

# THE ORGANIZER



**For a Labor Party, For a Workers' International**

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## 'You Can't Break with Wall Street Without Breaking with the Twin Parties of Wall Street!'



Everywhere he goes, Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders rails at Wall Street and the “oligarchy” that hold the reins of the U.S. economy, increasing economic inequalities and dismantling the U.S. middle class. Everywhere he calls for a “political revolution” against Wall Street and the big banks.

Echoing almost verbatim Sanders’ populist rhetoric, Hillary Clinton — a long-time spokesperson for U.S. finance capital — has also targeted the banksters, understanding that she wouldn’t get a hearing if she didn’t jump on the anti-Wall Street bandwagon. Her stump speech now almost always includes

this formulation: “Wall Street can never be allowed to threaten Main Street again. No bank can be too big to fail, no executive too powerful to jail.”

These speeches may sound good, but they mask the essential question facing working people in this 2016 presidential election: You cannot break with Wall Street without breaking with the twin parties of Wall Street: the Democrats and Republicans. And this is something that neither Sanders nor Clinton intends to do.

In a comment to the *Huffington Post* on July 30, 2015, Sanders said: “I made the promise I would not run outside the two-

party system, and I will keep that promise. I do not want to be responsible for electing some right-wing Republican to be president of the United States.” Translation: He will toe the Democratic Party line; he will make his peace with Wall Street.

As for Clinton, she is, in the words of the Labor Fightback Network, “one of the main candidates, if not the main candidate, of Wall Street in the coming elections; her multi-million dollar corporate funding attests to this.”

True, Sanders is raising many important demands, but experience over the past centu-

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# THE ORGANIZER

## WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE STAND FOR

*The Organizer* is the publication of Socialist Organizer, the U.S. fraternal section of the Fourth International.

Since we began publication of *The Organizer* in February 1991, we have focused the newspaper on helping to advance the struggle for independent political action by the working class and all the oppressed — at home and abroad.

That focus governs all the activity of Socialist Organizer. It is the reason behind our persistent advocacy of a Labor Party based on the trade unions and rooted in struggles of the working class and all the oppressed sectors of society, a Labor Party that charts a clean and decisive break with the twin parties of the bosses, the Democrats and Republicans.

Consistent with this view, *The Organizer* is a Forum that is open to all individual and currents in the workers' movement seeking to build a Labor Party and a Workers' International.

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We welcome contributions from our readers. Signed articles do not necessarily reflect the positions of *The Organizer*.

# ... Break with Wall Street!

ry has shown that it is not possible to win these demands and advance the interests of working people and the oppressed within the Democratic Party, a party run by and for the capitalist elite — that is, Wall Street.

The oppressed and exploited have risen up time and again in U.S. history. But each of these mass movements — such as the militant labor movement of the 1930s and '40s, the Black liberation struggle, or the movement against the war in Vietnam — was severely stunted, and eventually derailed, by the fact that they remained subordinated to the twin parties of the bosses. A political alternative — a party based on the trade unions and organizations of the oppressed and truly representing the working class majority — was missing.

### Always a “Lesser-Evil” Excuse

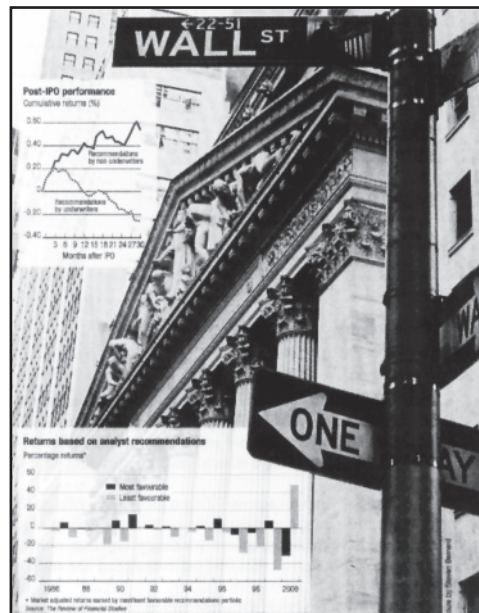
The top trade union officials, who remain tied at the hip to the Democratic Party, will always find reasons why working people should support the “lesser-evil” Democrat against the Republican nominee. To do otherwise, the main argument goes, would be to guarantee a future of union-busting, austerity, wars and racism. This election year, we can anticipate that the “lesser-evil” rhetoric will be at an all-time high.

But “lesser-evilism” is precisely what has moved the political pendulum so far to the right over the years that Hillary Clinton — a *bona-fide* hawk when it comes to U.S. foreign policy, a staunch advocate of corporate “free trade,” a loud proponent of the \$2 trillion Wall Street bailout; a partisan of blame-the-victim welfare reform — will be put forward as the “lesser-evil” to the Republicans in November. This is where this slippery slope of *realpolitik* has led us.

In today's situation of economic crisis (with a new recession just around the corner), the continued subordination of the trade unions and its allies to the Democrats is nothing short of political suicide.

### Graveyard of All Social Movements

When Barack Obama ran for president in 2008, he made a whole host of promises that he never kept. This was predictable; the Democratic Party has no choice — as a party beholden to the ruling capitalists who fund it — but to implement the corporate agenda.



Obama promised to enact the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) to make it easier for unions to organize. This never happened. The unions failed to put Obama's feet to the fire — using the same rationale of “lesser-evilism,” but in a different context: The union tops argued that we shouldn't make demands on the Obama administration, much less mobilize in the streets in mass actions around our demands, as this

would only play into the Republicans' campaign to “destabilize” the Obama administration.

Accordingly, there were no mass mobilizations for EFCA, or

single-payer (not even for the “public option”), or against the deportations of undocumented immigrants (close to 4 million deported under Obama, the “Deporter-in-Chief”). The Democratic Party controlled both Houses of Congress; it could have delivered some of Obama's campaign promises, but Obama and the Congress sat on their hands, proving yet again that the Democratic Party is the graveyard of all social protest movements.

Instead, year after year labor and the communities of the oppressed continued to take it on the chin: an even-greater assault on trade union rights (most notably for public sector workers but also for auto workers in Detroit), massive cutbacks, destruction of jobs and social protection, rampant wave of home foreclosures, attacks on democratic rights, continued reversal of women's

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rights, assault on immigrant workers, intensified racist attacks against Blacks and other oppressed sectors, and the list goes on.

The time is now for the trade unions and their allies to break with this infernal logic of “lesser-evilism” by mapping out a strategy of united-front, independent mass action around the demands that Sanders has popularized, while adding a plank on foreign policy that opposes U.S. intervention and war across the globe. The time is now for the labor movement to break with the Democrats and begin building a party of our own.

Putting this off till *after* the November election, as some propose, is not only an implicit acceptance of the labor officialdom’s call to vote for Clinton vs. Trump (the two most likely candidates at this writing), it’s also a call to remain shackled by the “lesser-evilism” that will inevitably hamstring any initiatives toward independent working class mass action and political action in the future.

### For Independent Black Political Action!

There is another component of the fight for working-class unity and independent political action that must be a high priority: the Black struggle, which, in the aftermath of the uprising in the Black liberation movement since Ferguson, Missouri, has moved to center stage in U.S. politics.

The murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson sparked the beginning of a mass upsurge against police violence based on the assertion that Black Lives Matter. A new Civil Rights movement is taking shape. We are at the beginning of a long struggle that must uproot white supremacy and a system based on racism.

There is a state of emergency in Black America, with mass unemployment at depression levels, mass incarceration and an epidemic of police violence. Many gains of the Civil Rights era have been eroded or destroyed. Voting rights are under attack, and income inequality affects Black people at a disproportionate percentage.

