

New Labor Organizing Committee

Draft Program



I. The Capitalist System of Exploitation

Under capitalism, in the United States as well as in other countries, the benefits of the whole economic system flow into the hands of a capitalist class who own the commanding heights of the economy and direct the government. The capitalists, through their ownership of the means of producing the necessities of life, and with the aid of their State, compel the great masses of workers to toil for them in return for only a tiny portion of the vast wealth they produce, in the shape of wages. The very basis of our capitalist society is this systematic robbing the workers of the surplus value they have created, exploitation which allows the capitalists to make their profits and enjoy their luxurious lifestyles.

Capitalist exploitation in the United States has resulted in the development, on the one hand, of a relatively small class of rich capitalists, and, on the other, of a great mass of struggling workers, with

large numbers of petty shop owners, semi-professionals, etc., in between. For every Bill Gates, Elon Musk, or Jeff Bezos, there are millions of poverty-stricken families and workers struggling to afford the basic necessities of life like housing, healthcare, transportation and education.

In the last century, the capitalist system has become more and more corrupt and monopolistic, developing into what is now called Imperialism, which is the last and highest stage of capitalism. Under an imperialist system, a small number of great powers extract raw materials from and super-exploit the workers of a larger set of oppressed peoples and nations around the world. To facilitate this immense transfer of wealth, the imperialists rely on endless wars of aggression and plunder against these oppressed nations, as well as a layer of loyal sell-out capitalists and politicians who are bribed by the imperialists to support their own people's exploitation and suffering. Within the imperialist countries themselves, smaller companies are consolidated into gigantic powerful corporations, which increases the general alienation and oppression of the masses, and makes the old state more fascistic and reactionary and less and less democratic as it becomes more difficult to defend imperialism from its own internal problems and the rebellious masses. Similar to the layer of traitorous sell-outs imperialism builds up in the oppressed nations, at home the imperialists also bribe a layer of the workers and masses with scraps of the wealth plundered from oppressed peoples abroad, creating a section of sell-out workers called the "labor aristocracy" which causes all sorts of problems for the workers movement and its path to revolution. The labor aristocracy is composed of or supported by a vast army of representatives, members of government regulatory bodies, labor officials, the best-paid workers in the narrow craft unions, privileged office employees, etc., which serve reaction by spreading mistaken ideas among the workers and selling out their struggles. The influence of the labor aristocracy in the labor movement must be defeated if the workers are to advance their own economic interests and strike major blows against imperialism.

Because of this capitalist system, workers in the United States are facing an unprecedented crisis on multiple fronts not seen in generations. For decades we have become more and more oppressed and exploited, which has resulted in us becoming poorer and poorer. We have less rights than ever before. We increasingly cannot afford to do basic things like pay our rent, put food on the table, and afford other monthly bills like health insurance, car insurance, phone and internet service, gas and other utilities, etc. The traditional eight-hour work day is dead as we are forced to work longer hours, multiple jobs, or do unpaid work just to stay employed. Inflation and price gouging eat away at the value of our wages, while hours and positions are cut as workplace after workplace "downsizes" or "streamlines" their operation, reducing their wage bill by reducing headcount, imposing speedups, investing in new means of production, or a combination. The reformists in Congress cannot even pass a \$15 minimum wage while the median house price approaches \$450,000 and the profits of the monopoly capitalists are billions of dollars annually. Under the collective bargaining agreements of the state unions, trillions of dollars have been transferred from the wages, benefits, and pensions of the working-class to the imperialist bourgeoisie. We are harassed, abused, discriminated against, and our basic rights like the right to assembly, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to organize or protest are restricted more and more every year.

Workers have no one to fight for us or defend our interests other than ourselves, and the only tools we have in the struggle are our own unity and discipline, which have been systematically broken down under the influence of the labor aristocratic state unions. We are the majority of our society, and our potential collective power is immense. In order to accomplish our historic and mighty tasks, we the New Labor Organizing Committee, present the following program for work among the multinational US working-class and its New Labor movement.

II. The Six Principles of the New Labor Organizing Committee (NLOC)

Class Struggle: The first principle of NLOC, from which all of our other principles stem, is that we recognize that true labor unions are and must always be organizations of struggle for the working class against the class that exploits them, the capitalist class, and its repressive government. This principle of class, the recognition that the working class and the owning class are locked in perpetual warfare and have irreconcilable interests, is a fundamental truth from which all of our other tasks and ideas flow. In particular we uphold the strike and other economic actions based around the withholding of our labor as the primary weapon of the unions, and resist all attempts to weaken, undermine, and restrain that weapon. We work to embody and uphold the old slogan of the class conscious workers “class against class”.

