



The world outlook

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As the third wave of the pandemic rolls over the global South, economic research institutes and the governments of the leading capitalist states are practising (expedient) optimism.

US President Biden proclaims that the bad Trump years are over, and the US wants to take back the role of global leadership. Gone, he said, are the years of unilateralism, the withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement and the sidelining of European allies. The world is to be hegemonically ordered again according to the wishes and ideas of the USA, of course for the good of freedom and democracy, the market economy and competition.

But Chinese imperialism, the new main rival in the global struggle for markets and spheres of influence, is also openly staking its claims. On the centenary of the Chinese Communist Party, it is once again presenting itself as an alternative to the US-dominated world order. Just as the established Western leading powers, the USA, but also their partners and rivals from the EU, like to disguise their economic and geostrategic interests with democratic promises, Beijing presents itself as a less imperialistic imperialism that interferes comparatively little in the internal affairs of its vassals, as long as they do not conflict with China's goals.

Even the crisis-ridden EU is once again calling for a new beginning. Germany and France, in particular, want more responsibility for the world and to be more proactive in representing their interests - be it vis-à-vis Russia and China, or the USA and Britain. Above all, however, they need finally to reorganise their own bloc and move the EU forward - on its own territory as well as in the Mediterranean and in Africa.

The political proclamations and ambitions in the countries dominated by imperialism are far more restrained. Here, there is no end in sight for either the economic crisis or the pandemic. While the latter synchronised the global recession in 2020, we are now witnessing a divergence of the world economy.

Economic forecasts

This is also expressed in the economic development forecasts for the years 2021 and 2022. In its quarterly report, the IMF assumes an increase in global economic output of 6.4 percent in April 2021, thus expecting an even stronger recovery of the global economy than at the beginning of the year.

The upswing is essentially driven by growth in the imperialist centres, above all by China and the USA, both of which are currently acting as locomotives of the world economy. For the USA, the IMF forecasts growth of 6.4 percent, for China even 8.4 percent. For the Eurozone, on the other hand, only 4.4 percent, for Germany 3.7 percent, for Japan 3.3 percent and for Great Britain around 5 percent are estimated. These countries are thus all below the expected global average of 6.0 percent. Of course, the higher expected growth in Britain or the USA, compared to Germany and the EU, reflects the different pace at which the countries carried out vaccinations, maintained restrictions on public life and reacted to the crisis in the health system. Although they are therefore of limited comparability, they do illustrate the decisive cyclical development trend.

In principle, we can assume that growth in the imperialist economies in 2021 and 2022 will stimulate the whole world economy. At the same time, short-term forecasts should not obscure their continued crisis nature, or the pandemic that continues to rage, especially in the countries of the global South.

As we shall see, the uneven development of the world economy is a central feature of the current situation and the form that the cyclical recovery is taking. The unevenness between the different regions and the imperialist character of global capitalism are particularly evident not only during the recession, but also in the current recovery. The upswing for some means stagnation, decline and permanent crisis for others.

Reasons for the upswing

In order to understand the causes of increasing disparity, we need to look at the short-term, cyclical causes of the development.

a) China, and some other countries such as Australia and South Korea, were able to contain the pandemic relatively successfully, albeit with very drastic coercive government measures. China's GDP therefore also grew in 2020, albeit by only 2.3 percent. The USA and Britain conducted vigorous vaccination campaigns and were able to revive public life and consumption relatively quickly.

The countries of the EU were a long way behind on this, but even they will have vaccinated a large part of the population by September 2021. Moreover, these countries, along with China and Russia, effectively monopolise the available global vaccine, including the production and availability of modified vaccine(s) to protect the population against new viral mutations. India also has enormous production capacity, but the patents are held by Western corporations.

