



Speak Out Now

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They Have No Solutions for Us

Since Trump became President, the reality of this so-called democracy has been on display for all to see. The Republicans in Congress have bowed to every demand. And the Democrats have barely expressed any opposition. Some judges have issued rulings opposing the most blatant disregard for laws. But the final word is left up to a Supreme Court that has already granted Trump a pardon for anything he might do.

Trump and his cabinet of billionaire lackeys believe they no longer have to mask the workings of a society that benefits them at the expense of the majority. To do this, they have to continue to convince enough people that what they are doing represents the interests of the REAL America. This imagined country is mostly white, Christian and dominated by (rich) men.

They have to create potential enemies to attack: immigrants, students who oppose the genocide in Palestine, government workers who supposedly aren't doing their jobs, teachers that challenge students to think and learn and not just obey.

They have established a climate of fear among millions of people who are part of society but don't have full citizenship. They send armed people, wearing hoodies and masks, to snatch Rumeysa Ozturk, an international graduate student, off of the street and send her to a detention center more than a thousand miles away from her home. She is not charged with a crime, unless it was for expressing her opinion in a student newspaper about her university's response to students protesting against the genocide in Palestine. People identified as immigrants are arrested, detained, and deported without a hearing. Others are labelled as terrorists because they have tattoos and sent to a prison in El Salvador.

Federal workers are stripped of their union rights and fired by the thousands. And now Trump's regime has doubled down on attacking Social Security, Medicaid, and food stamps, and laid off tens of thousands of federal employees that provide essential services across our society, from directing air traffic, to tackling public health crises, and much more. This administration is no longer hiding behind any pretense that they care about our rights or well-being. Instead, they are working to privatize these services to increase their profits at our expense.

Almost all who head the institutions of society—like the courts, large law firms, universities, and organizations that work for change in the system—are being brought in line and threatened to cooperate, or else lose funding or even face criminal charges.

The Democratic Party is not showing any signs of resistance other than continuing business as usual, and maybe expressing mild outrage. If they can't get anything done in Congress, why just sit there? Why not go to the people they supposedly represent and encourage us to mobilize our forces? They, too, represent the billionaires.

It's clear that we cannot rely on them to represent us. Our interests cannot be protected by a government that manages a system that is based on our exploitation by the billionaire class that owns and controls the resources of society and takes the wealth we produce, as their own.

If they can reorganize society, so can we. But it is impossible to use the political tools and methods that were developed to maintain their control over us to work for our interests and for the betterment of our world.

We can and must build something different. We can no longer watch the daily destruction of our lives and life as we know it on our Earth. There is something for each of us to do. And we are not alone. Some people have already started. There are protests, large and small, of government workers and their supporters, students, healthcare workers, and retired workers defending their future and the future of the next generations.

What happens depends on each of us doing something. Talking to our friends, families, co-workers, students, neighbors, and others can be a start. We won't understand our power until we begin to use it. Once we're in motion, new possibilities arise. Together we can join planned actions or organize our own. There are demonstrations everywhere.

There are national demonstrations planned for Sat, April 5. And Earth Day and May Day are approaching. It might seem difficult, right now, to imagine our possibilities. But reforms, like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, environmental protections, basic civil rights and the right to have unions, were won through past struggles by people like ourselves. We need to go beyond just trying to reform this system. Instead, as we oppose the current attacks, we need to have the goal of bringing a new system into being – one that represents the majority – not those in power today.

Newark, New Jersey:

Flight Attendants Picket

During the week of March 19, United Airlines flight attendants picketed United terminals in Newark and at 18 other airports, demanding a new contract. The contract was negotiated in 2016 and came up for renegotiation in 2021. For four years, members of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA have been working under the terms of that old contract, which includes wage scales that have not kept up with inflation, among other problems. The membership has authorized the union leadership to strike, but no date has been set.

While more aggressive steps are necessary to force negotiations and build organization for a strike, these pickets may be first steps. Working-class people are going to need to organize and fight to resist the attacks we are facing from the bosses and the government.

Baltimore, Maryland:

A Disaster's Anniversary: The Francis Scott Key Bridge

One year ago, a cargo ship chartered by an enormous shipping company crashed into the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The bridge collapsed, killing six immigrant workers who were filling in potholes.

Politicians used the anniversary to make a show of mourning with the families of the workers killed in the collapse. A new bridge is estimated to cost \$1.7 billion. It's clear the working class is paying for the negligence of a \$27-billion-dollar shipping company. Six immigrant workers died, tens of thousands of workers had their jobs disrupted, and thousands more were forced to deal with longer commutes. Now, billions of our tax dollars are going to a new bridge. The multibillion-dollar company that chose to put profits before our safety and livelihood will pay relatively small fines. This is just wrong, but in a world ruled by profit, working-class interests will always come second.

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

Bay Area, California:

Transit Cuts and Voting "NO!"

Bay Area public transit workers and riders are under attack. Muni rail lines are being cut in San Francisco. East Bay AC bus fares are rising. In the South Bay, VTA union workers brought buses and light rails to a halt for nearly three weeks, striking for higher wages and improved work conditions. By a vote of 83%, union members there rejected the latest contract offer from the district. But a San Jose judge ordered VTA union workers back to work. Contract negotiations will continue, but the strike is ending for now.

We must not despair in these times. People are willing to strike and reject a contract proposal—it's clear that workers are fed up with the status quo. We need to decide to stand up and fight back!

The Triangle, North Carolina:

Cuts to Food Programs as Hunger Increases

Over \$1 billion has been cut from two programs that enabled schools and food banks to buy locally grown food. Set up during the pandemic, these programs guaranteed farmers had local buyers. They gave schools and food banks access to fresh produce and meat.

In North Carolina, this will cut over \$11 million from food banks, and \$19 million from schools. NC is a major agricultural state, and is still dealing with the \$4 billion in damages to agriculture due to Hurricane Helene.

Hunger is at a 15-year high, with 1.5 million North Carolinians unsure of where our next meal is coming from. That's one in seven people, and one in five children! To billionaires and their politician partners-in-crime, food programs are deemed "nonessential" and get cut. To farming communities, all working people, and our families, they are ABSOLUTELY essential.