Anti-Opportunism: From the first day, our organization will immediately differentiate itself from the state-sanctioned labor movement by rejecting all forms of opportunism, the default behavior and “method of work” found within ranks of the professional organizers and so-called “leaders” of the state unions. NLOC will not abide any sell-outs, traitors, abusers, serial liars, and con-artists disguised as “organizers”, “activists”, and “leaders” within its ranks. Opportunism means trading the long term interests of the proletariat for real or perceived short term gains, and it is non-negotiable that every member actively combat it in the course of their work.

Independence: Our organization upholds the principles of proletarian self-reliance and autonomy. The working class can have no champion but itself, must have its own leading organizations, and must primarily rely on its own strengths and the members of its own class. We cannot rely on the state and its courts for recognition, and only recognize the legitimacy that comes from our support, leadership, and action on the shop floor. We must develop our own networks of funding, support, and resources as concrete manifestations of our solidarity and growing strength as a class.

Democracy: The NLOC puts forward the need for our organizations to be democratic and to embrace collective, democratic forms of leadership and structure in comparison to the bureaucratic and arcane structures of the modern state unionist labor movement. We uphold the shop floor committee model, the need for free and open union elections, accountability of leaders and organizers to the workers, and collective leadership on all levels. We reject the obligatory membership and dues model imposed and upheld by the state unions and embrace the model of conscious and voluntary membership and dues-paying. The NLOC upholds democratic centralism and recognizes the need for a minimum level of clandestinity in labor organizing in order to bring the maximum force against the employers while doing the utmost to protect the organized workers.

Anti-Imperialism: We recognize the self-evident but rarely talked about (at least in the establishment labor movement) truth that the US imperialist state is the number one enemy of workers and oppressed peoples both here and abroad. It is our duty to concretely struggle and undermine US imperialism, in words as well as deeds. We must actively encourage and develop an actual proletarian internationalist labor movement that unites workers across borders in a combined struggle against US imperialism. This struggle also applies domestically to the struggle of internally oppressed nations and national minorities against the US imperialist state.

Working-Class Unity: We insist on the key principle and task of developing working-class unity through our work. In particular, a working-class unity not based on papering over currently existing divides and backwards ideas among our class, but one which is actually centered on overcoming artificial professional categories towards achieving industrial unity, and one which actively and acutely struggles against all forms of chauvinism (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, nativism, etc.) that oppresses certain workers to privilege others. We also insist on targeting, in particular, the trend of class collaborationism in its many manifestations, not only because it feeds the workers illusions of peaceful co-existence with the capitalists but also because it actively confuses the workers and places them in opposition to one another. We reject all unity with the capitalist class and their reactionary agents, and embrace unity with all the exploited people who are willing to struggle alongside us.

III. Against Poverty, Rising Cost of Living, and Worsening Conditions of Work and Life

By way of the tremendous profits wrung from the toil of the workers, the American capitalist class enjoys unprecedented wealth and luxury. According to the latest figures on wealth and income data published by the Federal Reserve, the richest 10% of households own 74% of all assets and wealth in the United States, with 50% of households owning essentially no assets or wealth. According to the same data, the average wealth of these upper-class households was \$7.73 million. When looking at the incomes of the top capitalists themselves, the CEOs and owners themselves of the large companies that control our government made tens or hundreds of millions of dollars this year, while the median personal income remained around \$40,000 nationally.

While the capitalists own more and more, the cost of living increases each year because of a mix of inflation and artificial scarcity caused by capitalism. Basic things, like housing, education, healthcare, retirement, and childcare are now unaffordable for most workers in the US. Things that were once taken for granted, like the eight hour a day, five days a week work schedule have been eliminated as we are forced to work multiple jobs, do unpaid labor outside of contract hours, or otherwise are forced to labor outside of the typical work schedule to survive. Immigrants, workers from nationally oppressed groups, women, and LGBT workers in particular are super-exploited, often paid sub-par wages for the same jobs or given worse job classifications at the same companies.