However, the concentration of vaccines and the means for health protection in the imperialist centres and a few semi-colonies means that most countries on the planet will continue to be ravaged by the rampant pandemic. In addition, unlike the richest countries, they have little, indeed no, long-term means of temporarily shutting down their economies and securing supplies for the population. Therefore, there is not only a lack of vaccines and medical care. The mass of workers and peasants continue to be forced to work under the most precarious conditions without any significant health protection - and thus to accept the risk of severe chronic diseases or mass deaths (see Latin America, Africa, but also India and other large parts of Asia). This situation is not only a step towards barbarism, with millions of deaths, it is also accompanied by a permanent economic crisis in these countries, exacerbated by other factors such as ecological disasters.

b) All major imperialist states, and blocs led by them, such as the EU, resorted to state control measures, albeit limited, during the pandemic, in order to centralise the health sector to some degree and counteract the devastating consequences of neoliberal health reforms of recent decades. One result of these measures is the relatively rapid development of vaccines, the development costs of which were largely passed on to the states and taxpayers by the private corporations, while they (especially BioNtech/Pfizer and Moderna) are now reaping billions in extra profits.

In general, during the recession, the imperialist states support their big capital, their financial institutions and, subordinately, also smaller enterprises and parts of the working class, with subsidies in the billions in order to stabilise the economy and save the capitals from ruin or collapse. This policy is now being continued with gigantic stimulus programmes; that of the US government under Biden is equivalent to around 8 percent of US GDP.

Upswing for whom?

However, the stimulus programmes are limited to the imperialist metropolises. They are not replicable for the states and regions exploited by imperialist finance and big capital in Africa, Latin America and most of Asia. That is, the current economic policy of the leading capitalist states, above all, of the big powers, reinforces global inequalities and consolidates the dominance of the imperialist powers.

This is evident at various levels. First, the cyclical upswing of the world economy depends on the accumulation dynamics and demand in the imperialist centres. Secondly, their upswing generally leads to increased flow of capital and investment to the imperialist centres, putting pressure on the emerging countries. Third, the gigantic increase in public and private debt affects imperialist and semi-colonial countries differently. In the former, it can save their world-

dominating big capital and even begin renewing the capital stock in the direction of future technology. The debt of semi-colonial countries, on the other hand, serves primarily as a lever for deepening dependence on imperialist capitals, leading to increased subordination and the outflow of extra profits to imperialist countries.

This brings us to a first central characteristic of the current development of the world economy: crisis, pandemic and economic upswing all deepen semi-colonial dependency. It is therefore no wonder that numerous countries - including states such as India, South Africa, Brazil, Turkey - are plagued by a chronic state of crisis, the important features of which are rising debt burdens, threatened or real capital outflows, inflation, overt or covert mass unemployment or underemployment. In its most extreme form, this leads to a dramatic increase in malnutrition and undernourishment and to millions of deaths from hunger.

The character of the current recovery of the world economy, while it is essentially limited to imperialist core countries, also means that it is not certain which great powers and leading capitals will emerge as winners from this crisis. But it is clearly foreseeable which countries will emerge weakened and as losers from the crisis: the mass of semi-colonies including countries like Brazil. Among them, India presents the most contradictory picture. In 2020, the country experienced a historic GDP slump of -8 percent. For 2021, however, extremely high growth of up to 12.5 percent is forecast - albeit on the condition that the country is successful in controlling the pandemic. By no stretch of the imagination can this be said to be the case.

Besides the semi-colonial countries, some imperialist states will also be losers on the economic level of the current development, first and foremost, Russia. Putin's course and the reinforcement of the bonapartist and authoritarian character of his regime represent a pre-emptive action against possible mass protests, which, in addition to the bourgeois opposition, could bring the working class into action.

The unevenness of economic development ultimately also affects the EU/Eurozone far more than the USA and China. The crisis is dramatically exacerbating the imbalances and centrifugal tendencies in the EU. Imperialist countries like Italy and Spain continue to lose economic weight and competitiveness, but at the same time are far too big and important for the EU to drop them.

