

Mumia Abu-Jamal: After 100,000

written by Struggle - La Lucha

May 28, 2020



Memorial for COVID-19 victims at Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery.

What happens when the counter strikes 100,000? Nothing.

One hundred thousand American dead; that means, for all intents and purposes, nothing much. For does the counter stop counting? Or does it continue rolling on like the mighty Mississippi River?

Is 100,000 an end or just another number? And then summer begins to emerge and people rush out-of-doors to get some socializing in. What happens in the next two weeks — a spike, a dozen spikes?

It must be said that even as the official number strikes 100,000, the official number isn't the real one, for the U.S. is so stingy with testing that thousands of people, some who died at home, were never tested. How many homeless people have died, and do you really think they get tested?

In times like these, all people are not created equal. For Black folk, this has been a time of ineffable loss. For many workers — cleaners, nurses, orderlies, bus drivers, cab drivers and the like — their work was on the front line of the contagion of the coronavirus.

As America now opens its doors, what will they find: a new day or more death?

From Imprisoned Nation, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Listen to Mumia's commentary on [Prison Radio](#).



COVID-19 facts to counter the U.S.

anti-China campaign

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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The U.S. campaign of slander against China regarding its response to the coronavirus can't be seen only as electoral damage control for Donald Trump, nor should it be interpreted only as friction between two economic rivals with billions of dollars at stake.

Not that those aren't factors. But, even with its historic concessions to the global capitalist economy, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party showcases the superiority of socialist planning in the fight against the coronavirus and points toward a future where private ownership can be eliminated.

The anti-China propaganda, along with Trump's trade war and growing Pentagon threats toward China, are all part of the global class struggle.

The danger for the U.S. ruling class is that literally millions of young people in the U.S. are already fed up with the capitalist agenda of racism, war and gaping inequality, and since the election campaign of Bernie Sanders the fear of uttering the word "socialism" seems to have evaporated.

Exposing the lies about China is an important part of building a fightback movement against rampant U.S. capitalism and imperialism.

China did not conceal anything about the outbreak.

On Dec. 31, 2019, China complied with International Health Regulations — the United Nations' system of monitoring potential epidemics — and notified the World Health Organization (WHO) that there were 27 cases of a mysterious pneumonia-like illness in Wuhan. Nothing was known yet about its ability to spread pre-

symptomatically or from humans to humans.

On Jan. 12, Chinese scientists shared the virus's genome via the internet. It was the fastest this was ever accomplished.

On Jan. 22, President Xi Jinping spoke personally with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron about the outbreak. Ma Xiwei, the head of China's National Health Commission, spoke with U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar on Jan. 27, and senior Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi spoke directly with China's most rabid accuser - Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

In fact, according to a recent timeline [published by China to refute the slanders](#) being spread by the U.S., China briefed the U.S. on coronavirus epidemic prevention on Feb. 3 for the 30th time!

The novel coronavirus was not manufactured.

Scientists from Scripps Research Institute published the results of a study in the journal [Nature Medicine](#) on March 17. It is the most widely cited information on the origin of the virus that causes COVID-19. "Our analyses clearly show that SARS-CoV-2 is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated virus," they wrote.

They point to two pieces of evidence that they consider conclusive:

First, the virus's ability to attach itself to human cells so successfully indicates it happened through natural selection — not human engineering. And second, the molecular structure resembles viruses found in bats and pangolins more closely than it resembles any of the six other identified coronaviruses that infect humans.

"These two features of the virus ... rule out laboratory manipulation as a potential origin for SARS-CoV-2," concluded Kristian Anderson of Scripps.

There was no accident at the lab in Wuhan that “leaked” the virus.

The Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) is one of about 50 high-security labs that study infectious microbes in the world. At this particular lab, they study coronavirus samples taken from bats. After the genome of SARS-CoV-2 was shared with the rest of the world by China, lab scientist Shi Zhengli compared the DNA to every virus sample at the lab. All of the samples there were of viruses from previous outbreaks — too dissimilar to be the cause of COVID-19.

Viral samples at the WIV lab are handled with strict protocols, as they are in all Biosafety Level 4 laboratories. Some samples are chemically deactivated for study and all samples are frozen in liquid nitrogen and then kept in a freezer set to minus 80 degrees Celsius. All technicians wear double sets of personal protective equipment (PPE).

There have been accidents that resulted in shutdowns of similar laboratories. One such shutdown occurred at a U.S. lab at Fort Detrick, Md., in August 2019. But none have occurred at the WIV lab.

China acted to correct Wuhan authorities for the reprimand of Dr Li Wenliang.

Dr Li, an ophthalmologist who worked at Wuhan Central Hospital, noticed a number of cases of a pneumonia-like illness that presented similarities with the deadly SARS virus. He shared his observation with colleagues on an internal email network. On Dec. 31, Wuhan police reprimanded him for “spreading false information.”