The US worker is squeezed from every angle, and daily we lose more and more of our democratic rights and basic living standards. We must defeat this offensive on the multinational US working-class with a fight of our own. We must insist on the achievement of a complete and true minimum living yearly income of at least 60,000-70,000 dollars pre-tax for full time work at the current dollar value, a demand subject to increase due to inflation. We must fight for the abolition of private health insurance and the establishment of a national healthcare service. Private sector drug manufacturers and service providers must make their produce available through the national healthcare service by establishing contracts with the state or risk forfeiture to the state of their means of production. We must fight for the abolition of unpaid labor, including domestic labor, as well as sub-minimum wage labor for immigrants and disabled people, and for better working hours and working conditions across the board.

In face of increasing poverty and hardship, NLOC must fight for the well-being and demands of our class and our fellow workers everywhere. We must raise new and creative campaigns and forms of organization to carry these economic struggles to victory, always tying them to the struggle for political power for our class and the politicization of all the toiling people.

IV. Against Imperialism, at Home and Abroad

The American imperialists strive to do everything in their power to divide and oppress the masses so that they can better exploit and control them. Finance capital, gigantic corporations, and their puppet politicians carry on wars of imperialist aggression around the world in order to find new fields of investment, plunder resources, and secure markets and sources of cheap ultra-exploited labor for them and their lackeys' enrichment. American imperialism has hundreds of military bases around the world, and spends billions of our money on military build-up and foreign occupations, all while the conditions of the multinational US working class gets worse and worse day-by-day. Not only abroad, but at home US imperialism oppresses different peoples and nations, often using race and language discrimination to organize this domestic national oppression. By dividing workers up between American and "foreign", "patriotic" and "non-patriotic", by race and by ethnicity, the US capitalists build barriers to working class unity and the creation of a real challenge to their rule. The super-profits extracted from the oppressed nations under imperialism is one of the main sources of opportunism in the modern labor movement, and has resulted in the creation of an upper layer of workers who substantially benefit from this imperialism and work to defend it. This huge labor aristocracy is the main supplier of traitors, reactionaries, and capitalist agents within the ranks of the labor movement, and is a key problem in the United States, which is the world's leading imperialist power, and so must be combated at every turn in order for there to be real unity in the labor movement.

Militarism is tightly bound up with the labor movement. The arms industry is organized through the state unions, who in turn support the imperialist politicians, prevent work stoppages that could hinder military action, and cooperate with imperialism directly through the state apparatus and arbitration boards. Military funding eats up roughly 8% of wages through the highly regressive tax system.

The New Labor Organizing Committee (NLOC) fights against the US imperialist system which oppresses and exploits foreign and domestic workers alike. NLOC fights against the influence of the so-called "labor aristocrats", those who sell out their fellow workers in order to personally benefit and get some scraps from the table of the capitalists' spoils. It fights against imperialism and national oppression, and stands for freedom and self-determination for all nations and peoples around the world. It stands against chauvinism and discrimination under the label of "patriotism" or "Americanism", against all crimes committed against the oppressed nations of the world under the banner of US imperialism, and stands for the rights and autonomy of immigrant and national minority workers. It stands against the militarization of our society, and stands in solidarity with all workers' and people's struggles internationally. The trade union movement in the US has been systematically wrecked by the influence of American imperialism, which the NLOC combats.

V. For the Rights and Organization of Workers

World imperialism, with its deepening general crisis and worsening confrontations with the rebellious working class, is rapidly developing new fascist forces. The capitalists undertake to solve their growing difficulties by exploiting us as much as possible to make preparations for war and further dictatorship. They cast aside all pretense of democracy in and outside of the workplace. The big capitalists directly take over functions of the government. Every effort of the workers to organize and fight to address their burning grievances is met with ruthless repression. The imperialists have taken over the established organizations of the workers and turned them into toothless class-collaborationist state unions.

In regards to our workplace conditions, they use technological innovation against the workers rather than for our benefit. They invent and impose new forms of electronic surveillance and monitoring to better control and exploit us. They use artificial intelligence to plan layoffs and re-structure the workplace to maximize their profits while minimizing our incomes. Beyond technology, the capitalists and their politicians put forward new laws that erode our basic rights to freedom of assembly, trade union organization, economic action, freedom of speech, and freedom of press. They suppress all democratic decision-making and collective demands of the workers because they fear us and they fear our ability to work together as one to end their cruel and bloody system and replace it with a new democratic one in which the working class holds state power.

