

Instead of offering COVID relief, Trump mocks Biden for being pro-science



By John Wojcik

With every part of the country this weekend experiencing sharp increases in coronavirus infection rates, Trump continued, on the campaign trail, to deflect from the fact that he and the GOP-run Senate are blocking any meaningful relief package for a nation on its knees because of the pandemic.

Trump tried to attack Joe Biden on Sunday by saying the Democrat would listen to scientists if he was elected president.

Amid a scourge that has so far taken more than 219,000 lives in the U.S., Trump attacked Biden at a rally he held in Carson City, Nevada. The rally was attended by 5,000 people, most of them standing shoulder to shoulder and face to face without masks.

“If you vote for Biden, he will surrender your jobs to China. He will surrender your future to the virus. He’s going to lock down, he’s going to want us to lock down. He’ll listen to the scientists. If I listened totally to the scientists, we would right now have a country that would be in a massive depression, instead of, we’re like a rocket ship. Take a look at the numbers.”

Trump proceeded then to take a look at no numbers, including the 64 million who, since the pandemic began, have sought either state or federal unemployment benefits. He also did not mention the millions falling into poverty and facing eviction

and homelessness as a surging pandemic and winter close in over the nation.

So, as he refuses to support the Heroes Act which would provide the relief needed to slash both poverty and a surging virus infection rate, he chose instead to mock an opponent who would “follow the science” in dealing with the disease.

Dr. Anthony Fauci blasted Trump for this today, pointing out that when Trump himself became infected, he turned himself over to the very doctors

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and scientists he attacked at his Sunday rally.

While Trump, when he fell ill, was saved by scientists and doctors, he does not want the rest of us, if need be, to be able to benefit similarly. One can reasonably conclude that Donald Trump’s remarks this weekend show he actually favors a higher death

As coronavirus spirals out of control across America, Trump doubles down on a policy that is killing Americans.

rate among American workers. And why not? It means fewer people to oppose him and the neo-fascist circles around him in the White House and in the halls of government. The massive dislocation and chaos of the pandemic can be used by right-wing demagogues to maintain their power.

The evidence that saving lives is of no importance to Trump started piling up at the very beginning of the pandemic. Since then, Trump has blocked life-saving COVID relief in the Heroes Act, dismissed and disputed science, sent dangerous and life-threatening messages to the people, ignored his own government's guidance, castigated public health officials, and now mocks Biden for following the science.

People thought that after he and 33 others in and around the White House fell ill, he would change his tune. Since he has not, it should be clearer than ever that saving the lives of U.S. workers is the last thing on his mind.

The results of the Trump policy are clear.

The U.S. has the highest COVID-19 case count and death toll of any country in the world, and the rates of new infections and deaths continue to soar.

There can be no more compelling reason to sweep him out of the White House on Nov. 3. It is no exaggeration to say that our lives depend upon it.

Employers fail to control COVID, but Sri Lankan army rounds up workers instead

By Industriall

Garment workers in Sri Lanka were herded off into quarantine by the army in the middle of the night following a rapid increase of infections at their factory. Unions say this could have been avoided by forming the recommended health committees.

According to reports, on Oct. 19, the total number of COVID-19 cases in the town of Minuwangoda increased to 2,122, including more than a thousand workers at Brandix Apparel Ltd., their close contacts, and family members.

This cluster accounts for nearly half the total number of COVID-19 cases in Sri Lanka and has received national attention.

Unions say the army, which handles COVID quarantine centers, entered garment workers' boarding rooms at night without prior notice, forcing them to move to quarantine centers.

Anton Marcus, of the Free Trade Zone and General Services Employees Union, says: "Had the factories formed health committees as decided by the tripartite [workers, employers, government] taskforce, the health problems would have been identified earlier and this crisis could have been avoided. It is imperative that

health committees are immediately formed in every garment factory.

"The forceful quarantine measures must stop and workers need to be treated with dignity. We appeal to the government to provide job security for the workers, income assurance, as well as health and safety while ensuring that the crisis does not damage the industry as well."

Workers were given no time to prepare or to gather their belongings. They were taken together, without following any safety processes like social distancing, to distant quarantine centers. They were given no opportunity to let family members of anyone else know what was happening.

The fact that the quarantine center lacked safety measures, basic sanitary facilities, health staff, and access to good food meant an increased possibility of infection among the quarantined workers. Family members of the quarantined workers did not get any information; not even local government officials offered any details.

Various reports suggest that company officials insisted on maintaining production to achieve set targets and failed to stop the developing health crisis among the workers.

Unions say the army entered garment workers' dorms at night without notice, forcing them to immediately move to quarantine centers.

Chilean Communists call for replacement of Pinochet constitution in Sunday vote



By Morning Star

The Communist Party of Chile (CPC) has urged progressives in the country to unite behind calls for a new constitution ahead of the Oct.25 referendum on the issue.

Victory in the poll would mark a decisive break with the current constitution, which was controversially introduced in 1980 under the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. He led a U.S.-backed military coup which overthrew the socialist government of President Salvador Allende in 1973. Under Pinochet, much of the public economy was privatized and democracy was squelched.

On Sunday, Chileans will be asked if they want a new constitution. If they agree to the move, they will then be given two options on how it should be written: by a convention composed 50% of politicians and 50% of citizens; or by a body of directly-elected citizens.

The CPC has united with other progressive forces to campaign in support of the second option. They warn that the right wing favors the first option because politicians might opt merely to tinker with the existing constitution rather than enact a complete overhaul.