News of the incident spread across social media. When central leaders in Beijing learned of it, they, in turn, reprimanded the authorities in Wuhan. The mayor of Wuhan and police officials apologized publicly.

Sadly, Dr Li died from COVID-19 in February. But, Li was not a “whistleblower.” The

efforts to learn about COVID-19 and prevent a health catastrophe were underway in China before Dec. 31. In fact, that is the same day that the first notice to the WHO took place.

In the U.S., millions have lost their livelihoods overnight. The deadly virus has hit oppressed communities — where deep poverty blocks access to health care — the hardest. The racist prison system is now a massive network of death traps. Seniors trapped in nursing homes run for profit are dying in startling numbers.

This disaster can't be assigned just to Trump or to the Republican Party. The blame belongs on the doorstep of capitalism. The diversion created by slanders against China has to be exposed.



Xi Jinping: Fighting COVID-19 through solidarity and cooperation

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 28, 2020
Statement by H.E. Xi Jinping

President of the People's Republic of China
At Virtual Event of Opening of the 73rd World Health Assembly
Beijing, May 18, 2020

Fighting COVID-19 Through Solidarity and Cooperation

Building a Global Community of Health for All

President of the World Health Assembly,
Director General of the World Health Organization,
Dear Delegates,

To begin with, I wish to say that it is of significant importance for this World Health Assembly to be held at such a critical moment as the human race battles this novel coronavirus.

What we are facing is the most serious global public health emergency since the end of World War II. Catching the world by surprise, COVID-19 has hit over 210 countries and regions, affected more than seven billion people around the world and claimed over 300,000 precious lives. I mourn for every life lost and express condolences to the bereaved families.

The history of human civilization is one of fighting diseases and tiding over disasters. The virus does not respect borders. Nor is race or nationality relevant in the face of the disease. Confronted by the ravages of COVID-19, the international community has not flinched. The people of all countries have tackled the virus head on. Around the world, people have looked out for each other and pulled together as one. With love and compassion, we have forged extraordinary synergy in the fight against COVID-19.

In China, after making painstaking efforts and enormous sacrifice, we have turned the tide on the virus and protected the life and health of our people. All along, we

have acted with openness, transparency and responsibility. We have provided information to WHO and relevant countries in a most timely fashion. We have released the genome sequence at the earliest possible time. We have shared control and treatment experience with the world without reservation. We have done everything in our power to support and assist countries in need.

Mr. President,

Even as we meet, the virus is still raging, and more must be done to bring it under control. To this end, I want to make the following proposals:

First, we must do everything we can for COVID-19 control and treatment.

This is a most urgent task. We must always put the people first, for nothing in the world is more precious than people's lives. We need to deploy medical expertise and critical supplies to places where they are needed the most. We need to take strong steps in such key areas as prevention, quarantine, detection, treatment and tracing. We need to move as fast as we can to curb the global spread of the virus and do our best to stem cross-border transmission. We need to step up information sharing, exchange experience and best practice, and pursue international cooperation on testing methods, clinical treatment, and vaccine and medicine research and development. We also need to continue supporting global research by scientists on the source and transmission routes of the virus.

Second, the World Health Organization should lead the global response.

Under the leadership of Dr. Tedros, WHO has made a major contribution in leading and advancing the global response to COVID-19. Its good work is applauded by the international community. At this crucial juncture, to support WHO is to support international cooperation and the battle for saving lives as well. China calls on the international community to increase political and financial support for WHO so as to mobilize resources worldwide to defeat the virus.

Third, we must provide greater support for Africa. Developing countries, African countries in particular, have weaker public health systems. Helping them build capacity must be our top priority in COVID-19 response. The world needs to provide more material, technological and personnel support for African countries. China has sent a tremendous amount of medical supplies and assistance to over 50 African countries and the African Union. Five Chinese medical expert teams have also been sent to the African continent. In total, in the past seven decades, over 200 million people in Africa have received care and treatment from Chinese medical teams. At present, 46 resident Chinese medical teams are in Africa helping with COVID-19 containment efforts locally.

Fourth, we must strengthen global governance in the area of public health. We human beings will eventually prevail over the coronavirus. Yet this may not be the last time a major health emergency comes knocking at our door. In view of the weaknesses and deficiencies exposed by COVID-19, we need to improve the governance system for public health security. We need to respond more quickly to public health emergencies and establish global and regional reserve centers of anti-epidemic supplies. China supports the idea of a comprehensive review of the global response to COVID-19 after it is brought under control to sum up experience and address deficiencies. This work should be based on science and professionalism, led by WHO and conducted in an objective and impartial manner.

Fifth, we must restore economic and social development. While working on an ongoing basis to contain the virus, countries where conditions permit may reopen businesses and schools in an orderly fashion in observance of WHO's professional recommendations. In the meantime, international macroeconomic policy coordination should be stepped up and the global industrial and supply chains be kept stable and unclogged if we are to restore growth to the world economy.