Risks

When we speak of the current cyclical upswing of the world economy, we must not forget the factors of uncertainty to which even the bourgeois institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank or the OECD and national economic research institutes point: First, there is the pandemic. Even if this has been pushed back to some extent in many western countries, we can assume that even in these countries there will be a fourth wave, although probably weaker as a result of the mass vaccinations. However, the semi-colonial world is in free fall. Effective pandemic control, which hardly seems possible without a massive transfer of resources from the imperialist world, is not in sight.

A second massive risk is the danger of inflation, especially in the semi-colonial countries whose currencies are coming under increasing pressure due to the crisis. The return of inflation, which seemed for years to have disappeared from the imperialist countries, is, however, becoming an increasing danger in the centres of the world economy.

Thirdly, the anti-crisis measures, and the gigantic economic stimulus packages, have massively exacerbated two interrelated problems: the gigantic debts of states, companies and private households on the one hand, and the growth of speculative bubbles on the other.

Overaccumulation

The latter is closely linked to the emergence of new forms of financial capital. The gigantic increase in fictitious capital is causally related to the fact that the policies of the major imperialist states since 2007 have essentially been aimed at rescuing big capital, be it interest-bearing, industrial or commercial. This in turn has meant that the destruction of surplus capital necessary for a fundamental recovery of profit rates did not take place, or at least not to the extent necessary to set in motion a new accumulation dynamic in the productive sphere.

The current policies of the USA, the EU and China, under buzzwords such as digitalisation, artificial intelligence and ecological renewal, also aim at material replacement and modernisation of the capital stock, and all resort to state economic stimulus policies for this purpose as well.

But in all cases, especially in the traditional Western states, the attempt is ultimately made to square the circle. On the one hand, the state should push for a renewal of the capital stock, but on the other hand, the existing big capitals should be protected. Since the existing industrial fixed capital in all leading imperialist states also represents gigantic assets which no owner will voluntarily give up and have destroyed, the entire "restructuring", every "modernisation" becomes a contradictory undertaking which ultimately amounts to massive subsidies for big capital, whose more or less large-scale material renewal is largely financed by the state, that is, to a large extent from the taxes of the working class. In addition, the renewal of the big capital stock, however much it is labelled "ecological" and "renewable", is primarily aimed at increased competitiveness on the world markets.

This can easily be illustrated by looking at the automotive industry. The switch to e-mobility does not, of course, mean switching to rail or other more sustainable forms of freight and passenger transport, but primarily from cars with internal combustion engines to those with electric motors. Ecologically, this endeavour is a path to a dead end. It is falsely sold as sustainable, but in fact gigantic sums are spent on subsidising the big corporations, so that this pseudo-ecological transformation mainly secures the profits of the existing big capitals.

This form of state intervention thus primarily serves to reform capital and strengthen its competitiveness on the world market. In the longer term, however, it exacerbates the crisis in the global economy. Let's take the car industry again. If the plans of the EU, USA, Japan and other manufacturing countries were to be successful and keep all the respective corporations competitive, nothing would change in the over-accumulation of capital in the industry. Sooner or later, this would manifest itself in overcapacity and overproduction, especially if China were to succeed in producing one or more e-car companies capable of competing on the world market and so become a competitor to the Western monopoly capitals in this sector as well. What applies to the automotive industry naturally also applies to all other important sectors.

The "transformation" of the capitalist economy thus encounters increasing barriers that arise from the accumulation of capital itself and can only be overcome through a huge escalation of this inner contradiction, in other words, a gigantic destruction of existing, surplus capital.

Since 2007/8, we have basically been in a period of development of this contradiction and preparation for such an escalation. How long it will take for this to erupt, for the contradiction to reach its peak, is something no one can predict with any accuracy. After all, this is not simply the result of a purely economic movement, but of the political-economic shape of world capitalism, in particular the development of the class struggle not only between wage labour and capital, but also between the different bourgeoisies.