Austerity and the assault on public-sector employment have translated into a further setback for living standards in the Black community. Because of a history and pattern of discrimination in the private sector, Black people are 30% more likely to find employment in the public sector. Budget cuts during the “Great Recession” were devastating to an already vulnerable population.

The struggle against police brutality and racism is an urgent task that cannot be simply reduced to one of class against class. The

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oppressed can’t be expected to wait until the unions go into motion. We must support the independent self-organization and activity of the oppressed Black people.

We must understand that white supremacy has been and continues to be the central source of division within the working class in the United States. To help overcome this obstacle, we must fight for the unions to champion the rights of racially and nationally oppressed groups, and we must support and participate in the autonomous movements and organizations of Blacks and Latinos, as part of an overall strategy of building working-class unity.

This will require breaking with the Democratic Party and forging a unity of equals with workers of other nationalities, by

building an independent Black Party, which could be linked to the struggle for a Labor Party based on the trade unions.

### Let’s Begin the Fight Today!

To those who argue that the fight for a Labor Party is, at best, only a propaganda issue at this time, and that our sole focus should be on building united-front mass actions, we respond that we need to do both.

The 2016 election has shown that voters are sick and tired of “establishment politics” and are open to independent alternatives. A new generation has become politicized. The demand for labor-community candidates at all levels to champion the demands raised by Sanders, including more far-reaching demands than the ones he has raised, has fresh and fertile ground. Labor-community candidates could act as a bridge to an independent Labor Party.

Fightbacks in the economic arena and the political arena are two sides of the same movement. Victories for independent workers’ politics on the political/electoral stage would build class-consciousness and workers’ confidence in their own strength, in this way aiding the revitalization of the trade union movement. To say, “Let’s just concentrate right now on the domestic fightbacks” means, in practice, accepting the subordination of the trade unions to the Democrats.

The struggle for a Labor Party – including the fight for a Black Party linked to the struggle for a Labor Party – remains the principal means today for U.S. workers and their organizations, with their oppressed allies, to break free of the stranglehold of the capitalist parties.

## For a Labor Party!

1. SINGLE PAYER HEALTHCARE
2. NO TO ALL PRIVATIZATION
3. THE RIGHT TO A FREE EDUCATION
4. END AUSTERITY
5. NO TO ALL WARS
6. STOP THE DEPORTATIONS
7. BLACK LIVES MATTER! FIGHT RACISM
8. BRING BACK A MILITANT AND FIGHTING LABOR MOVEMENT!

# Who Has the Power? UC Berkeley And the Victory for Students and Workers Over Outsourcing Labor

By MARIO ANTHONY

## The Victory

The Student Labor Committee (SLC), outsourced workers, and AFSCME 3299 have won the Justice 4 UC Workers Campaign. Our coalition's victory resulted in UC Berkeley creating 69 full-time career positions for currently outsourced workers hired by private companies. Twenty-four parking attendants jobs through LAZ Parking and 45 custodial workers posts from ABM Industries and Performance First will now be hired by the university. Additionally, another 24 limited positions were opened up. Our coalition did not rest until administration insourced approximately 100 workers.

The victory is a moment to rejoice. One of the workers explained that he is going to start saving to send his daughter to the University of Miami; another was elated that he would be able to quit his second job at the Hyatt. Students were equally excited because they participated in making change in the lives of the workers and pushed back against privatization on campus. But the struggle is not over. By building mass confidence in this process, we aim towards making larger change. We must analyze this victory in the proper context, to draw lessons for current

authority over the budgeted items for the campus" (Document 100.6: Duties of the Chancellor) and can thus be held responsible for the exploitation of outsourced labor. From a broader perspective, the Chancellor's power exists within the context of the institu-

A second means of monopolizing power is through fear. Fear is among the most effective tactic the administration mobilizes. Workers and students are familiar with this tactic. Throughout the campaign students were detained by UCPD for occupying



tional structure of the UC Regents and President Napolitano. Behind them stands the state, which allocates millions of dollars from taxpayers. And, finally, the state exists within national and global capitalism, with its ongoing push for privatization.

Administration is able to wield power because we, as students and workers, have not taken it yet. There are concrete obstacles towards building mass power. At UC Berkeley's campus, for instance, there is the obstacle of the UC Police Department. Actions led by the SLC or by the broader coalition were always closely followed by armed agents on bicycles, motorcycles, or in cars. There is a widespread view that the police are here to protect and serve, but whose interests are they protecting and serving? During the Speakers Boycott, they obeyed and represented the interests of administration. Pickets at the Haas School of Business, Zellerbach Hall, California Hall, Alumni Hall, and elsewhere were continuously met with agents. The significance of their presence cannot be understated: they symbolize the actual structural relationship of power at the university and beyond.

offices, buildings, and staging direct actions. In the case of the Speakers Boycott, student organizer Kim Kristian is now facing suspension or expulsion from the university because administration has identified her as a threat to the status quo. But Kim is a fighter for student and worker power and will not allow the university to intimidate her. Organizers across the campus are preparing to come to her defense.

## Call to Action

Highlighting the power dynamics at the UC Berkeley campus reveals that student and worker power is a threat to administration because when we organize we can have our demands met. This dynamic jeopardizes the entire system.

We should not stop until we — students, workers, and all the oppressed — have demonstrated our power by taking control of the universities and the state. Ultimately, this is the only way to ensure that we will be liberated from police repression, that we will be liberated from fear, and that we can end all forms of injustice.



and future battles to be waged. This requires looking at the power dynamics involved in this campaign.

## Who Has the Power?

This is the question at the heart of every political struggle. Who has the power to outsource with private companies or hire workers directly through the university? Chancellor Nicolas Dirks has an undeniably powerful role, as he wields "administrative

# UNITY & INDEPENDENCE

## Forum for Trade Union Unity and Independence

# We Need More Than a Bernie; Working People Need a Party of Our Own

[Statement by KCLabor.org distributed  
at April 1-3 Labor Notes conference  
in Chicago]

We wouldn't allow the boss to select our candidates for union office. But, when it comes to choosing candidates to run government at all levels, that's what happens. America is the only industrialized democracy without at least one mass working-class party. American bosses and bankers have an uncontested de-facto monopoly of all things political through their two official parties.

Polls over the past few years have consistently shown that a majority have lost faith in both boss parties and would like to see a new party. We haven't yet seen a viable new one, but there is a growing polarization in the old ones — both far-right and "left."

There is even a resurgence in interest in socialism. A *New York Times* poll last November found 56 percent of Democrats — and 52 percent of Clinton supporters — showed a favorable response to socialism. Kshama Sawant, running for the Socialist Alternative Party, has been twice elected to the Seattle City Council. The more than a century of stable political rule by two interchangeable parties taking turns at advancing the corporate agenda is in trouble.

### Political Revolution

Senator Bernie Sanders — known to all as Bernie — understands this new political climate and is skillfully tapping in to it. His campaign centers on a few popular reforms identified in focus groups, such as single-payer health care; free public college education; and a 15-dollar minimum wage. These substantial reforms, won decades ago in many other industrialized countries, are worthy of our support — and students, young



workers, and even a few progressive unions have rallied around them big time to back Bernie. They are present in large numbers here at this conference.

But this "independent" who caucuses with Democrats while identifying himself as a "democratic socialist" isn't trying to launch a new working-class party. His impressive Feel the Bern is confined to fund-raising, mass rallies and phone-banking aimed at winning delegates in the Democrat primaries and caucuses.

Even in the unlikely event that Bernie wins the nomination, and, even more unlikely, goes on to be elected in November, his one-man crusade will not be able to win the reforms that have inspired his followers. The President can propose but has limited powers to decree. Only Congress can pass laws. Bernie's Political Revolution will not get much support on either side of the aisle on Capitol Hill.