Sixth, we must strengthen international cooperation. Mankind is a community

with a shared future. Solidarity and cooperation is our most powerful weapon for defeating the virus. This is the key lesson the world has learned from fighting HIV/AIDS, Ebola, avian influenza, influenza A (H1N1) and other major epidemics. And solidarity and cooperation is a sure way through which we, the people of the world, can defeat this novel coronavirus.

Mr. President,

China stands for the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind. China takes it as its responsibility to ensure not just the life and health of its own citizens, but also global public health. For the sake of boosting international cooperation against COVID-19, I would like to announce the following:

- China will provide US\$2 billion over two years to help with COVID-19 response and with economic and social development in affected countries, especially developing countries.
- China will work with the U.N. to set up a global humanitarian response depot and hub in China, ensure the operation of anti-epidemic supply chains and foster “green corridors” for fast-track transportation and customs clearance.
- China will establish a cooperation mechanism for its hospitals to pair up with 30 African hospitals and accelerate the building of the Africa CDC headquarters to help the continent ramp up its disease preparedness and control capacity.
- COVID-19 vaccine development and deployment in China, when available, will be made a global public good. This will be China’s contribution to ensuring vaccine accessibility and affordability in developing countries.
- China will work with other G20 members to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the poorest countries. China is also ready to work with the international community to bolster support for the hardest-hit countries under the

greatest strain of debt service, so that they could tide over the current difficulties.

To conclude, I call on all of us to come together and work as one. Let's make concerted efforts to protect the life and health of people in all countries. Let's work together to safeguard planet Earth, our common home. Let's work together to build a global community of health for all!

I thank you.



New York cops practice viral profiling

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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It is widely reported that New York City police are exploiting social distancing rules, meant to protect people from the coronavirus, to practice brutal “racial profiling.”

[The Brooklyn Paper](#) reported on May 12 that “New Yorkers of color made up 93 percent of COVID-19 related arrests in the city since mid-March, according to newly released Police Department data.

“Between March 16 and May 10, cops made 125 arrests citywide that were in some way related to the novel coronavirus — and 116 were people of color, according to a May 12 release.”

Borough	Total Arrests	People of color arrested
The Bronx	46	46
Brooklyn	39	36
Queens	22	19
Manhattan	17	15
Staten Island	1	0

On May 11, some 50 people marched from Foley Square to New York Police Department headquarters at One Police Plaza in Manhattan to protest the bias. Anthony Beckford, president of the Brooklyn chapter of Black Lives Matter and a local City Council candidate, tweeted: “This does not happen to white people who violate social distancing. They are using the pandemic as a weapon for further brutality.”

News reports on local TV and videos on social media show police using the pandemic rules as an excuse to conduct “stop and frisk” assaults, enforcing their violent authority. The videos show police placing Black and Brown people in grapple holds, forcing them to the ground and kneeling on their necks while striking them in the head.

One [widely shared video](#) shows four cops wrestle a woman to the ground and handcuff her in a Brooklyn subway station while her small child looks on. The police claimed that she was arrested for not wearing her mask correctly.

Another clip shows a member of the NYPD punching a man in the face during an arrest in Brooklyn on May 3, before threatening bystanders with a baton for not wearing masks. Three police tackled and arrested 21-year-old Stephon Scott. One of the cops strikes Scott in the head as the detainee lays pinned to the ground, before taking out his baton and threatening to arrest another man for failing to wear a mask — despite the fact that the cop's own mask does not cover his nose, and one of his fellow officers is not wearing a facial covering at all.

“City Hall and the NYPD need to seriously reconsider social distancing enforcement that leads to escalations involving the use of tasers and violent assaults,” Tina Luongo of the Legal Aid Society said. “What is equally disturbing is that some of these officers — who were ostensibly enforcing social distancing laws — were in violation of those very same laws themselves by not wearing protective masks, endangering the lives of all New Yorkers around them.”

“The arrests of black and Hispanic residents, several of them filmed and posted online, occurred on the same balmy days that other photographs circulated showing police officers handing out masks to mostly white visitors at parks in [Lower Manhattan](#), [Williamsburg](#) and [Long Island City](#),” noted a report in the [New York Times](#).



Nurses who refused to care for coronavirus patients without N95 masks are suspended, union fights back and wins

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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Los Angeles — In mid-April, 10 nurses employed at Providence Saint John's Hospital in Santa Monica, Calif., were suspended for demanding the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep them from infection and possible death due to exposure to the deadly COVID-19 virus while working on infected patients.

The hospital administration claimed that the nurses already had the necessary equipment to remain safe and that N95 masks were not needed. However, one nurse at the hospital told the [Los Angeles Times](#) that she knew personally that this is not true. Angela Gatdula said she was exposed to COVID-19 while treating patients with the virus. She tested positive for the virus on April 9.

Gatdula said she should have been given the available N95 masks since she was treating COVID-19 patients.