Even if the current stimulus programmes can revive central national economies and the world economy in the short term, they will not be able to lead to a sustainable dynamisation of the world economy as a whole. Rather, the internal contradiction of the movement of capital will further intensify as a result of these programmes. Falling profit rates cannot be stopped in the longer term by resorting to neo-Keynesian concepts; rather, the mass of surplus and fictitious finance capital will continue to grow.

The battle for the world market

The current policies of all major powers are not designed to be protectionist. It would be a gross misunderstanding to understand the quite significant elements of Keynesian economic policy in the USA, the EU and also Germany (not to mention China's state interventionism) as a foreclosure or disengagement from the world market.

On the contrary. At present, all the leading capitalist states are aiming to create conditions that will ensure success in the global markets for their industry, their large service companies and, above all, their financial institutions. The policy

of the USA, China and the leading imperialist powers in the EU naturally goes hand in hand with making whole regions of the world locations for the investment of their capital. Germany and other imperialist states are trying to compensate for disadvantages vis-à-vis the USA and China by linking whole countries to the EU as semi-colonial markets and production sites within the framework of international value chains. This goes hand in hand with the export of capital and goods to the whole world, not least to China itself, from which Germany (and other European states) certainly do not want to cut themselves off.

For its part, China is not relying only on internal dynamics, but is also pushing ahead with its grip on markets and investment spheres for its capital with the so-called New Silk Road. The US wants to revive a new Western alliance not simply to cut off China from its markets and to incorporate the EU as a subordinate ally, but also to regain lost world market positions.

Towards the tipping point

The internal dynamics of this world market competition, which is joined not only by the USA, China and the leading EU countries, but also by Japan, Britain, Russia and even weighty semi-colonies such as India, South Korea, Taiwan, mean that its replacement by a protectionist policy, the isolation of one's own economic bloc, is of course predictable, sooner or later.

The trade conflicts and reciprocal punitive tariffs between the US and China, like the EU under Trump, must be seen as harbingers of a possible change in the prevailing economic strategy. Also, the US policy of containing China and Russia, drawing the EU and other allies into an increasingly open confrontation with them, may naturally turn into a fragmentation of the world market and the closing off of entire regions to competition.

Even if we are moving towards such a tipping point, it has not yet been reached. Counterposed to it is the existing degree of integration of the world market, the formation of global production and utilisation chains, that is, the development of productive forces, which would be annihilated if there were a retreat from the world market and a transition to a protectionist system. Conversely, these internal tendencies of capital accumulation will come up against more than just the internal obstacles of over-accumulation and falling profit rates. The nation-state constitution of world capitalism will also one day prove to be an obstacle to development.

The basic problem of the current economic policies of all the major powers can be seen from the fact that, when they react to crises and try to deal with them, their techniques, such as increased state intervention, must themselves intensify competition and susceptibility to crisis.

Economic policy and political rule

It is therefore no coincidence that the ruling classes, and with them their economic policy and longer-term strategy in general, have themselves fallen into crisis. This is expressed in internal conflicts and fluctuations, as we can see from the doctrines and policies of Trump and Biden in the USA. Basically, such internal contradictions can be observed in all major imperialist states. They reflect the different interests of opposing capital fractions, essentially the contradiction between short-term profit goals of individual capitals and a long-term policy to secure the interest of capital as a whole.

Defeats in the class struggles of the last decade, above all, of the Arab Spring, but also of Syriza in Greece, had a deep, disillusioning and demoralising effect on the masses. In the last five years, it was not the left but the populist right that repeatedly presented itself as a pseudo-radical alternative to the rule of the traditional "elites".

The basis for the rise of right-wing populism was, on the one hand, the failure of the reformist and trade union workers' movement to provide a progressive response to the crisis of capitalism, and, on the other hand, the increasing real or feared disintegration of the petty bourgeoisie, the middle classes, but also the labour aristocracy and the mass of wage earners. Thirdly, right-wing populist movements around bourgeois leaders such as Trump, Salvini, Modi, Bolsonaro etc. express the interests of that wing of capital which wants to grind down the traditional forms of rule of Western,

bourgeois democracy. That ultimately means all the positions won by the working class and the oppressed and their replacement by authoritarian and plebiscitary systems.