The most likely scenario is that Hillary Clinton, with both more union endorsements and backing by Wall Street, will get the nod to run against whichever loony right candidate is chosen by the other boss party. Bernie has repeatedly pledged to deliver his support to the Democrats' choice. If it's Hillary Clinton, the Political Revolution ends in

Philadelphia in July. We'll be back to the same old, same old being urged to back a perfidious "friend" of labor. Or more honestly, the "lesser evil."

### Lesser Evil Only Guarantees Evil

We not only need a new party — we need a new type of party. One that will reclaim our stolen class identity. One that is democratically controlled, with office holders responsible to those who helped elect them, not the usual vice versa. One that is more than just an electoral machine but is above all part and parcel of ongoing working class struggles in the workplace, in the communities, on the campuses, and in the streets — that can also pave the way for replacing the pro-boss Establishment with electoral victory for a working class government.

Twenty years ago, after testing the waters with a formation called Labor Party Advocates, 1,400 labor leaders and activists held a Labor Party Founding Convention in Cleveland. Its structure was built on our only class-based mass organizations — unions — but also established community chapters open to the unorganized and unemployed as well. It adopted a comprehensive program that still stands up well today.

It was a promising start that eventually succumbed to forces beyond its control. Ultimately union material support shrank to the point where the party had to be put in a sort of medically induced coma. You can find the history — along with future perspectives — on a web page we have provided: [kclabor.org/kclaborparty.htm](http://kclabor.org/kclaborparty.htm)

Never in living memory has there been a greater, more urgent need for a labor party. Eight years ago, there was much excitement

*(continued on page 6)*

Dear Readers:

Many of you have written us to express your sharp disagreement with the Labor Fightback Network's statement, which *Unity & Independence* distributed widely, titled "Bernie Sanders Campaign Should Be Seen As an Initial Step in a Process Leading to the Establishment of a Labor Party." We are publishing in this issue of *U&I* two of the many letters we received with this point of view.

Many other readers spoke to us directly at the Labor Notes conference on April 1-3 in Chicago to tell us that the LFN statement, in their view, gave veiled support to the Sanders campaign and marked a sharp departure from the previous LFN stance in favor of a break with the Democratic Party and the need for a Labor Party. All asked us for our assessment, as the Editorial Board of *The Organizer* newspaper, of this LFN statement.

Upon further reflection, it is our view that LFN statement does, in fact, represent an adaptation to the Sanders campaign insofar as there is nothing but praise for Sanders and his "political revolution," while there is not one word of criticism, not one word about his running as a Democrat. The only criticisms are aimed at Hillary Clinton who is labeled, correctly, as "one of the main candidates of Wall Street."

The title of the article is perhaps the most misleading. It affirms that, objectively, Sanders running in the Democratic Party should be seen as laying the basis for a Labor Party — when this is not at all the case. Sanders running in the Democratic Party serves primarily to round up, as a sheepdog, all the disenchanting and disenfranchising voters, as well as the youth, and drive them back into the Democratic Party.

At the Second National Labor Fightback Network Conference in Rutgers, N.J. on May 15-17, 2015, the closing report, which was approved unanimously by the delegates in a voice vote, affirmed that,

"[T]he LFN does not endorse any candidates in the mainstream parties. What has united us is the view that a break with the twin parties of the bosses is more urgent than ever and that across the country the most immediate task is the running of independent labor-community candidates rooted in the labor movement and the communities of the oppressed. The spread of such candidacies would lay the foundation for building a party of and for the working-class majority based on the unions and organizations of Black people, Latinos and other oppressed groups.

"We will work with Bernie Sanders supporters on all the big united-front campaigns where we agree. Unionists and activists who support our network are free to support whatever candidate they wish to support, but they cannot do this in the name of the Labor Fightback Network. ...



## Reply to Our Readers Regarding the Labor Fightback Network Statement On the Bernie Sanders Campaign

"We are proposing to make use of our LFN blog and establish an electronic newsletter to promote an Open Dialogue for Independent Labor-Community Politics. ... Hopefully through these discussions we can motivate union locals, and possibly even city-wide labor bodies, to build labor-community coalitions, with unions at the center, that can host labor-community congresses to run candidates that can take their mandate from these congresses and are answerable to them. ... The time is ripe to open this dialogue."

We believe that the Labor Fightback Network should return to this united-front orientation by opening a discussion/debate on its blog and in its postings. Individual

LFN supporters should be invited to explain why they don't believe that supporting Sanders is contradictory with advocating for a Labor Party — while others, such as ourselves and KCLabor.org [see page 5], could explain why support for a Democratic Party candidate, however powerful his populist rhetoric, is an obstacle to the struggle for independent, working-class politics.

Most important, the LFN could open a much-needed discussion on why the Labor for Bernie campaign should host a national assembly in the coming months to relaunch a Labor Party Advocates-type formation.

— The Editorial Board of  
The Organizer Newspaper

### ... More Than a Bernie

and hope around Barack Obama. Even today many — including Bernie — cannot admit how reactionary the Obama administration has been in its attacks on public education and teacher unions; decimation of the U.S. Postal Service; record numbers of deportations; the fraud of Affordable Health Care — and trying hard to get a Grand Bargain with the GOP to gut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

And we should never forget — GIs are still killing and being killed in America's longest war in Afghanistan, and there have been new

interventions on behalf of the global corporate agenda in Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan — and again in Iraq. Some friend!

We can't depend on duplicitous friends or crusading heroes. We have to rely on ourselves — those who labor by brain and muscle. That's why in addition to supporting efforts like the Labor Campaign for Single-Payer Healthcare, and 15 Now, we favor a revival of Labor Party Advocates. We'd like to hear what you think either in discussion at our Conference table or by e-mail when you return home.

Contact us at: kcalp@kclabor.org or telephone Bill Onasch at 816-753-1672

Dear Editors,

*The Organizer* newspaper consistently advocates for the formation of a Labor Party. Apparently the Green Party is not good enough. There are approximately 110,000 registered Greens in the State of California. An enormous amount of work has been done over the years to achieve that access. And, much debate about the writing of the party platform. There must be a way of taking advantage of that effort rather than starting over.

**B.H.,  
San Francisco, CA**

## REPLY

Dear reader,

Many supporters of Bernie Sanders are saying that if Sanders loses the nomination, they will vote for Jill Stein of the Green Party.

We understand the reasons why they will vote for the Green Party and the motivation behind the call for an independent “third” party, but we disagree with the notion that a multi-class “progressive” party can substitute for the mass political action of the working class and oppressed themselves. This is why we call for a party with a clear class base and program. The Greens are inherently incapable of posing a real alternative to the two-party system because they do not rely on the organizations and struggles of workers and the oppressed.

— **The Editors**

Dear Editors of U&I,

I write to express my views of the latest statement by the Labor Fightback Network regarding the Bernie Sanders campaign that you have distributed widely.

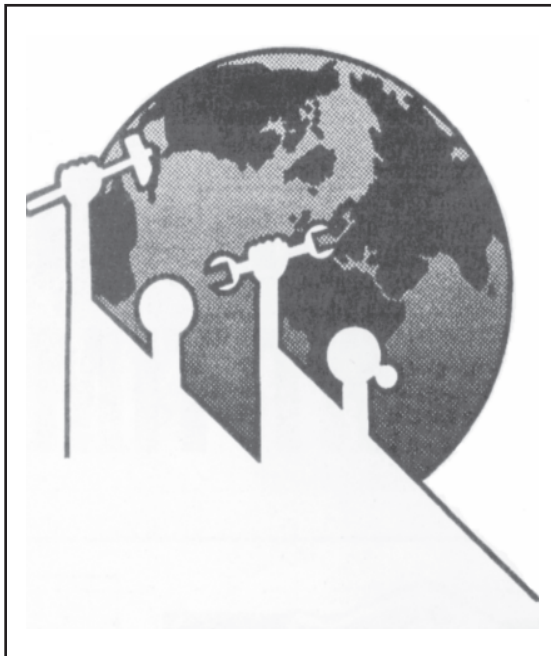
I agree that there will be significant sections of the labor movement which, becoming disillusioned with Sanders yet unwilling to support Clinton, may prove willing to give the proponents of independent working-class politics a hearing. I fully agree that working to keep such labor-based formations intact, uniting them in a network or alliance, and seeking to move them toward independent working-class politics is a sound course, and could be the first small step toward building an organization of a type we’ve never truly had in this country: a political expression of the organized working-class and oppressed communities.

