support of the protests and more are becoming more radicalized by their involvement daily. We must reject the liberal viewpoint and move forward with revolutionary demands and action!

“The worker ant soon realized protest was more fruitful than trying to change things from the inside"
Statement of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organization on the uprisings in the United States.

In the United States of America there has been a social outburst unprecedented in many years, both because of the extent of the protests and because of their expressions of combativeness. The assassination of George Floyd by the police in Minneapolis has caused thousands of men and women to take to the streets in more than 120 cities in all states of the country, united in the cry “No justice, No peace.”

The quickly spreading of the protests that began in Minneapolis and the social and political connotations they now have around the country, express how repressed the discontent and the refusal of several problems were among the population, some of which have become even more visible and others have been exacerbated by the effect of the Covid 19 pandemic. The people of the United States refuse the racism, the deterioration of the working and living conditions, the vertiginous growth of unemployment (40 million unemployed in the last months), the high level of mortality caused by the action of the pandemic, which fundamentally affects the poorest, the blacks, the Hispanics, the migrants, the xenophobia and the white supremacism promoted by President Donald Trump and the dominant circles of power, that is to say, it is a struggle that questions the prevailing capitalist system.

The events that are happening now in the United States -which we saw months before in several countries of Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa- are easily to be explained when we look at how capitalism acts against workers and peoples to protect the reproduction of capital and the increase of its owners’ profits. However, the mobilizations in the US have a particular importance and transcendence, since they take place in the main capitalist-imperialist economy of the world, showing that the most developed powers are not protected from the struggle of the masses.

Where there is oppression and exploitation, there is resistance and struggle of the workers and peoples.

Around the world, the discontent and repugnance of the workers and peoples is growing because their living conditions are more affected as the capitalist economy shrinks. The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic, on the world economy and on each country, principally affect the workers, the unemployed and underemployed, the homeless, the landless, migrants, and the most poor sectors of society, which makes it possible to foresee that new rebellions, new struggles will spread around the world for justice, for social and political rights, against oppression and the exploitation.

The International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (CIPOML) expresses its solidarity with the workers, youth and women who have struggled in the United States and condemns the brutal answer given by the government of Donald Trump; we condemn the mobilization of military troops and the National Guard, the declaration of the state of emergency and the curfews in several states, the violent repression that has cost the lives of other citizens in the protests who, nevertheless, have not been able to stop the indignation and the presence of thousands of fighters in the streets.

We invite the workers and peoples of the world, the parties and organizations who are members of our Conference to keep and organise new demonstrations of solidarity with the peoples of the USA and condemnation against American imperialism.

International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations
June 2020
This Juneteenth: honor the past, fight for the future

American Party of Labor
The American Party of Labor is... a revolutionary working class organization. Our aim is to abolish the capitalist system and replace it with a socialist, working democracy, a system based on the principle laid out by Marx, “from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.” There can be no true freedom or democracy, we argue, when billionaires have more wealth than the bottom 90% of Americans.

Who Can Join? How Do I Get Involved?
Every working person who is open to our plan for change, agrees with our Program and Platform and is over the age of 18 is welcome to join. To look at our joining procedure, activity, membership FAQ, and more: please visit: bit.ly/JoinTheAPL You can find everything that you should know about us here, and you can contact us and connect to members in your area. If we don’t have a presence in your city, we’ll get to know you and help you establish one.

Why be Marxist-Leninists in the USA in the 21st century?
There is an important fundamental difference between Marx and the so-called anti-capitalist or “third way” theories. Marx, unlike many thinkers of his day, did not just see a problem with capitalism that could be mitigated. Instead, he and his comrades analyzed capitalism itself to understand how the system worked. Marx’s ideas for revolution are based off of that analysis, and the experiences of the struggles in Europe of 1848. Solutions to the problems of capitalism can only be reached by understanding and observing the system itself, textured with the political reality of the country and historical struggles. This is why we think revolutionary history is worth talking about, and making part of our platform.