Trump's ouster, the Biden administration and most European government coalitions present themselves as "reasonable" bourgeois alternatives to right-wing populism that focus on democracy, a certain social balance, the integration of representatives of the working class and the socially oppressed. The Green New Deal is their ideological flagship.

It should not be overlooked that the "democratic" imperialists such as Macron in France or the German government are also pursuing a course of dismantling democratic rights and enacting racist legislation, expansion of police powers and the surveillance state. The situation in the refugee camps at the US-American border and the deaths in the Mediterranean Sea illustrate the reality of this "democratic" imperialism.

Conversely, bonapartist regimes oriented towards a strong, centralised leadership, as in Russia or China, are also only a very limited response to the crisis of bourgeois politics and rule. They only function as long as the bonapartist chief proves to be a successful mediator between different social interests and class fractions. If this fails, their rule will also falter, as we can see in the example of Putin.

Above all, the particular political regime does not change the fundamental contradictions it claims to manage. The intensified global economic competition inevitably goes hand in hand with a political confrontation between the great powers. Most importantly the attempt of the USA under Biden to form a global alliance against China/Russia and to integrate the Western allies into it under its leadership. This basically pursues two goals. Firstly, to contain China, secondly, to restore and fortify the US leadership against the other Western imperialist states. Even if everyone invokes the regained unity of values, common interests and goals, as at the recent G7 summit, these cannot hide tangible conflicting interests, such as economic policy towards China. Similarly, while the USA is basically seeking a stronger confrontation with Russia, Germany and France see this confrontation as an obstacle to their own longer-term interests.

In any case, the struggle for the redivision of the world will continue to intensify and, with it, armament, interventions in other countries as well as nationalism and racism for the ideological justification of these policies among their own population.

Class struggle

The pattern and tempo of cyclical development, as well as the different prevailing constellations of bourgeois politics, will, nonetheless, have important effects on the class struggle in the different countries for the next period.

Of course, the big issue everywhere is who will pay the cost of the crisis, of the bailouts, of the Corona policy. All bourgeois governments will naturally try to shift the burden onto the working class, the peasantry and the middle classes, as was basically the case during the Corona crisis. The economic upswing in the USA and in several European countries, however, means the short-term conditions will be different from those of large parts of the masses in the semi-colonies.

The extra profits of imperialist capital in the metropolises, as well as the current economic upswing, even allow some room for trade union and social redistribution struggles. In addition, the health crisis has made it clear to millions that massive investment, nationalisation and recruitment are needed in this area as well as in other sectors such as housing and transport. Finally, the US Democrats under Biden were also elected on the promise of countering the polarisation of society through democratic, anti-racist and social reforms. The EU's Green New Deal also contains a similar promise.

Of course, all of these will not be given to anyone. The bourgeois governments will water them down further under the pressure of the financial markets and big business.

For the class struggle, however, it means that revolutionaries, militant activists in the trade unions, left parties or the radical left, must try to use the conjunctural situation and the popularity of general political and social demands to

improve the situation of the working class. Demands for a minimum wage, the expansion and nationalisation of health care, the struggle against rent speculation or for a programme of socially useful work in social and ecological restructuring under workers' control, etc., as well as those for full citizenship rights for migrants or the right to abortion, can provide important starting points for the formation of mass movements anchored in the trade unions and workplaces. At the same time, of course, in the imperialist centres we will also see massive attacks on jobs, restructuring of industry and cuts as a result of public debt.

In any case, it is essential to use these issues as a starting point for a common struggle, for a political movement, especially since even the reforms mentioned above will not simply be conceded, but have to be fought for through mass actions, demonstrations, political strikes, occupations.

In most semi-colonial countries, the situation is different because of their different economic development. It will be characterised by a permanent crisis of the economy, the pandemic and also ecological disasters.

