



Speak Out Now

January 16, 2023

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2023: Who Will Decide Our Future?

Our future can feel insecure and out of our control during these times. But, as we all know, things can change rapidly when people are moved to respond, like we saw following the murder of George Floyd.

We are confronting some serious problems. We have a healthcare system which is in reality a wealthcare system for the insurance companies and big hospitals. And the Covid pandemic continues — seemingly without end. Inflation is at record levels and as prices rise, our paychecks shrink. More people are confronting poverty and pushed out of their homes and onto the streets, often wrapped in the cycle of addiction. Millions of people have been driven from their homelands, fleeing to the U.S. in the hope of a better life, only to be stopped at the border and sent home. And like a ticking time bomb, there is the global climate catastrophe, generating storms, floods, heat waves, fires — disasters for communities across the U.S. and all over the world.

The policies and priorities of the 1% come at the cost of our lives and livelihoods.

It is clear what the bosses, and their government have planned for 2023 — to make us continue to pay for their crises and maintain their record profits at our expense. They continue with more layoffs, while many of us face overwork and understaffing. Some workers in unionized workplaces are confronting the demand for lengthy union contracts, with no built in compensation for the rising costs of living. There are threats of cuts to our pensions, to social services, healthcare, and education. And the majority of workers don't even have the minimal protections provided by a union contract. Faced with these attacks, it is hard not to feel overwhelmed and powerless. And it is true, by ourselves there is little we can do.

What has been and could be our response?

When we look at all the people around us, in the same situation — it is clear that we have the

numbers. When we look at the facts — working people produce and distribute everything in the society and we run all the transportation, healthcare and the other services that make society function. It is clear we have the potential power to take on these problems. Some workers in the U.S., have already begun to organize and fight back. Healthcare workers, especially nurses, have gone on a number of strikes. Railroad workers threatened a national strike only to have the Democrats, who claim to be the “friends of labor”, outlaw their strike. There have also been recent strikes by dock workers, paper mill workers, airport workers, and at universities.

It's not just about what is happening here.

Recently, we have seen incredible movements, by people facing much worse conditions than we face. In Iran — under a brutal dictatorship that limits the freedom of everyone, especially women — a mass struggle has defied the authorities, protesting in the streets for months, sparked by the police murder of a young woman, Mahsa Amini. And people all over the world have demonstrated in support. Recently in China, hundreds of thousands of people, fed up with the repressive policies of the government, went into the streets, forcing the regime to change its Covid policies. There has been a strike wave of workers in many different industries and services across Europe.

What the future could hold is up to us.

Why should we continue to sacrifice for the 1%? Our lives and livelihoods, and the futures of our children should be the priority. We are not alone. We have our co-workers, neighbors, family and friends, and so do workers all over the world. Working people are the majority of the world's population. We make the society run. We have the power, if we organize to use it, to bring society to a halt. We don't have to accept and submit to the plans of the 1%.

2023 can be the year we make our own plans and organize to create a new reality.