But I have some criticisms of the statement that I think are worth considering:

### **One: On the Role of Bernie Sanders**

Sanders’ ideas found an echo among the masses of working people because conditions that he had no hand in shaping pre-

# LETTERS TO THE EDITORS



pared a receptive audience. Far too much emphasis is put on Bernie Sanders; it is almost as if he alone is the midwife of this new radicalization.

Sanders is a left-wing populist who finds himself supported by millions of Americans precisely because he is expressing sentiments and advancing proposals that have been embraced by a growing majority of working people for quite some time now. He has a following precisely because they have already been revitalized.

We saw the first ripples in the pond, not in the form of any movement connected with Sanders, but preceding him in the uprising in Wisconsin, in the Occupy Movement, in the recent student upsurges in California, the electoral successes of labor and socialist candidates in Lorain and Seattle, the struggle of the CTU in Chicago, the rise of a new BDS movement, the militant response to the growing number of police murders seen in Ferguson and dozens of other cities across the country, the formation of a new generation of Black liberation cadre under the banner of Black Lives Matter, and other developments.

### **Two: Forming Our Own Independent Organizations**

The LFN writes that, “We agree with Sanders on the need to build a mass movement.” Every Democrat calls for a mass movement to support him and his agenda, if elected, and yet their first act upon being elected is always to disband all the campaign organizations and grassroots groups that helped elect them.

Sanders has never once explained what the form and content of such a post-election organization should be. His supporters, win or lose, will be frozen out and have no political role to play after the elections — unless they form their own independent organizations.

### **Three: Focus on Mass Action**

The LFN statement focuses on establishing a national party with “enough representatives to get legislation passed.” But shouldn’t our goal be to build a working-class party that fights on multiple fronts — not only in Congress, but in the workplace; in united-front, mass actions in the streets, in our schools, etc.?

There is but one brief, passing mention of extra-parliamentary struggle, despite the fact that those forms of struggle are just as important, and will probably be much more important, for a mass-based workers’ party resting on the trade unions and the organizations of oppressed communities.

### **Four: On the Democratic Party**

The LFN statement underscores the attacks we can expect under a Clinton presidency, but says nothing about the fact that, regardless of his personal sincerity or zeal, the progressive legislative and executive agenda of a Bernie Sanders presidency would be circumscribed, limited, and determined by the Democratic Party as an institution. Any Democrat in the White House will be able to accomplish very little.

The question is not who is sitting in the Oval Office, but what party holds state power, and what class it represents. There is a gaping chasm between his progressive platform, and what he will actually be permitted to do as a Democratic president. And the Democratic Party would not be the only check on the implementation of his platform; the economic resistance of the ruling class in the form of lockouts, divestment, capital flight, and other types of sabotage could quite easily paralyze his presidency.

Only a mass party of workers and oppressed people can match this type of economic power, and overcome it by playing to the strengths of the working class — particularly the opportunities flowing from the workers’ concentrated strength at the point of production.

**Dave Faunt Le Roy  
Baltimore, Md.**

# Single-Payer Organizer Mark Dudzic: 'Sanders Has Given a Voice to Workers'



Mark Dudzic

[Note: Following is an interview with Mark Dudzic, national coordinator of the Labor for Single Payer campaign and past coordinator of the Labor Party. The interview was aired on March 12, 2016 on Equal Time Radio (WDEV 550AM/96.1FM - Vermont) and was conducted by radio host Traven Leyshon, secretary-treasurer of the Vermont state AFL-CIO. The transcription is by Unity & Independence, the labor supplement of The Organizer newspaper.]

**Traven Leyshon:** The Sanders' victory in Michigan rocked the political establishment. Sanders tapped into and expressed the deep anger among labor and youth, and he is making more inroads into the African-American community. Beyond the immediate primaries or Democratic Party national convention, could we be seeing the first steps toward a party of our own?

**Mark Dudzic:** Certainly that is my hope, and it's the hope of a lot of other activists in the labor and other social movements. But it's a little too early to tell. Clearly the Sanders campaign has captured the widespread disgust with the kind of "accommoda-

tionism" that characterizes Democratic Party politics, especially at the national level. There's a constant feeling of betrayal. Senator Sanders has given voice to working people who never recovered from the 2008 economic crisis and who see no future under the current system.

**Traven Leyshon:** Labor unions are diminished in strength, but they're still the largest mass organizations that people have. What do you see in regard to the ferment in labor or more widely among working people? A lot of people who had given up on the political process, it seems, have become more politicized.

**Mark Dudzic:** I don't think people who are active gave up on politics, they gave up on politics that produced no real benefits for themselves, their neighbors, and their co-workers. Sanders represents a real sense of hope for them. I do most of my work within the labor movement, and, as you said, despite

represent. And we've been doing this for ages, to the point where labor's vision becomes restricted to the very narrow politics of what's possible.

On the other hand, there is what I would call labor's "transformative" side — that is, its capacity to act and think in terms of the long-term interests of working people. And Sanders has crystallized this transformative vision: What would politics in this country look like if it were conducted on behalf of people who work for a living? Why should college not be free, just like high school? Why shouldn't we have healthcare for all like every industrialized country? These are issues that wake up and energize working people, and reach the core of the group of activists who do the work of the labor movement.

**Traven Leyshon:** What is Labor for Bernie, and where is it going?

**Mark Dudzic:** Labor for Bernie is an informal structure; it is not connected to the

Bernie campaign. Labor activists were asked to sign a pledge. Close to 20,000 people have joined the network. Some national unions have come on board. These are the change agents in the labor movement; they are people who feel that labor's many compromises have made it impossible to represent our members. They have a different view of how we must do our politics and where we must be as a labor movement. It's very exciting.

It's such a significant movement, in fact, that it's resulted in the national AFL-CIO maintaining a position of neutrality in the campaign — which has certainly disrupted the plans of

the Democratic establishment and the Clinton campaign.

**Traven Leyshon:** Let's review for a few minutes the period of the Labor Party in the 1990s. It was a period of great hope, when people had a broader vision, where a wing of the labor movement made links with poor people's organizations; there was institutional support from labor organizations. First we had Labor Party Advocates, then the Labor Party, which was more of an organizing com-



being weakened over the years, labor is still central and essential to the working class and to working class politics.

We're now in an unusual situation where the contradictions of what labor is all about are really coming to the fore. On the one hand, you have a long-term practice of "instrumentalism," trying to utilize whatever small space labor can find within politics to protect or preserve the institutions within labor and the conditions of the people they



mittee for a future Labor Party, as we were not running candidates. Do you see the possibilities of networks, Labor for Bernie, unions that have come out for the Sanders campaign, or other community organizations ... creating some kind of institutional support for other experiments, non-partisan networks, with some kind of political independence?

**Mark Dudzic:** It's a complex situation. Everything is in flux right now. It's always hard to make a prediction when you're at this point in the movement.