This means that in the semi-colonial countries, the struggle for an emergency programme against the crisis and pandemic will play a central role, encompassing various economic and social aspects. Basically, we can assume that the class struggle in these countries will take a far more explosive form because of the sharpened social and political situation, up to pre-revolutionary and revolutionary situations as in Myanmar.

Because of the tendencies towards Bonapartism, authoritarian, despotic forms of rule, but also the social oppression of women, LGBTIAQ persons or of national minorities, democratic questions will play a central role in the class struggle, often enough establishing the starting point for nationwide mass movements. The combination of democratic, social and economic demands into a programme of action, the programme of permanent revolution, which combines democratic questions with the struggle for socialist and international revolution, will be of decisive importance for the success or failure of these movements.

Resistance and class struggle

The importance of this question can hardly be overestimated. Globally, defensive actions and the advance of reactionary forces have nourished the idea among many workers and leftists that we can only choose between two bourgeois camps, that of pseudo-radical, populist reaction and that of the "democratic" centre. For many, an independent class politics seems only a dreamed-of goal in an indeterminate future. "First" we have to fight the evils of right-wing populism and Bonapartism, and we would have to fight Trump, Bolsonaro, Modi, Orbán, Le Pen, Putin or the Beijing regime in alliance with the democratic wing of the bourgeoisie. "Realistic" at best would be an anti-neoliberal reform policy or a more left-wing version of the Green New Deal. A shift in the balance of power would only be possible in alliance with one wing of the ruling class, whether that is the liberal bourgeoisie or the ostensibly "more social" and "anti-imperialist" great powers like China and Russia.

All such strategies will lead to a dead end. They subordinate the interests of the working class and the oppressed masses to the interest of one or another wing of the bourgeoisie.

Fatal role of bureaucracy

The big apparatuses of the workers' movement, the bureaucratised, top-down controlled trade unions, the reformist, bourgeois workers' parties, as well as left-wing populist regimes and movements in the countries of the global South, all play a particularly pathetic role in this.

Ultimately, the policy of the trade union bureaucracies and social democracy, but ultimately also of the left parties, amounts to a policy of national unity with capital, coalitions in government and social partnership in the workplaces. Under bureaucratic control, these organisations, which despite membership losses continue to comprise millions upon millions of wage-earners, cannot realise their potential. On the contrary, the bureaucratic leaderships act as an obstacle, a brake, often even as direct opponents, of any mass mobilisation. Not only do they pursue misguided policies, they also spread false consciousness in the class.

One variety of this dependence on the liberal imperialist powers and parties is the widespread attempt to revive a radical version of social democracy, either by founding new parties based on a radical Keynesian programme combining social movements with electoralism, or by attempting to take over bourgeois liberal or traditional social democratic parties. We have seen the former fail in the case of Syriza and Podemos, and the latter in the form of Corbynism in the British Labour Party. Former Stalinist "left parties" have long experimented with the same method.

Today, we see a mixture of both in the case of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and their so-called "dirty break" with the party of Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton. Ideologues of this neo-reformism try to incorporate a Marxism stripped of its revolutionary essence into their politics by means of a revived Luxemburgism, Gramscianism or Kautskyianism. "Trotskyists" who adapt to this are simply treading the path of the original revisionism and 1970s Eurocommunism and are part of the problem, the ideological confusion, not its solution.

Mobilisations

In spite of these powerful obstacles, in spite of the pandemic and the crisis, last year also saw impressive resistance around the world. The revolution in Myanmar and the strike movement of the Indian workers and peasants are impressive highlights of democratic and social struggles. In Latin America, we are witnessing a massive upsurge of class struggles and polarisation. They pose the question of how to link the struggle for basic democratic and social demands with that for socialist revolution. Fundamentally, they show that a programme of permanent revolution is needed!