One of the suspended nurses, Jack Cline, who is especially vulnerable to the virus because he is also diabetic, told the L.A. Times that he refused to go into a room with an infected patient without the proper protection. Even doctors in that room, who did have N95 masks on, told him he should not enter without the proper mask. However, he was suspended and, like the other 10 nurses, threatened by the hospital administration, saying they may pursue having his nursing license removed.

However, that's not where the story ends.

The hospital administration underestimated the militancy of the nurses and their belonging to the largest nurses' union in the U.S., with more than 150,000 members nationwide. The National Nurses United is the largest union and professional association of registered nurses in U.S. history, the labor organization says on its web site.

Add to that the solidarity of the progressive movement and activists who came out consistently for the nurses. A well-attended and loud-honking car caravan protest on April 21 was organized by the union, which invited the community of folks in solidarity with the nurses to come out and demand the nurses be reinstated and given the necessary protections to do their jobs and remain safe.

For over an hour, honking horns were heard from cars adorned with signs in support of the nurses and circling the perimeter of the hospital.

The nurses' demands included greater hospital transparency regarding PPE, the lifting of ordered leave for nurses without masks who refuse to treat patients, and the availability of hotel rooms where they can quarantine.

And ...

On that very same day, the hospital [reinstated the nurse](#) and will now supply nurses with N95 masks for those working with infected patients.

In spite of the challenges to continuing activism that exist during this COVID-19 crisis, with unity, creativity and especially solidarity, we can still make gains!



Workers' lives before meatpacker profits

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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Donald Trump celebrated Workers' Memorial Day on April 28 by ordering dangerously unsafe meatpacking and poultry plants to remain open.

Twenty workers in the industry have already died and nearly 5,000 have tested positive for the coronavirus, [according to the Center for Disease Control](#). The 115 infected facilities with 130,000 workers were in 19 states.

Even 100 U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors [have caught the virus](#).

Working in these slaughterhouses was always risky. [Between 2015 and 2017](#), an average of two workers a week had one of their limbs amputated.

Workers having their hands or fingers cut off didn't bother the bleach promoter in the White House. Trump invoked the Defense Production Act in order to shield monopolies like [Tyson Foods](#), with annual sales of \$42 billion, from lawsuits.

"We're going to sign an executive order today, I believe, and that'll solve any liability problems," [said Trump](#).

Green Bay, Wis., [Mayor Eric Genrich](#) said Trump's order gave a legal blank check to "meat packing conglomerates." Five hundred workers in the nearby JBS meatpacking plant contracted COVID-19.

Meatpacking executives were "thrilled," [according to the president](#), after he called them. "They're so happy. They're all gung-ho, and we solved their problems"

There's no mention of Trump talking to any elected union officials representing workers that use "dangerous equipment," work on "slippery floors," and suffer from "high noise levels" and "musculoskeletal disorders," according to the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#). Workers aren't too "gung-ho" about being exposed to animal blood and feces, either.

Sacrificing workers for profit

Trump's executive order came two days after John H. Tyson, chairman of the board of Tyson Foods, placed [newspaper ads](#) claiming "the food supply chain is vulnerable."

Who's really vulnerable are workers like Tara Williams, who's employed at the Tyson poultry plant in Camilla, Ga. Her friend and co-worker, Eloise Willis, died of COVID-19 on April 1. It took management two weeks to put up a picture of Willis and

tell workers she had died.

Eloise Willis worked a 10-hour shift at Tyson for 35 years. She and her fellow union members handled 100,000 chickens per shift.

Big-hearted John Tyson is now offering workers a \$500 bonus in May and again in July if they have [“good” attendance](#). The blood money shouldn’t take too much out of Tyson’s [\\$2 billion fortune](#).

Work or starve

No one should have to work in dangerous conditions. If the entire U.S. workforce were exposed to COVID-19 at the same rate as meatpacking and poultry workers are, over 5 million would have tested positive.

Because of the meat monopolies’ drive for profits, employees are often placed close together on a production line. This virtually guarantees a high infection rate.

Despite the pandemic, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds is telling workers to go back to work or lose unemployment benefits. Iowa Workforce Development said that any worker refusing to go back to work because they fear catching the coronavirus would be considered a “voluntary quit” — and denied benefits.

[Reynolds went ahead](#) with loosening social-distancing restrictions in the Hawkeye State even though seven epidemiology and biostatistics professors from the University of Iowa advised the governor not to do so.

The entire labor and peoples’ movements have to organize against workers being forced to go back to unsafe companies. No worker should have to choose between losing benefits or getting sick and possibly dying on the job.

During World War II, a largely Black force of sailors loaded munitions at Port

Chicago, Calif., 48 miles from San Francisco. Unsafe conditions led to a July 17, 1944, explosion in which [320 sailors were killed.](#)

Their families were originally supposed to get a \$5,000 benefit. This was reduced to \$3,000 after Mississippi Congressman John Rankin realized most of the victims were African American.