I think that what happened in the 1990s is very relevant to what's happening today. You had two significant things going on in the 1990s: You had an internal insurgency in the labor movement after decades of getting our butts kicked, both politically and in the shops and bargaining units. There was a sort of fightback movement that talked about new ways of organizing, be it new-member organizing, more sophisticated campaigns to represent our members, or breaking with some of the collaborationist ideas that the national labor movement had adopted when it was fat and lazy in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. All this resulted in the only contested leadership election and a new leadership in the AFL-CIO.

This was coupled with the deep disillusion with another Clinton — Bill Clinton — who was elected in 1992. There was a lot of hope after 12 years of Reagan and Bush that Clinton would start advocating for workers' interests — but instead, the administration completely dropped the ball on healthcare reform, instituted vicious blame-the-victim welfare reform and criminal-reform policies, walked away from labor-law reform and then, the thing that really capped the disgust, was Clinton's wholehearted support for the NAFTA agreement — which really was the fast march toward globalization and de-industrialization.

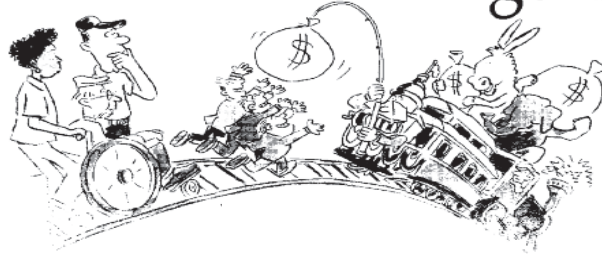
That disgust and that insurgency combined for about 10 years. We had a very powerful movement within the labor movement to call for a party of our own, for a Labor Party, that would represent the interests of working people — not the compromises in parties that were dominated by corporate interests.

What's different today is that the labor insurgency basically was defeated; the labor movement is a lot weaker and more isolated than it was in the 1990s. But today, there are all sorts of new coalitions and organizations that aren't strictly speaking part of the institutions of organized labor, but are talking about economic and social justice issues for working people. These movements are coming together and are becoming more and more significant in working class life.

But new opportunities for organizing and for doing politics are a lot less clear. I'm not sure there's a consensus in the activist community that we must move toward a complete break with the Democratic Party to build a party of our own, as the next step to take.

I am very hopeful that this moment will result in a broad discussion within the labor

## Why worry about Medicare and Social Security? Because both parties are on the Deficit Bandwagon.



movement and other social movements about how we can move away from corporate-dominated politics toward independent working class politics. But I am not sure anyone yet knows what exact form that discussion and that organization will take at this point.

**Traven Leyshon:** A lot will be impacted by whether or not the Sanders campaign continues to develop momentum. People are holding their breath every time there is a mega-Tuesday. Sanders is proving the pollsters wrong, like in Michigan, where he proved he can win a greater percentage of African American voters. You now have more union activists and more community organizations, like National People's Action, doing real grassroots organizing for Sanders — and many of these organizations are going to continue mobilizing around their issues after the campaign, no matter what happens.

We certainly have that in Vermont. The most enthusiastic supporters of Sanders are not the Democratic Party establishment; it's independents, it's Progressive Party members, it's the affiliates of National People's Action. Do you see any formations developing that can capture and express in an organized way this Labor for Bernie campaign, this enthusiasm and upsurge nationally, that we've got to do something?

**Mark Dudzic:** I think that the understanding that we need to do something is everywhere across the country right now. You can't put the genie back in the bottle, even if Sanders never wins another primary. I think that the energy and vision that he unleashed are not going to go away, certainly not in the labor movement. These are folks who have taken a stand against the way their unions do politics. So that's not going to go away. But I'm not so sure at this point that there's any clarity about what kind of coalition will come together after the campaign.

The trouble with an election campaign is that it's an urgent moment when you have to work exclusively around campaign issues. Historically, it's been very difficult for per-

manent organizations to emerge from the aftermath of progressive campaigns. So there's reason to be concerned that all this energy will dissipate once the campaign is over, however it ends.

I am hopeful, though, that people can weigh in now, while the campaign is still viable and still reaching millions of people, on what we need to do to communicate with one another and keep momentum going after the elections are over in November.

**Traven Leyshon:** Exactly. In the 1980s, the Rainbow Coalition was dissolved, nothing was left.

**Mark Dudzic:** This is an important lesson: You have to think about the future while the campaign is still going on. There's a difference between a political campaign, on the one hand, and a substantive and sustained campaign and movement-building for working people, on the other. An election campaign is just one manifestation of this — but you can't build a movement around a political candidate.

I hope that these lessons will inform the work that we do here. Also Senator Sanders, to his credit, has talked about the need to build a movement; he has said that he supports any effort during this campaign to turn it into a real, long-term force for social change

**Traven Leyshon:** Any concluding thoughts?

**Mark Dudzic:** We are going to be meeting soon to put together the activist core of the Labor for Bernie movement. There are also other efforts under way; folks are organizing a People's Assembly in mid-June in Chicago.

This is a time when we have to put our energies into continuing the Sanders campaign on the ground while building networks of activists that use this campaign as an opportunity to build the kind of movement that is needed to build the kind of politics that can represent the real concerns of working people in this country.

# Letter from Readers: 'We Disagree with Your Analysis of the Sanders Campaign'



In order to argue in favor of the serious threat Sanders poses, you mention that the *Wall Street Journal* has said, in your words, "The movement around Sanders has gone too far, and must be stopped and brought back into the safe channels of the nation's institutional framework." But the *Wall Street Journal* thinks Sanders is a real socialist, meaning that according to it, Sanders "would also use government to control the means of production."

Sanders is no socialist, and he has said nothing about the government control of the means of production. He thinks we should be emulating some of the capitalist countries in Europe. He just wants more government regulation and a stronger safety net. He throws around the term "revolution," but that is another fake aspect of his campaign.

One of the main keys to answering the question about the genuineness of Sanders' campaign, in our opinion, lies in the analysis of how his campaign is run. Is he in fact creating a "movement," as you claim when you refer to "the growing movement that has been generated in support of the far-reaching reforms raised by Sanders"?

In several articles, Robert Reich, former Secretary of Labor under Clinton, has correctly argued that it will be impossible for Sanders to implement his platform without creating a "movement" that can put pressure on the politicians.

We would argue that Sanders has clearly NOT created a movement, nor does he intend to create one. Obama also drew huge, enthusiastic crowds to his rallies, but after winning in 2008, he turned his lists of supporters into lists from which to solicit future campaign contributions, according to Reich. Bernie Sanders has drawn even bigger crowds than Obama, but he has not created a movement. People come to his rallies, listen to his speeches, and then they leave just as isolated and atomized as when they arrived.

In order to create a movement, people must belong to an on-going organization where they participate in the important decision-making. In this way they play a significant role in the organization and thus it becomes a part of their identity, and they also establish relations with one another. They are transformed from isolated individuals into an organic whole. Black Lives Matter is a movement.

In the Bernie Sanders campaign, however, his supporters do not play a role in estab-

Dear editors of *The Organizer*:

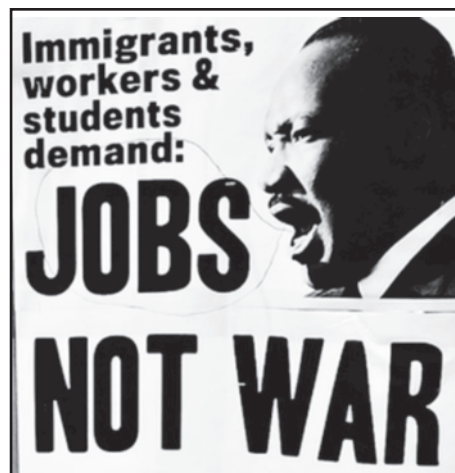
We want to respectfully disagree with *The Organizer's* analysis of the significance of the Sanders' campaign and argue that it is far less positive than has been depicted.

