

**Who are we ?**

● The International Workers Committee Against War, Exploitation, for a Workers' International (IWC) was set up at the World Conference held in Mumbai ( India ) on November 19, 20, 21, 2016 gathering delegates from 28 countries.

● The IWC was set up on the basis of the Mumbai Manifesto against war, exploitation and precarious labour which was endorsed by labour activist and trade union and political organisations officers from 46 countries (\*)

● Its continuations committee is composed of labour activists from all political/ trade union backgrounds:

**Innocent Assogba** (Benin),  
**Alan Benjamin** (USA),  
**Colia Clark** (USA),  
**Constantin Cretan** (Romania),  
**Berthony Dupont** (Haiti),  
**Ney Ferreira** (Brazil),  
**Daniel Gluckstein** (France),  
**Rubina Jamil** (Pakistan),  
**Apo Leung** (China),  
**Gloria Gracida** (Mexico),  
**M.A. Patil** (India),  
**Mandlenkosi Phangwa** (Azania),  
**Klaus Schüller** (Germany),  
**Jung Sikhwa** (Korea),  
**John Sweeney** (Great Britain),  
**Mark Vassilev** (Russia),  
**Nambiath Vasudevan** (India).

(\*) Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Azania, Belarus, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Korea, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

**UNITED STATES**
**Labor's Resurgence, Bernie Sanders, the DSA and the Fight for Independent Working-Class Politics Today**
**An Interview with *The Organizer* Editorial Board Member Alan Benjamin (part II)**

**Question:** *The Organizer* newspaper has reported on the substantial growth of Democratic Socialists of America, or DSA, the political group that has been promoting Bernie Sanders for president. Tell us about it?

Benjamin: The DSA, the long-dormant refuge of labor officials adhering to liberal social-democratic policies within the Democratic Party, has re-emerged through the Bernie Sanders campaign with a largely youth and rank-and-file labor base, a militant base. This is another expression of the growing radicalization of the youth and sectors of the working class.

DSA just held its national convention in Atlanta, with more than 1,000 delegates representing 56,000 dues-paying members organized in hundreds of chapters nationwide. During the pre-convention discussion, some of the DSA chapters refused to endorse Sanders for president, as proposed by the outgoing DSA leadership, on the grounds that a vote for Sanders would be nothing more than a vote for Biden or Warren, given that Sanders will be denied the nomination and that he has urged his supporters to vote for the DNC-selected candidate. Many DSA activists formed a caucus, the Red Star caucus, that called on DSA to spearhead a campaign for a Workers Party now.

This affirmation of an independent position had significant support among DSA members. The new DSA leadership, grouped mainly in the Bread and Roses caucus, embraced the call to build a Workers Party, but relegated this task to some time in the distant future. A report on the DSA convention published in the August 7 issue of *The Nation* magazine summarized the DSA's new course:

"Decisions over electoral work marked a definite shift to the left. In a further move away from the old DSA's commitment to 'lesser evilism,' the convention voted that DSA should refuse to endorse any presidential candidate other than Bernie Sanders on the Democratic Party ballot line in 2020. DSA similarly

tightened its national endorsement policy to only support class-struggle candidates running as open socialists.

"For the first time, the organization also openly committed itself to a 'dirty break' from the Democratic Party. As the organization's new national electoral policy explains, 'DSA is committed to building political organization independent of the Democratic Party and their capitalist donors.... In the longer term, our goal is to form an independent working-class party, but for now this does not rule out DSA-endorsed candidates running tactically on the Democratic Party ballot line'."

The adopted DSA electoral policy document references the Farmer-Labor Party (FLP) in Minnesota in the 1930s as an example of a "dirty break" with the Democratic Party that must be emulated. This was no break at all. FLP Governor Floyd Olson not only failed to break with the Democrats, he called in the National Guard to smash the 1934 general strike in Minneapolis organized by militant socialist unionists.(1)

"Running tactically on the Democratic Party ballot line" is crossing the class line into the camp of the capitalist class. All too many political misleaders throughout the history of the U.S. labor movement have roped independent-moving fightbacks back into the Democratic Party on the grounds that this is merely a tactic towards the goal of building an independent working-class party ... in the longer term. Rather than serve as a bridge towards independent politics, the "dirty break" strategy is a major obstacle in its path. .../...