When many surviving Black sailors refused to go back to work under the same conditions, they were labeled “cowards” by the corporate newspapers. Fifty sailors were charged with mutiny, a death penalty offense.

Future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall led the defense campaign that won the sailors’ release in 1946.

Trump and the capitalist class are trying to force workers back to dangerous conditions just like the Navy brass ordered Black sailors back to loading explosives at Port Chicago. But human life is more important than meat profits.



Essential workers protest at Ralph's supermarket in Hollywood

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UFCW Local 770 called a protest at "Rock n Roll Ralph's" supermarket on Sunset Blvd in Hollywood, Calif. Nineteen workers have tested positive for Covid 19. The union called for drivers to stay in their cars and make noise as they drove by the socially-distanced picket line. The sound of horns from passers-by was deafening — expressing the great appreciation that people have for these essential workers. While cases of infection and deaths may be declining in much of California and other parts of the country, Los Angeles has not yet "flattened the curve."



Blaming the victims

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Have any union members been seen at the recent Tea Party rallies at the state capitols? Working and poor people need jobs and income. But they're not too keen on rolling back the absolutely necessary public health measures combating the coronavirus.

The United Automobile Workers union said "No!" to the automakers who wanted to prematurely open the car factories and endanger employees.

It's the working class — especially Asian, Black, Indigenous and Latinx people — who have suffered most from this crisis. [One hundred transit workers have died](#) of COVID-19, including 70 in the New York City area.

Retired union members have also died from the coronavirus. Among them is longtime Transit Workers Union Local 100 activist [Arnold Cherry](#), who was a key organizer in the 1980 New York City transit strike.

Thousands of packing and poultry workers, many of whom are immigrants, have

been exposed to COVID-19. [United Food and Commercial Workers union steward Enock Benjamin died at home on April 3](#) while his family frantically waited for an ambulance. Brother Benjamin worked at the JBS slaughterhouse in Souderton, Pa., just outside Philadelphia.

The tragic death of Black workers Arnold Cherry and Enock Benjamin — or any workers — doesn't seem to bother billionaire bosses Dick Uihlein and Liz Uihlein too much. Why should it?

Profits continue to roll in at the family-owned Uline shipping supply outfit since it's considered an "essential business." Many of its employees — who don't have a union — are forced to work in the company's warehouses and offices.

Liz Uihlein claimed "the media is overblowing COVID-19," in a [March 13 email](#). She's now urging employees to support recalling Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers and lift the Badger State's stay-at-home order.

Racism hurts all poor and working people

Liz and Dick Uihlein put their corporate headquarters and a warehouse in the southeastern Wisconsin village of Pleasant Prairie. This 90-percent-white suburb is 44 miles away from Milwaukee's Black community and a considerable car distance from Racine and Kenosha, Wis., as well.

Uline could have set up shop on the 360-acre site of the former A.O. Smith plant on Milwaukee's North Side, where 7,000 workers used to earn union pay and union benefits. It's across 27th Street from [ZIP code 53206](#), where 62 percent of Black adult men are either incarcerated or have been in prison.

Wisconsin's poorest neighborhood, a COVID-19 hotspot, was made poor by racism and deliberate deindustrialization. It's a vivid example of why the labor movement needs to demand "Jobs not jails!"

The Uihleins could also have located their HQ in what was the family-owned Schlitz brewing complex. It's across Third Street from Bronzeville, Milwaukee's original Black neighborhood.

Uline's Pleasant Prairie location was chosen as an excuse not to hire Black and Latinx workers, whom capitalists view as more likely to join a union. While workers of color are last hired, all Uline workers, including white workers, lack union protection.

The Uihleins supported the Tea Party rally in Madison, Wis., on April 24. Maybe 1,500 people showed up with their Trump flags.

While 26 million workers lost their jobs, U.S. billionaires increased their collective stash by \$282 billion between March 18 and April 10, [according to the Institute for Policy Studies](#).

One of the organizers of the Madison Trumpfest was [Eric O'Keefe, a longtime political hack for the billionaire Koch family](#). He said "to shut down our rural counties because of what's happening in New York City, or in some sense Milwaukee, is draconian."

O'Keefe is really saying "to hell with Black and Brown people dying in the big cities."

COVID-19 doesn't discriminate, but capitalism does

The coronavirus is sweeping through Black communities like a plague. The real killer is poverty.

The reason African Americans account for [70 percent of Louisiana's deaths from COVID-19](#) is linked to Black women in the state making 47 cents for every dollar made by white men. The virus is just as deadly within Indigenous, Latinx and

immigrant communities.

Fifty-four years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. declared: “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.”

It’s injustice when a much higher percentage of people of color suffer from asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure, making them more vulnerable to die from the coronavirus.