*The Organizer* says, for example, "Clinton's verbal embrace of the populist Sanders message ... is nothing but a swindle. ... Clinton has no intention of enacting any of the campaign reforms espoused by Sanders." But you do not say the same about Sanders. As we will argue below, we think the populism of Sanders is nothing but a swindle as well because he has little intention of enacting his reforms.

You go on to mention many of the issues Sanders has raised in his campaign that have mobilized masses of people include: jobs with a minimum wage of \$15, a mass public works program to repair infrastructure, single payer, and end to "free trade," the right to free education, including college, racial justice, and prison reform. The Labor Fightback Network also included campaign finance reform, fighting climate change, breaking up the big banks, and more.

But many of these same issues were included in Obama's 2008 campaign platform: He talked about investing in infrastructure, fighting climate change, racial justice, raising the minimum wage, single payer, the right to privacy, raising taxes on the rich, renegotiating NAFTA, support of card check for the unions, defense of whistle blowers, and much more. And, of course, he dropped virtually everything once he was elected.

So the questions naturally arise: Is Sanders simply raising these issues to win votes, and will he be prepared to drop



almost all these issues if he is elected, as Obama did? And if the answer is yes, shouldn't your readers be warned that Sanders is just as much a fake as Obama and H. Clinton?

You go on to say, after mentioning that the Sanders' campaign has attracted millions of people: "In fact, one of the salient features of the 2016 presidential campaign is the massive rejection by the American people of all the mainstream candidates in both corporate-run parties." Isn't this implying that Sanders is not a mainstream candidate, even though he has voted with the Democrats 98 percent of the time and he is running as a Democrat?

lishing campaign policy. His campaign is top-down — like virtually all institutions in capitalist society — where Sanders dictates policy and his supporters simply accept it or leave. Sanders is not stupid; he knows he needs a movement to implement his program. But he also knows the risk of creating a movement: you create an organization that you do not control. Because he refuses to create a movement, his campaign is fake. And, of course, we all know that his platform will not be implemented within the Democratic Party. We are saying his campaign is fake for both these reasons.

Both *The Organizer* and the Labor Fightback Network seem to be arguing that the Bernie Sanders' campaign has numerous positive features and some negative features, particularly the fact that he is running within the Democratic Party. Because of the positive factors, there is the suggestion that Sanders might be approached to run as an independent, assuming he loses the Democratic Party nomination. But we are arguing that there is a dialectical relation between the positive and negative factors. The fact that Sanders is running as a Democrat cannot be separated from how to evaluate his program. The fact that he is running as a Democrat and not creating a movement is announcing loud and clear he is not putting up a serious fight for his issues.

All of this explains why we argue that in response to the question of what is to be done today, it makes more sense to place the emphasis on united front struggles where we urge organized labor and working people in general to fight for those issues that are intensely important and in which there is already general agreement. After all, if organized labor were truly in favor of these issues, they would be taking the appropriate steps to transform them into reality. Issues in which there is overwhelming agreement include creating jobs for all, increasing taxes on the rich, defending and expanding Social Security and Medicare, substantially increasing the minimum wage, etc.

If labor and working people were to put up a real fight, then they would be forced to create a movement. And this movement could in turn be used as the foundation of the creation of a Labor Party. A Labor Party without a movement is like a cart before the horse. The Labor Party would lack the necessary steering mechanism, namely a democratically run organization. Without such an organization, policies are dictated from above.

In *Letters on Tactics* Lenin argued: “But, in assessing a given situation, a Marxist must proceed not from what is possible, but from what is real.” Under the present circumstances united front struggles offer far more realistic alternatives than trying to immediately struggle for a Labor Party, given that most people are not even consid-



ering the option of a Labor Party and few unions have endorsed the idea. But this does not preclude the appropriateness of propagandizing in favor of a Labor Party now.

Finally, the Labor Fightback Network (LFN) statement in support of Sanders is entirely misleading. Early on, it lavishes praise on the Sanders campaign. Here are some examples:

“His campaign brings to the forefront a combination of demands not presented to the general public in modern times.”

“Sanders has revitalized the tarnished image of a social agenda, and even of the word socialism itself.”

“Throughout the singular and unexpected momentum Sanders has generated, he repeatedly emphasizes that electing a president alone will not bring about the sweeping changes he advocates. He calls for a revolution fostered by the engagement of millions of people to fight for the changes needed, economically and politically. We of the Labor Fightback Network emphatically agree.”

Throughout this praise it is as if the fact that the campaign is being conducted within

the Democratic Party has no bearing on the nature, quality or authenticity of the campaign itself.

The document then proceeds to assume that Clinton will win the Democratic Party nomination so that the question then arises, what should become of the Sanders' campaign? And it is only at this point that the LFN statement finally adds, almost as an after thought, that “the interests and aspirations of the millions of Sanders' supporters cannot be attained through the Democratic party – a party of, by and for the ruling 1%.”

But because this observation comes so late in the document, the question naturally arises: What if Sanders did in fact win the Democratic Party nomination, would the LFN then support him, given all the undeserved praise it showered on his campaign within the Democratic Party? We believe, because of the way the document was written, many readers of the LFN statement will answer this question with a resounding yes.

**Ann Robertson and Bill Leumer**  
San Francisco, CA





# Is the Sanders Campaign a Road to a Workers Party? A Debate with Socialist Alternative

By DAVID WALTERS

Socialist Alternative (SAlt) is a socialist group in the U.S. that has been active in the \$15-an-hour minimum wage movement. One its members, Kshama Sawant, was elected (and re-elected) as an open socialist to the Seattle City Council in a very popular campaign originally centered on the \$15/hr NOW minimum wage ordinance, rent control, and taxing the rich.

For over a year, they have been big boosters of the Bernie Sanders campaign inside the Democratic Party. SAlt, variously, has put forward many positions regarding elections: “For 100 Socialist Candidates”, “A Workers Party” and, lately, a “Party of the 99%.” While active in movements for social change (Black Lives Matter, defense of public education, and so on) their main focus for this period has been on the upcoming elections. It has always been a point of principle for revolutionary socialists, which SAlt claims to be, that any activity in support of candidates in the Democratic Party was wrong; in fact, a betrayal of the principle of independent working class politics that characterized for



decades all those who claimed the mantle of “socialist.”

SAlt members are organizing people to register as Democrats and flood into the Democratic Party to support Sanders. They are also calling on Sanders to run as an “independent” even though, from the time of his first election to Congress, he has functioned as a Democrat and supported major policy initiatives of this ruling class party. But it gets worse. They are circulating a petition calling upon Sanders to “Run Through November” — either as the Democratic Party nominee, or, if necessary, as an independent.

Their petition campaign clearly implies that Bernie Sanders could be supported if he ran as a Democratic Party candidate in the November elections. But should he fail to

win the nomination, he should run as an independent. This sums up the problem with liberal/progressives, who fail to understand the need to make a clean break with the Democrats for a real working-class alternative through independent labor-community campaigns — something SAlt claims to *support on paper* ... but actually contradicts in practice.

In a leaflet SAlt distributed at the recent Labor Notes Conference in Chicago, they wrote the following in relation to the “danger of being a spoiler” (causing the Democrats to lose a state if Sanders were to run as an independent in November):

“Many people are focused on defeating the Republicans in the general election, and would be worried that an independent campaign run by Bernie could throw the election to Donald Trump. Yet there are 40-45 states which will be clearly won by the Democratic or Republican candidates, and there is absolutely no reason Bernie could not campaign all out in these states until November.