In Belarus, Lebanon, Nigeria and many other countries, mass movements mobilised against reactionary regimes and social misery, so that pre-revolutionary situations and crises developed. The explosive situations in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and large parts of Asia mean that mass struggles are still likely in the coming period and may escalate into revolutionary situations. As in the Arab Revolutions after 2011, the question then becomes how these movements can achieve revolutionary victory.

In the imperialist countries, above all in the USA, huge mass movements, such as Black Lives Matter, mobilised millions of people and inspired the racially oppressed and youth all over the world. Similar approaches of spontaneous internationalism are also shown by the women's strike movement and important parts of the environmental movement, both of which mobilised millions worldwide, again even during the pandemic. On the level of trade union and company struggles, we have seen the beginnings of transnational, coordinated actions in individual companies, such as Amazon.

Leadership crisis

Despite a historical crisis and the threat of deep cuts, however, the core layers of the working class, especially in the imperialist countries, were often on the margins of these movements and mobilisations. Workplace struggles against closures and mass layoffs, although numerous, remained isolated from each other and under the firm control of the trade union bureaucracy and workplace functionaries.

This stalling policy of the reformist apparatuses and parties also explains why the working class could not take a leading role in most movements. The leadership of resistance movements then fell almost involuntarily to politically petty-bourgeois forces and their ideologies. The dominance of these ideologies; identity politics, intersectionalism, postcolonialism, feminism, left populism, in the movements of recent years is itself a result of the prevailing bourgeois politics and the associated bourgeois consciousness in the working class. The fact that many activists see an alternative in radical petty-bourgeois theories and programmes is the inevitable punishment for the social-partnership and social-chauvinist politics of the trade-union bureaucracies and reformist parties, as well as the toleration of their dominance by many forces who believe themselves to be to the left of them.

Activists from the petty-bourgeois-led movements can only be won over to a revolutionary workers' politics if revolutionaries support the struggles for liberation without any ifs and buts, if they patiently explain their criticism of their programmes and theories, and if they wage a relentless struggle against the bureaucratic and reformist leaderships

in the working class itself.

In concrete terms, this means they must fight for the class-struggle renewal of the trade unions and build oppositional democratic grassroots movements against the bureaucracy. It is not enough merely to denounce the misleaders, in order to break their supremacy, revolutionaries have to make demands on them without concealing their critique. They must fight for all workers' organisations to break with the bourgeoisie. This means in countries like the USA, standing in the DSA for a consistent break with the Democratic Party and the building of a mass party of the working class. In other countries, like Germany, this means working for the creation of a new revolutionary workers' party.

United Front

In all cases, revolutionaries must propose a united front of all parties, organisations and movements of the working class as well as the oppressed on the basis of a programme of action against crisis, pandemic, environmental destruction, racism and sexism. Such a programme must include, for example, demands against threatened dismissals, against unemployment, rent increases and for free access to a health system for all, for a solidarity lockdown. This also means challenging private ownership of the means of production, for example, by demanding the expropriation of the pharmaceutical industry and a global plan for the production and free distribution of vaccines for all. It is about the expropriation without compensation of all private corporations in the health sector under workers' control and all those threatening mass layoffs and cutbacks.

These and all other major social struggles can only be won if they are based on mass mobilisations of the working class. Therefore, all their organisations must be called upon to participate in the common struggle, thus setting the great mass organisations in motion and at the same time exposing their leaderships to the test of practice.

Such a struggle requires democratic structures: it must be based on assemblies in the workplaces and neighbourhoods, on elected action committees and caucuses. Finally, a mass movement must also build self-defence organs that can protect it from the attacks of strikebreakers, right-wing gangs or the police.

Internationalism and the International

In order to connect the resistance on a continental and global level, an international movement is needed, a revival of the social forums, which should not only be organs for discussion, but should also be decision-making coordinators of the common struggle.

While absolutely necessary, this will not be sufficient. What is needed is a political response to the leadership crisis of the working class itself: new revolutionary parties and a new, Fifth International based on a programme of transitional demands for socialist revolution - a world party representing a truly international, global response to the triple crisis of humanity.

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