The White House twists these diseases of poverty into telling victims “it’s your own fault.” That was the point of Surgeon General Jerome Adams’ April 10 lecture, where he told poor people to “step up” to fight COVID-19.

“We need you to do this, if not for yourself, then for your abuela,” [said the Trump tool](#). “Do it for your granddaddy. Do it for your Big Mama. Do it for your Pop-Pop.”

It’s not the fault of people in the South Bronx that they [suffer from asthma at a rate 8 to 12 times higher than the U.S. average](#). It’s the fault of capitalist air pollution.

It’s not the fault of Black and Latinx workers who catch the coronavirus because they work in essential jobs.

It’s not the fault of family members who get ill because they live in overcrowded apartments. High rents are the cause, along with a capitalist government that refuses to build affordable housing.

One of the first acts of the Cuban Revolution was to limit the amount of rent and utility payments to 10 percent of a family’s income. Sixty years later, Cuban doctors are fighting the coronavirus all over the globe.



COVID-19 pandemic is a historic event that will intensify working-class struggle worldwide

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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April 24, 2020 — A friend and comrade, Mikol, recently explained that the COVID-19 virus pandemic is of such proportions on a world scale that it will surely intensify the struggle of the workers and poor for social and racial justice, and against capitalism itself. Globally, 2,761,121 cases of the COVID-19 virus have been confirmed, of which, 193,671 people have died, but the real figures are even higher. The overwhelming majority of the victims are from the working class and poor of the world, who are always the most vulnerable.

While the COVID-19 virus was not man-made in a laboratory as the right-wing, anti-China media have charged, the lack of medicines and personnel, the lack of hospitals, of beds, of ventilators, of masks and gloves, the lack of planning to confront the virus crisis, was a conscious decision made by the ruling classes of the United States and Europe.

For the super wealthy, defending the lives of the workers and poor, who would die in

a pandemic, was not a “profitable” investment to make.

According to Google News, the numbers of confirmed cases and dead as of April 24 are:

United States: 905,492 cases confirmed, 51,209 dead.

Spain: 219,764 cases confirmed, 22,524 dead.

Italy: 192,994 cases confirmed, 25,969 dead.

Germany: 154,159 cases confirmed, 5,653 dead.

Britain: 143,464 cases confirmed, 19,506 dead.

France: 122,577 cases confirmed, 22,245 dead.

Turkey: 104,912 cases confirmed, 2,600 dead.

The world death toll figure of 193,671 is horrible and staggering, but the reason so many have died is not only because the COVID-19 virus is deadly; it is also because capitalism, the system of production of goods for profit, did not consider it profitable to produce medical supplies to be stockpiled for a future pandemic.

Politicians and the rich knew pandemic was approaching

One has only to see the video clips of President George W. Bush in 2005, of President Barack Obama in 2014 and of billionaire Bill Gates in 2015, to name a few of the spokesmen for capitalism, all of them hypocritically warning of a pending pandemic outbreak. Netflix even produced a documentary series, titled: “Pandemia.” Additionally, the U.S. intelligence agencies reported to President Donald Trump in November and December of 2019 that a virus pandemic had started in China.

But even with the warnings, the big business owners of industry and finance of the U.S. and Europe, driven by their blind urge to obtain greater and greater profits, consciously chose to ignore the warnings. After all, other areas of the capitalist world economy were generating huge fortunes in profits, and there isn’t much profit

in producing medical supplies for storage, to protect working people and the poor.

Obama and Trump giveaways to corporations and the rich

Economically speaking, the big corporations of the U.S. were doing quite well under presidents Obama and Trump. Under Obama, to prevent the 2008 recession from further collapsing the capitalist economy, the big corporations received a \$787 billion bailout package (the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009). The value of the stock market under Obama after three years registered a 53 percent gain in shareholder value as compared to when he took office.

Under Trump, the rich and super rich received a \$1.5 trillion tax cut package in 2017, and up until Feb. 19, 2020, the stock market under Trump had grown by 42 percent in shareholder value as compared to when he took office three years prior.

No money for universal health care, but plenty for war and intervention

The U.S. and NATO imperialist governments, whose workers have suffered the brunt of COVID-19 deaths thus far, have spent trillions of dollars intervening militarily against Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Iran, against the Palestinians and arming Israel, against People's Korea, Venezuela and Cuba, etc. Trump, just this week, attempting to shift the blame for his mishandling of the COVID-19 crisis, said the U.S. had spent \$8 trillion in wars in the Middle East.

Universal medical care a key demand for working class worldwide

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed how the capitalist system has failed the health care needs of the workers and poor in all capitalist countries. The pandemic has demonstrated that one cannot successfully fight a viral epidemic that spreads from person to person if part of the population has no medical coverage and is not treated. Thus, the demand for universal medical coverage is crucial at this juncture of social-political development.