“Bernie Sanders and his supporters should discuss whether in the small number of swing states, Sanders could choose not to be on the ballot in order to avoid that concern. An encouraging result of such a campaign would prepare the ground for many more independent, anti-corporate candidacies in the near future.”

Hence Sanders should run only in “safe states” (where a large vote for Bernie would not change the outcome of the electoral vote in November) and should desist from running in “swing states” (so as not to obstruct Hillary Clinton from winning the vote in those states).

This is the exact language that the Working Families Party, the Green Party and other fusion (inside-outside) political groups have used in adapting to the Democrats.

Sanders supporters, who support him for his progressive policies on many important issues, should consider what is to be done. The massive outpouring for single-payer healthcare, free education through college, an end to the “free trade” agenda, Black Lives Matter, the fight for \$15 all point to the need to build a campaign outside the Democratic Party, such as a Labor Party based on the unions and the communities of the oppressed.

A real “clean break” movement needs to be organized. It could begin by organizing independent committees and conferences for working class political action, getting the unions (especially those that have joined the Labor for Bernie campaign) and community organizations to start looking outside the Democrat Party so as not to get sucked into the morass of this bosses’ party. Now is the time!

# The Bogus Power of the Black Vote Within the Confines of the Democratic Party



[The following is abridged from an article posted by Black Agenda Report executive director Glen Ford on February 24, 2016. The complete article is posted on the BAR website.]

By GLEN FORD

I can hear it now: “For the third time in this century, Black voters (‘the hands that picked cotton’) are picking a president of the United States.” Such inanities will ring out from every bastion of Democratic Party hegemony in Black America in celebration of Hillary Clinton’s sprint towards coronation as the Third Black President (her husband having purportedly been the first).

Although the young, white Sandernistas may not grasp it yet, their doomed quest to transform the Democratic Party “from below” has failed to move the voting bloc that makes up the actual “bottom” of the party: the bedrock 25 percent that is Black.

Bernie Sanders, whose domestic politics is a much closer fit with the historical and current Black world view, is not losing to Hillary because of his positions on the issues, or because Blacks trust in Clinton’s honesty and integrity (huge numbers don’t, in every demographic).

It is also no longer the case that most Blacks are unfamiliar with Sanders’ platform.

African Americans are, by some measures, more tuned in to the “news” than whites (although Blacks trust the media less). But they tune Sanders out, because their main purpose for voting in national elections is to keep the White Man’s Party, the Republicans, out of the White House, and believe Clinton has a better shot. Almost everything else is bullshit.

There is a *direct and dialectical relationship* between this historical “Politics of Fear,” as we have described it in these pages, and the hegemonic domination of a calcified and infinitely corrupt Black Miseducation Class whose primary loyalty is to the Democratic Party, which for two generations has been their route into the corridors of money and power. They “deliver” that vote to the highest bidders in a party structure that is under the commanding influence of finance capital and its representatives (currently, the many-times-over-bought-and-paid-for Clintons).

The mantra is, effectively, “All Power to the Democratic Party!” – brokered, of course, by the Black political class. Paralyzed by fear of the White Man’s Party, Black voters find a false sense of power in clustering around the perceived “winners” on the Democratic Party menu.

“Black Power” devolves to a shuffling and clustering around the most well-healed, right-wing Democratic candidate vetted by Wall

Street.

That candidate’s victory represents an objective defeat for the historical Black political agenda on social justice and peace. Yet, it will be celebrated as a benchmark of Black progress and POWER (‘the hands that picked cotton...’), because African Americans were on the winning side of the contest. Such is the great paradox of Black national electoral politics since the demise of the Black Liberation Movement and the rise of the Black Miseducation Class.

The question of self-determination lies at the heart of the political crisis in Black America. If masses of Blacks at this point in history cannot overcome a mind-twisting fear of the Republican/White Man’s Party, to vote their own, thoroughly documented leftist politics in national elections, then activists should treat the duopoly process, itself, like poison.

History shows us that the Black self-determinationist imperative blooms and thrives in movement politics – the only kind of politics that can circumvent and ultimately overcome the entrenched and morally defective Black Miseducation Class, who are inextricably entwined with the Democratic Party and its rich financiers.

If movement activists fail to vaccinate themselves against the Democratic Party contagion, they will become its drones and replicants.

# BRAZIL DECLARATION: A Coup D'état Is Under Way! No to the Coup! For Democracy and Social Rights!



A coup d'état is under way, there can be no doubt about it! This coup is in progress via the legal, illegal, and arbitrary actions of Judge Sergio Moro against Lula [Past President Luis Inacio da Silva] and Dilma [Brazilian President Dilma Rouseff]. These are actions that target the Workers Party (PT). The coup preparations also include the possibility of Dilma's impeachment by most of the hacks in the House of Representatives, led by Eduardo Cunha (PMDB).

The coup is an effort undertaken jointly by the bosses, the judicial system, and the reactionary political forces — involving the San Paulo Chamber of Industry (FIESP); the Supreme Court; parties such as the PSDB and the PMDB; and the mainstream media, such as Globo and others. All aim to create a “state of exception.”

The president of the CUT trade union federation, Wagner Freitas, stated: “I know that workers only have rights and conquests in a democracy. Coups like this one are for the purpose of enslaving the workers for capitalism.” He's right.

On the one side, you have the working class, the youth, the landless peasants, the oppressed of the country. On the other side, you have imperialism, the financial oligarchy and big business, to whose interests the judicial system has shown to be subordinate — a system that is making use of all the means inherited from the military dictatorship that have still not been fully dismantled.

We must state this clearly: To defend the PT, the CUT and all organizations of workers and popular sectors, and to put a stop to the coup, requires first and foremost breaking with all the dictates of imperialism and taking

immediate action to implement the measures that the masses — the workers and the youth — have been demanding for the past 12 years, ever since the first victory of Lula.

This is not about pointing fingers at anyone. It is about understanding what is at stake in order

to take action!

A question is posed: How is it possible that after 12 years of the PT in the presidency and government we have reached a situation today that is so incredibly dangerous for the workers, the youth, the landless peasants — and for democracy itself, which was won more than 30 years ago against the military dictatorship through bitter struggle? How is it possible that imperialism and its lackeys in Brazil can now feel so emboldened to again target democracy in our country?

If imperialism and its reactionary forces are so disposed to launch a new coup d'état today, 36 years after the military was swept from power, it's because for 12 years at the helm of the government, the top leadership of the PT never stopped bending to the demands of imperialism.

Certain measures of social-assistance were carried out under the pressure of the struggles waged by the landless peasants, the youth, and the poor people of our country. But what was done to address the more fundamental and essential questions that concern the popular masses of the country?

What happened with the agrarian reform?

What was done to end the “primary-surplus” [superávit primário] policy that imposed drastic restrictions and budget cuts in education and public health — for the sole purpose of ensuring the timely payment of the infamous foreign “debt” that was not contracted by the people? What was done in terms of canceling that bloody debt, which the Brazilian people have already paid back many times over — but which keeps on getting bigger?

What was done to re-nationalize the corpo-

rations and public services delivered into the hands of the private sector by the privatizing forces of the PSDB and other sectors linked to the “privataria tuca”?

Lula has just been brought into the Dilma government as the president's Chief of Staff. On the day his new post was announced, Dilma announced the privatization of four more large airports, stating, “I am certain that we will be turning over four airports — Porto Alegre, Florianopolis, Salvador and Fortaleza — to the private sector.”

It is precisely this policy that has led us to the difficult situation we are facing today. This is the policy that we must break with — urgently! This requires:

- \* Ending the fiscal adjustment and budget policy based on the “primary surplus” that cuts and restricts social and public service spending — all for the purpose of paying the bankers and speculators the interests on an illegitimate debt;

- \* Repealing the misnamed Protection Program for Employment (PPE), which guarantees no jobs whatsoever and only lowers the workers' wages in the name of job preservation — instead of doing what should be done, that is, prohibiting all layoffs so as to prevent the workers from shouldering the burden of the crisis;

- \* Stopping privatization, guaranteeing control over all deep-water oil reserves by Petrobras, ensuring Dilma's veto of bill PL 555, which delivers our public enterprises to the control of private shareholders.