The NLOC, to counter this trend towards greater and greater dictatorship in our workplaces and our society, upholds the right of the workers to directly elect and establish their own committees for resolving grievances with management/relevant regulatory agencies, without the medium of human resource departments or the state unions. We uphold that the right to strike cannot be abrogated under any circumstances and strive to abolish all no-strike clauses in existing CBAs. The NLOC defends the right of workers to revise contracts established by NLRB-certified bargaining units according to majority will at any time.

We fight so that there are guarantees for the freedom of speech, assembly, organization, and freedom of the working-class press including the distribution of trade union literature at job sites. We demand an end to State involvement in the trade union movement, including the nullification of any laws aimed at preventing work stoppages such as the Railway Labor, Taft-Hartley, and National Labor Relations Acts, and the abolition of forced arbitration as well as compulsory wage deductions. To end tyranny by management, we fight for the right of workers to discipline, including by termination, supervisory employees. We demand that workers shall not be discriminated against by the employer on any issues for any reason, including sex or gender distinctions, nationality, race, immigration status, disability, religion, or language. We fight for the right to organize workers' self-defense from capitalist oppression, in particular reactionary and fascist violence.

In their struggle against imperialism, the workers' only defense comes from their own organizations. No rights or concessions have ever been granted by the bourgeoisie out of generosity, they were won on the basis of the workers' unity and discipline. The workers need to achieve a much more expansive level of organization than the state unions—which have left the overwhelming majority of American workers completely unorganized and defenseless—are capable of. On the grounds that the working class' strength is proportional to its total level of organization and class consciousness, the NLOC aims to construct industrial unions which embrace the masses of unskilled wage laborers in the United States.

VI. Immediate Program of Struggle

As an application of this analysis and statement of objectives, the New Labor Organizing Committee propose the following Program of Struggle for the initiation of campaigns and joint work with other independent class-conscious forces within our immediate conditions. Similarly, we provide a set of suggested minimum collective bargaining agreement demands for New Labor organizations to promote, advocate, and struggle for in the course of their work.

- For a minimum living wage.

- Against speed-ups, mass lay offs, and other attacks on the workers justified using technological breakthroughs. Technology should serve the workers who use it.
- Against the rise in cost of living, and the stagnation or reduction of real wages.
- Against document checks and harassment/discrimination based on immigration status. Workers shall be compensated for time spent dealing with the immigration bureaucracy and should be provided with free legal/language services.
- For freedom of organization for all workers, including their press, and including the right of distributions of literature and assembly at job sites.
- For health insurance with full coverage, including dental and vision and without high premiums or monthly costs.
- For sufficient and paid maternity and paternity leave. For the direct provision of childcare or childcare benefits.
- For a single socialized benefit fund; against the private insurance racket.
- For the simplification of wage scales and elimination of arbitrary and divisive job classifications.
- For a reduction of the working day/week with no loss in pay, in accordance with increases in the productive forces or the transfer of unemployed persons into productive labor.
- For earlier retirement for blue-collar jobs, and increased retirement/pension pay for all job classes.
- For the abolition of all No-Strike Clauses and the full right to strike without limits.
- For the abolition of all Managerial Rights clauses.
- For workplace committees elected by the workers that determine shop conditions and policies.
- Against all state intervention in the settlement of disputes and against arbitration.
- Against all workplace harassment, discrimination, and abuse of power by bosses and supervisors, in particular abuses against nationally oppressed workers, immigrant workers, women workers, and LGBT workers.
- For severance and/or re-training in the event of any layoff or dismissal.
- Against arbitrary part-time classifications
- Against all forms of unpaid labor
- Against imperialism and the militarization of society and the economy
- For the constant defense of the interests, dreams, and goals of the working class and toiling masses.
- For accommodations for workers with physical or mental impairments and illnesses.

VII. Suggested Minimum Collective Bargaining Agreement Demands

- \$30/hr starting wage
- Hourly guarantee of 25/week for part time employees and 40/week for full time employees
- Employee insurance plan should have a premium covered 100% by the employers

- Establishment of a joint committee composed of half employee representatives, half corporate representatives for resolving grievances involving management
- Anything past 8 hours in one day is paid at overtime rate, hours worked between midnight and 8am are also paid at overtime rate
- Hazard pay for extreme weather, including extreme winds, snowfall, rainfall, exposure to temperatures above 85°F or below freezing
- Minimum of two consecutive days off per week
- Minimum turnaround time of 12 hours between shifts
- Anti-harassment, workplace surveillance/micromanagement and anti-discrimination provisions
- Include contract language that weakens or outright eliminates no-strike clauses and managerial rights clauses, especially concerning the pace of work.