Mass unemployment on the rise in the U.S. and Europe

According to the latest announcements from the federal government in the U.S., in the last month, 22 million workers have filed for unemployment insurance coverage. The Financial Times estimates that 59 million workers in Europe will suffer cuts in working hours and pay, and others will suffer temporary or permanent layoffs. The International Monetary Fund forecasts a contraction of economic growth of 7.5 percent in the Eurozone this year, with unemployment hitting 10.4 percent or higher.

It's unnecessary to keep citing figures showing the economic plunge in the works in the capitalist countries on a world scale.

Collective grieving may turn to anger

The workers on a mass scale are in shock. Some are in disbelief. Many are grieving the loss of family and friends. Their emotional understanding of the COVID-19 virus pandemic is mixed; some may see it as an act of God or an act of the Devil, others may see it as Mother Earth punishing humans for the exploitation that capitalism has thrust upon the planet.

But as the grieving process passes and unemployment sets in and is felt, the workers will look for a political understanding and for leadership to help guide the struggle for social justice in this new phase of social-political development under capitalism.

COVID-19 is not going to disappear

The COVID-19 virus is not going to disappear. Social distancing and shutting down sections of the economy were geared to buying time and limiting the number of deaths. Remember that there is no known cure for the pneumonia caused by the COVID-19 virus, and there is no vaccine to stimulate resistance to the virus as of yet.

Ordering workers to return to their jobs without having a cure for the pneumonia that the virus causes and without having a vaccine is equivalent to sentencing tens of thousands of workers to death. The grief of many may well turn into anger. Changes in mass consciousness are preceded by changes in the material conditions of social-political life. As Mikol said to me: "Tom, the COVID-19 virus pandemic is a game-changer on a world scale."

Revolutionaries dedicate their entire lives to building working-class parties and popular organizations to be able to intervene in the class struggle of the workers and poor against the capitalist system. Well, make no mistake about it, the struggle of the working class is about to burst asunder. Let us unite and achieve great victories for the workers and oppressed of the world.

[Read more about Tom Soto's historic contributions to the struggle.](#)



Pandemia del Covid-19 es un hecho

histórico, intensificará la lucha de la clase obrera en todo el mundo

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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24 de abril de 2020 — Un amigo y compañero, Mikol, me explicó recientemente que la pandemia del virus Covid-19 es de proporciones tan grandes a escala mundial que seguramente intensificará la lucha de los trabajadores y de los pobres por la justicia social y racial, y en contra del propio capitalismo. A nivel mundial, se han confirmado 2,761,121 casos del virus Covid-19, de los cuales 193,671 han muerto, pero las cifras reales son aún mayores. La gran mayoría de las víctimas son de la clase trabajadora y los pobres del mundo, que siempre son los más vulnerables.

Si bien el virus Covid-19 no fue creado por el hombre en un laboratorio, como lo han acusado los medios derechistas anti-China, la falta de medicamentos y personal, la falta de hospitales, camas, ventiladores, máscaras y guantes, la falta de planificación para confrontar la crisis del virus — fue una decisión consciente tomada por las clases dominantes de los Estados Unidos y Europa.

Para los súper ricos, defender las vidas de los trabajadores y de los pobres, que morirían en una pandemia, no fue visto como una inversión “rentable”.

Según Google News, el número de casos confirmados y muertos al 24/04/2020 son:

Estados Unidos: 905,492 casos confirmados, 51,209 muertos.

España: 219,764 casos confirmados, 22,524 muertos.

Italia: 192,994 casos confirmados, 25,969 muertos.

Alemania: 154,159 casos confirmados, 5,653 muertos.

Reino Unido: 143,464 casos confirmados, 19,506 muertos.

Francia: 122,577 casos confirmados, 22,245 muertos.

Turquía: 104,912 casos confirmados, 2,600 muertos.

Las cifras de muertes mundiales de 193,671 son horribles y asombrosas, pero la razón por la que tantos han muerto no es solo porque el virus Covid-19 es mortal, sino también porque el capitalismo, el sistema de producción de bienes para generar ganancias, no lo consideró rentable producir suministros médicos para ser almacenados para una futura pandemia.

Políticos y ricos sabían que una pandemia se acercaba

Solo hay que ver los videos del presidente Bush en 2005, del presidente Obama en 2014 y del multimillonario Bill Gates en 2015, por nombrar algunos de los portavoces del capitalismo, todos ellos hipócritamente advirtiendo de la pandemia por venir. Netflix, incluso, produjo una serie documental, titulada: “Pandemia”.

Además las Agencias de Inteligencia le informaron al presidente Trump en noviembre y diciembre de 2019 que una pandemia de virus había comenzado en China.

Pero aun con las advertencias, los grandes empresarios de la industria y las finanzas de los Estados Unidos y Europa, cegados por el impulso de obtener ganancias cada vez mayores, eligieron conscientemente ignorar las advertencias, después de todo, otras áreas de la economía mundial capitalista estaban generando enormes fortunas en ganancias, y no hay muchas ganancias en la producción de suministros médicos para el almacenamiento, para proteger a los trabajadores y los pobres.