- \* Suspending all new measures that undermine the retirement and pension systems, which have already been hard hit in recent years;

- \* Suspending all the cuts to public education and public services.

This National Congress — which is led by corrupt individuals — has no legitimacy to remove Dilma from the presidency nor to modify the Constitution in favor of the plans of recession on behalf of imperialism, the IMF, and its national friends. Therefore, it is urgent and necessary to convene a National Constituent Assembly in which the people, in a sovereign manner, can decide their own destiny.

— **Internationalist Communist Faction of O Trabalho**

already experiencing a catastrophic social situation? After all, wasn't it then "Socialist" Prime Minister Michel Rocard who stated, "We cannot accommodate all the misery of the world"? And didn't the Greek government just announce its inability to provide the funding needed to provide shelter for the tens of thousands of immigrants?

But how can the Greek government provide funding for this effort — or for anything else, for that matter — when it accepts to implement all the dictates of the European Union and the IMF, thus condemning the Greek people to continue sinking into poverty? "There are no resources for the refugees," or so we are told. But the truth is that under the iron heel of the austerity plans of the European Union and the IMF there are no resources for anyone; there are no resources to address the needs of the workers and people of Greece, Italy, France, Poland, and beyond.

What is needed is to put an end to the "Memorandums", to the "Responsibility Pacts", and to the bailout gifts of billions and billions of euros to the capitalists and speculators; only then will there be funding for everyone! This should be the unanimous position of all workers' organizations throughout Europe!

### Let Us Not Allow Them to Divide Us!

At the very moment when the Macedonian police were dispersing the refugees, the French police were using bulldozers to raze to the ground the so-called "Jungle" in Calais [1], the largest slum in Europe. (Of course, this will only lead to the creation of new slums.) In Calais, where decades of deindustrialization have thrown the working population into the ranks of the unemployed (18% officially), adventurers are seeking to promote racist campaigns.

"Divide and rule" has been the watchword of the masters ever since the Roman Empire. In the words of our comrades of the Democratic Independent Workers Party (POID) in Calais: "Let us not allow them to divide us! These are the same governments that here are organizing a social war against the Labour Code and that over there are crushing the people under their bombs!" More than ever, it is time to raise high the banner of working class international solidarity against

# ...Open the Borders Now!



the capitalist system, which is the root cause of war and exploitation. More than ever, "Workers of the World, Unite!"

### Endnote

[1] Calais is a major port in Northern France. It is the entry point to Britain by ferries and through the "Channel Tunnel".

## Barbarism in the Heart of 'Civilized' Europe

Ten thousand children among the refugees are said to have "disappeared" since their arrival in Europe, according to figures provided by Europol at the end of January 2016. "Disappeared"? The term is somewhat hypocritical: They were kidnapped by networks of mafias that have made money hands over fists through trafficking of all sorts, prostitution, and other criminal activities — all of which flourish under a decaying capitalist system.

### When Eurostat "Discovers" that Asylum Seekers Come From Countries at War ...

A study by the European statistics-gathering agency Eurostat published on March 4 indicates that in 2015, 1.2 million people applied for asylum in member countries of the European Union — twice as many as in 2014. Where did these asylum seekers come from?

In 2015, 362,800 asylum seekers were from Syria (twice as many as in 2014), 178,200 were from Afghanistan (four times more than in 2014), and 121,500 came from Iraq (seven times more than in 2014). These are the countries which, one after the other, have been subjected to foreign military intervention under the leadership of the United States.

Iraq: First there was the war in 1991, which was followed by 10 years of a murderous UN embargo, then a second war in 2003, followed by more than 10 years of occupation, and then a third military operation in 2015.

Afghanistan: First there was the NATO military intervention 2001 — and the occupation and war have not stopped ever since.

Syria: It has been ravaged for the past five years by a civil war fueled by the United States through its allies in the region: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. In March 2015, the U.S. NGO Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) estimated that at least 1.3 million civilians have been killed since the beginning of the "War on Terrorism" launched by George W. Bush in 2001. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, a journalist with *The Guardian* of London, estimates, for his part, that the number of victims is closer to 4 million people.

Those responsible for the "drama of the immigrants" therefore have names: Bush, Obama, Sarkozy, Hollande, Cameron, Merkel, as well as their governments and the NATO leaders.

# To Address the 'Immigrant Crisis' in Europe: 'Open the Borders Now, Unconditionally!'



By Dominique Ferré

[*Note: The following article is reprinted from Issue No. 29 (March 9, 2016) of Tribune des Travailleurs (Workers Tribune), the weekly newspaper of the Democratic Independent Workers Party / POID of France. The translation is by The Organizer newspaper.*]

Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, addressing the immigrants, declared: “Do not come to Europe!” — as if the hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children had thrown themselves willingly onto the road to exile!

Immediately after these words were spoken, the instructions of the president of the European Council were put into action: The Macedonian police fired tear gas canisters at close range as a way of welcoming the refugee families fleeing the wars and IMF plans that have ravaged their countries. This occurred on the Macedonian-Greek border, where these refugees, who had been driven from their homes by the wars in Syria and Afghanistan, had been warehoused. It was

here that their shouts of “Open the Borders!” rang out.

**“Welcome these Men, Women and Children Fleeing the Barbarism that YOU Have Created!”**

Yes: “Open the borders! Welcome these men, women and children fleeing the barbarism that you have created!” Such should be the unanimous demand of the labor movement. It is an elementary democratic demand, consistent with the legacy of the French Revolution, which “declared war on the tyrants” and gave asylum to the victims of oppression. Because who, after all, is responsible for the wave of hundreds of thousands of refugees crossing the Aegean Sea at the peril of their lives, and traveling thousands of miles on foot, robbed of their meager possessions by the mafiosi “smugglers” of all sorts?

**“War Is the Main Cause of this Exodus!”**

“The war in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan; and the repression and the economic difficul-

ties in the Middle East and Africa continue to force many people to try and reach Europe,” wrote the editorialists of the *International New York Times* on March 1, 2016. “War,” explained an activist of the Left Radical of Afghanistan in our previous issue [of *Tribune des Travailleurs/Workers Tribune* – Tr. Note], which was caused and sustained for decades in our country by the Great Powers, is the main reason for this mass exodus.” In such circumstances, the least one would expect from these warmakers — from those who have destroyed Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria and left them in ruins — would be to welcome these refugees in a dignified manner, wouldn’t it? But, no, it will be objected, “This is not realistic, . . . the flow of refugees will never end!”

**For an Immediate End to All Imperialist Interventions!**

To this objection, the labor movement should respond clearly and distinctly: “The immigrant crisis” is the result of the barbaric imperialist wars and interventions [see sidebar article]. It’s a fact: The five-year tenure of [French President François Hollande] has witnessed a record number of foreign military interventions (Mali, Central African Republic, Iraq, Syria, and the continued occupation of Afghanistan). Putting an end to the hundreds of thousands of men and women fleeing war demands an immediate end to all imperialist interventions! All troops from the U.S., France, Britain and other countries should be withdrawn immediately from all the countries in which they are intervening! All intervention by the proxy forces of the Great Powers — such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey — must stop; these forces have provided weapons to the armed groups in Syria, leaving the country mired in bloodshed.

**There Is “No Way” to Welcome All of Them”?**

But how, we will be asked, would it be possible to accommodate all these people at a time when all the European countries are  
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