CPC president Guillermo Teillier said it was crucial to “put an end to the Pinochet constitution that has perpetuated an unequal and abusive economic system.” He urged the government to ensure that Chileans are able to cast their vote in Sunday’s poll freely and called on President Sebastián Piñera to

guarantee the safety of citizens.

Violent clashes took place between security services and protesters last Sunday as demonstrators marked the first anniversary of mass anti-government protests.

There were riots in the capital Santiago after security services set upon a peaceful demonstration. Two churches were subsequently torched, one of which, St. Francis Borgia, is home to institutional ceremonies for Chile’s brutal Carabineros police force.

At least 600 were arrested during clashes in other major cities.

Scores were killed by Chilean police and security services during last year’s protests, when armed forces were mobilized onto Santiago’s streets for the first time since the Pinochet dictatorship ended. Detained protesters reported being tortured and raped by police.

As of last December, the Carabineros had internal investigations into about 800 incidents of abuse underway.

Constitutional changes proposed by the CPC and other progressive forces under the banner of the “I Approve Chile” coalition include lowering the voting age to 16 and making provisions for gender equality and the right to universal publicly funded health-care, along with the right to a job.

A new constitution is expected to take two years to write before it becomes law.

Gen. Augusto Pinochet led a U.S.-backed military coup which overthrew socialist Salvador Allende in 1973. The Pinochet constitution is still in force today.

LOCAL NEWS

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India: Communists accuse Delhi police of targeting the left instead of instigators of communal violence

By Emile Schepers

The Communist Party of India (CPI) has sharply criticized the federally controlled police of the city of Delhi for its supposed “investigation” of February riots in that city which left 53 people dead, others injured, much property destroyed, and many Muslims forced to flee.

The CPI points out that the rioters attacked people peacefully demonstrating against a new national citizenship law (Citizenship Amendment Act, or CAA) which blatantly discriminates against Muslims, and then went on to carry out a violent anti-Muslim pogrom. Many sources point to police collusion with Hindu chauvinist rioters, and instigation by ranking members of India’s ruling BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party). Yet the police report blames the communists for the riots, singling out for a frame-up CPI National Executive Member Annie Raja, Communist Party of India (Marxist) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury, and other leftist figures, who had supported the peaceful protests against the citizenship law. BJP leaders who had really incited the violence are not mentioned in the charges.

Nevada: Los trabajadores de emprenden una batalla épica

John Bachtell

Cientos de trabajadores sindicalizados en Nevada no se detienen y van de puerta en puerta para hablar con los votantes. Los impulsa la lucha épica por sus vidas, sus medios de subsistencia y sus familias, ganando este estado crucial de batalla para Joe Biden y Kamala Harris.

“Nunca hemos estado en una pelea como esta”, dijo Giaconda Argüello-Kline, secretaria-tesorera del Local 226 del Sindicato de Trabajadores Culinarios, en un lanzamiento de lienzo virtual el 2 de octubre. COVID-19 se ha cobrado la vida de 50 trabajadores de la hostelería y familiares y ha enfermado a otros 400. “Todos estamos pasando por miedos a causa de la pandemia. Pero controlar el miedo nos hace más fuertes. Están haciendo este trabajo para todo nuestro país”.

FiveThirtyEight tiene a Biden como líder con un promedio de encuestas de 6.6 por ciento en Nevada. Pero el sindicato y las organizaciones aliadas no dan nada por hecho, considerando las amenazas de Trump de robar las elecciones.

“Tenemos que ganar esta elección todos los días”, dijo D. Taylor, presidente de Unite Here, el sindicato internacional de Trabajadores Culinarios [CWU, por sus siglas en inglés], de 300.000 miembros. “Al final del día, si trabajamos duro podemos derrotar (a Trump). No quiero ni siquiera llamarlo presidente”.

El movimiento sindical apoya universalmente a Biden. El presidente de AFL-CIO, Richard Trumka, describe la plataforma de Biden como la más pro-laborista de cualquier candidato presidencial demócrata.

El Sindicato de Trabajadores de la culinaria, el local más grande de Unite Here con 60,000 miembros, personifica la determinación de los sindicatos.

“Ya sea que usted sea asistente de habitación de huéspedes en el casino de un hotel o maestro de una escuela primaria, Donald Trump es una amenaza para nuestros medios de vida y para todos los trabajadores y familias”, dijo Mario Yedidia, subdirector de Unite Here.

Los encuestadores voluntarios están tomando precauciones adicionales para protegerse contra

La CWU tiene una membresía muy diversa, más de la mitad de latinos y una gran cantidad de inmigrantes. Esa es una ventaja en un estado como Nevada, donde el 20% de los votantes de Nevada son latinos, un distrito electoral crítico que Biden debe acudir para ganar. “Los latinos son el voto clave”, dijo a los encuestadores Evelyn DeJesus, vicepresidenta ejecutiva de AFT. “Se dice que la victoria atraviesa la comunidad latina. La verdad es que te atraviesa. Estás mostrando cómo es la sangre vital de la democracia”.

“He aprendido de mi sindicato que él hablar provoca cambios. Estoy tocando puertas para asegurarme de que ganemos contra este presidente racista”, dijo Andrea Torres, miembro del Local 8 de Unite Here, quien se ausentó de su trabajo como sous chef en Seattle para solicitar votos. “Estoy luchando duro porque quiero tener esperanza para mi futuro, para nuestro futuro”.

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