Obama y Trump regalos para las corporaciones y los ricos

Hablando económicamente, a las grandes corporaciones de los Estados Unidos les fue bastante bien bajo los presidentes Obama y Trump. Bajo Obama, para evitar que la recesión de 2008 colapsase aún más la economía capitalista, las grandes corporaciones recibieron un paquete de rescate de \$787 mil millones (la Ley de Reinversión y Recuperación de Estados Unidos de 2009). El valor de la Bolsa de Valores bajo Obama, después de 3 años, registró un aumento de 53 por ciento en el valor de las acciones, en comparación con cuando él asumió su cargo como presidente.

Bajo Trump, los ricos y súper ricos recibieron un paquete de recortes de impuestos de \$1.5 billones en 2017, y hasta el 19 de febrero de 2020, la Bolsa de Valores bajo Trump había crecido un 42 por ciento en valor de las acciones, en comparación con cuando él asumió su cargo 3 años antes.

Sin dinero para la cobertura médica universal, fortunas para la guerra y la intervención

Los gobiernos imperialistas de los EE.UU. y de la OTAN (Organización del Tratado

del Atlántico Norte), cuyos trabajadores han sufrido la peor parte de las muertes hasta el momento, han gastado billones de dólares interviniendo militarmente contra Irak, Afganistán, Siria, Libia, Yemen, Irán, contra los palestinos y armando a Israel, contra Corea Popular, Venezuela y Cuba, etc. Trump justo esta semana, tratando de echar la culpa de su mal manejo de la crisis del covid 19, dijo que los Estados Unidos había gastado 8 billones de dólares en las guerras en el Medio Oriente.

Cobertura médica universal demanda clave para la clase trabajadora del mundo

La pandemia del Covid-19 ha expuesto cómo el sistema capitalista ha fallado en proveerle la atención médica a los trabajadores y a los pobres en todos los países capitalistas. La pandemia ha demostrado que no se puede combatir con éxito una epidemia viral que se propaga de persona en persona, si parte de la población no tiene cobertura médica y no recibe tratamiento. Por lo tanto, la demanda de Cobertura Médica Universal es crucial en esta coyuntura de desarrollo social político.

Desempleo masivo en aumento en los EE.UU. y Europa

Según los últimos anuncios del gobierno federal en los Estados Unidos, en el último mes 22 millones de trabajadores han solicitado cobertura de seguro de desempleo. El Financial Times estima que 59 millones de trabajadores en Europa sufrirán recortes en las horas de trabajo y reducciones en sus salarios, otros sufrirán la pérdida parcial y permanente de sus empleos. El Fondo Monetario Internacional pronostica una contracción del crecimiento económico del 7.5 por ciento en la zona euro este año, con un desempleo del 10.4 por ciento o más.

No es necesario seguir citando cifras que muestran la caída económica que sufrirán los países capitalistas a escala mundial.

Sufrimiento colectivo puede volverse en ira

Los trabajadores a gran escala están en un estado de shock. Algunos están incrédulos. Muchos están afligidos por la pérdida de familiares y amigos. Su comprensión emocional de la pandemia del virus Covid-19 es mixta, algunos pueden verlo como un acto de Dios o un acto del Diablo, otros pueden verlo como la madre Tierra castigando a los humanos por la explotación que el capitalismo ha impuesto sobre la Tierra.

Pero a medida que pasa el proceso de duelo y se establece y se sienta el desempleo y reducciones de salarios, los trabajadores buscarán una comprensión política y un liderazgo para ayudar a guiarlos en la lucha por la justicia social en esta fase nueva de desarrollo socio político bajo el capitalismo.

El virus de Covid-19 no va a desaparecer

El virus Covid-19 no va a desaparecer. El distanciamiento social y el cierre de sectores de la economía se llevaron a cabo para ganar tiempo y limitar el número de muertes. Recordemos que no existe una cura reconocida para la neumonía causada por el virus Covid-19 y hasta el momento tampoco existe una vacuna que estimule la resistencia al virus.

Sugerirle a los trabajadores a que regresen a sus trabajos sin tener una cura para la neumonía que causa el virus y sin tener una vacuna es equivalente a condenar a la muerte a decenas de miles de trabajadores. El dolor de muchos bien puede convertirse en ira. Los cambios en la conciencia de masas son producidos por los cambios en las condiciones materiales de la vida económica social política. Como Mikol me dijo: "Tom, la pandemia del virus Covid-19 cambia las reglas del juego a escala mundial".

Los revolucionarios dedican toda sus vidas a construir partidos de clase trabajadora

y organizaciones populares para poder intervenir en la lucha de clase de los trabajadores y los pobres en contra el sistema capitalista. Bueno, no se equivoquen al respecto, la lucha de la clase obrera está por estallar. Unámonos y logremos grandes victorias para los trabajadores y oprimidos del mundo.