(1) "Governor Floyd B. Olson declared martial law in Minneapolis, deploying 4,000 National Guardsmen at his disposal. Picketing was banned and scab-driven trucks — issued military permits — began to move again. The union, seeing this as an attempt to break the strike, demanded that all permits be revoked and in defiance of the martial law, the workers vowed again to return to the picket lines on August 1." (reprinted from the Teamsters' union website)

**Question:** The situation you describe calls for opening a dialogue with the rank-and-file members of DSA — and with Labor for Bernie activists — who are open to building an independent working-class party but don't yet see the danger signs ahead, and/or can't see how to get there from here.

**Benjamin:** Indeed. These are activists who oppose the ongoing U.S. wars and interventions worldwide and who aspire deeply to full social and economic justice, at home and abroad — goals that are incompatible with the policies of the Democrats and Republicans. The two main presidential contenders in the fall of 2020 will be candidates who ignite wars and will intensify the exploitation of the working class and communities of the

oppressed; that is as certain as death and taxes.

To avoid falling prey to the perennial “lesser-evil” political blackmail — this time in the name of “Anybody But Trump” — these activists (and more generally the entire working class) need a “clean-break” perspective to win their pressing demands. And they don't have to wait until some time in the distant future to get the ball rolling.

There is a new openness to building an independent labor-based political party. This goal was adopted at the 2017 national convention of the AFL-CIO — another expression of the profound movement from below. But it won't become a reality without a conscious

effort today to regroup the partisans of independent politics in coalitions of labor and communities of the oppressed that launch independent working class candidates for office, beginning at the local level, in the November 2020 elections.

Building politically independent labor-community coalitions that incorporate Single Payer Healthcare and the Workplace Democracy Act among their primary demands and mobilize around them is the place to start. The union leaders and activists who formed the Labor and Community for an Independent Party (LCIP) are promoting these coalitions as the building blocks of an independent party of labor and the communities of the oppressed. ■

## ALGERIA

### Oued Souf: Fire in a Maternity Hospital

*“For an end to these policies and to the regime that implements them”*

Eight newborn infants died in a fire that broke out in a maternity hospital in Oued Souf. Other infants were injured. This has caused great emotion throughout the country. The citizens of this southern town have poured out into the streets to express their anger, their indignation, and their disgust. The minister of Healthcare thought it best to relieve the director of the hospital and the regional head of Healthcare of their duties -- the minister himself remaining in place.

With these decisions, the minister means to limit the confines of “this crime” to local and individual failings. Yet, is that the truth? Absolutely not. (...) Here is what the head of the National Union of Public Healthcare Practitioners (SNPSP), Dr. Mrabet, said: *“The hospital structures are dilapidated, and fire security standards do not even exist in the building specifications.”*

Moreover, the real reasons lie elsewhere. It was less than a year ago that the minister, riding roughshod over the Popular National Assembly (i.e., parlia-

ment), had a new healthcare law adopted. (...) The draft was based on a principle recommended by the IMF and the World Bank: make this sector profitable by practicing “truthful prices”, limiting procurement and renewal of materials, freezing healthcare infrastructure construction projects – particularly in the south and interior of the country – and, finally, limiting the recruitment of necessary staff. (...) Can we trust this regime, which is preparing to implement yet other recommendations from the IMF and the World Bank in “the framework of a ‘new look’ structural adjustment plan” that will involve all sectors of the national economy, with the same objective, that of “recolonizing” the country? The answer is: definitely not!

To put an end to these anti-worker and anti-national policies, we must put an end to the regime which, obeying imperialism, implements them. The regime means to extend these policies by organising their continuation in power through the 12 December presidential election, thus confiscating the

sovereign right of the people to decide for themselves. (...) Trade union and worker organisations must break with all the fronts associated with the lawyers of the bourgeoisie and imperialism; we must together achieve our unity and set up popular citizens' committees in the factories, in the universities and in the neighbourhoods. We must co-ordinate at all levels, we must organise a boycott of the elections and prepare the general strike, to put an end to the regime. Let us fight for the convening of a sovereign Constituent Assembly, for satisfaction of all democratic and social demands, for a government of workers and their organisations united. The activists of the Organisation Committee of Internationalist Socialists (COSI) are fighting here where they are, on this orientation, which was made concrete in Béjaïa this 24 September. ■

(Extracts from the editorial of issue n° 36 of *Minbar el Oummel* (Workers Tribune), 25 September 2019, publication of the Organisation Committee of Internationalist Socialists (COSI).