

# ***Speak Out Now! at AC Transit 3/11/2024***

## **Where Is The Time?**

Many of us at AC Transit work wacky schedules with long hours, especially those with low seniority. Add on top of that the long commutes because many of us are not paid enough to live close to where we work, which means that more of our week gets eaten away. Yes, it is necessary to work and make money. But how about time to do the things that we want? Spend time with family? Have a social life outside of work? With all of the wealth in this society, why couldn't we work fewer hours and get paid more?

## **Crash On International Racetrack**

Recently, there was a bad crash on International Boulevard and 54th Avenue in Oakland where two cars collided and ran into an AC Transit bus, injuring 16 people, including two people who were seriously hospitalized. International Boulevard is a notoriously dangerous part of town where there have been a reported 18 fatal traffic incidents over the past two years. Many of us who drive the Tempo know that many people regularly speed through the bus lane like it's the freeway, run red lights, make illegal turns and do donuts in the intersections, regardless of whether there are little kids, the elderly, or anyone else around. The safety of our passengers, communities, and ourselves must be taken seriously!

## **2 Tiers - 1 Workforce**

For many of us who have gotten hired after 2020, we are faced with the brutal realization of how much we have to pay into our pensions. This is because a 2 tiered pension system was forced on us at AC as well as other public workers in California. Not only does this drain our paycheck but it also divides us as a workforce, driving an unnecessary division between newer and older workers. As we look to potential struggles ahead of us, whether the contract expiration next year or anything else, unity amongst us is essential!

## **Want To Learn More About Palestine?**

Check out the resources page on [speakoutsocialits.org](http://speakoutsocialits.org) which includes our brand-new Palestine pamphlet!

## **Get Back To Work!**

Many of us are probably over COVID - over talking about it and thinking about it. But just because we are over COVID, doesn't mean that it is over with us. People are still getting sick and dying. The CDC just announced on March 1st that it is lifting its recommendations to isolate or 5 days after testing positive for COVID, and is now recommending to return to normal activities if symptoms improve for at least 24 hours. What these new guidelines do is allow companies to pressure people to go back to work before they are fully recovered, potentially infecting others, especially if they don't have adequate PTO or sick pay. When the CDC tells us that we can quickly return to "normal activities," we know what they are really telling us - shut up and go back to work!

## **Tax Time Around the Corner**

It's starting to get close to that time of year again, when we have to look back at our past year and calculate if we paid enough taxes. We pay taxes on everything, from the wages we earn to the gas we use to go to work, to the food we have prepared for us.

But what do they actually pay for? If you've driven on the road, you would find potholes galore. Trying to avoid them and not damage your car is like a new game you didn't want to play. You could see school and social programs that are underfunded, and are not able to do their job adequately. Lastly, you could see our money get funneled away from us, not for our benefit. As Israel is currently committing genocide, they have gotten 3.8 billion dollars (99.7% for their military) every year and more than likely will get another 14 billion this year. If all that money that we have paid over the years had been used to meet our needs, one can only wonder what our conditions would look like?