Regarding the regulation of capitalism and emergent social democratic reform movements, it is not uncommon that capitalist states restrict the private sector for various reasons. The problem is that political power is still stacked in favor of the ruling class, they have every avenue and all the resources necessary undo reforms and regulations. What truly led to the collapse of the socialist bloc was not the lack of political will, which was ultimately too radical, but rather that these nations pursued market style reforms until they had more or less become capitalist countries. As we have seen in the US, liberal victories are short-lived.

Today, social democratic movements would have us do much the same. If not less – regular capitalists 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 without putting the working class in power. We cannot face climate change, resurgent fascism, police brutality, the exploitation of oppressed nations, and the threat of American imperialism around the world without a revolutionary, centrally organized movement.

The American Party of Labor has a more generalized list of our goals.
http://thetheredphoenixapl.org
http://AmericanPartyofLabor.org/

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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 conscious application of Marxist-Leninist ideology.
2. The American Party of Labor maintains that value in society is produced by human action within the material world. That is to say, value is created by the consumption of labor power. The working classes, which have only their labor power to sell for their daily sustenance, therefore make production possible. We call for the reorganization of society to provide the means of production to the working class to be administered either under an elected or selected management or collectively through a council system.
3. The American Party of Labor demands the abolition of private property and that all means of production be in the hands of the working class. Profit under capitalism is extracted 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 labor plus the necessary deductions to support the state and its various cultural, economic and social support projects.
4. The American Party of Labor demands that all oppressed nations within the context of the American Empire, including, but by no means limited to, Indigenous peoples, Native Hawaiians, Guamanians and Puerto Ricans (within the context of Puerto Rico), be given national self-determination as to whether or not they wish to remain in the American socialist state, which shall be constructed on the remnants of the United States. We call for the end of the so-called Commonwealth system in all U.S. imperial possessions. The nations in these political organizations should either choose to become a U.S. state or an independent country.
5. The American Party of Labor demands the cancellation of all current debt held by developing countries to the U.S. These loans were not made with the intention of helping the people of these countries, but rather to enslave those countries with debt.
6. The American Party of Labor is a party against all imperialism. We are opposed to all wars of aggression on the world stage and all other threats of war and military intervention. We call for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from abroad. We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all occupied peoples and with all nations living 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 peoples around the globe struggling for their emancipation from their own systems of exploitation are our allies. We extend our hands to all revolutionary organizations guided by Marxism-Leninism worldwide and to national liberation movements of exploited peoples of all countries because our cause is one and the same.
8. The American Party of Labor demands the U.S. withdrawal from NATO and other imperialist alliances.
9. The American Party of Labor stands fully against the militarization of the U.S.-Mexican border. It supports the rights of immigrants and the ending of neo-liberal policies in other countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, that drive sustenance farmers off their lands and to the United States due to a lack of economic opportunity in their native countries.
10. The American Party of Labor has a more generalized list of our demands and positions in a separate document called the Party Platform.

How is the American Party of Labor Different From Other Organizations?

An Anti-Revisionist, Internationalist Party:
The American Party of Labor is a dedicated anti-revisionist party, opposed to concessions to capitalists, and critical of all imperialist actions by the US, Russia, and China. The APL is an observer member in the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO), and participates in the international anti-revisionist struggle.

A Party of Working Class People:
The American Party of Labor is made up of workers fighting for workers rights. Many of our members are in active union and unionization struggles, and we all do our political work after clocking out.

A Party of Equals:
The APL is active in the fight for the rights of women, oppressed nations, the LGBTQ+ community, and immigrants, and for the community control of police departments. In 2019, the APL was a founding member in the National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression.

Forever Anti-Fascist: We take the anti-fascist legacy of the Marxist-Leninist movement. Members of the American Party of Labor are dedicated anti-fascists, and active in movements against the Far-Right on college campuses, and the barbaric treatment of immigrants at the border.

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