

International News



Workers of the World Unite! You Have Nothing to Lose But Your Chains!

James P. Cannon, founding American Communist, was fond of saying the art of revolutionary politics consists in knowing what to do next. Since the onset of this crisis of capitalism we have been shown all the bright ideas of the Democrat and reformist labor tops and the "fight back" programs of the fake left and fake Trotskyists. They have canalized and dammed up the anger of the working class to safeguard the prerogatives and power of a bourgeoisie that is confiscating surplus value from the future.

The Obama crowd is telling youth to forgo any dreams of prosperity. The crisis deepens. Even as spin-managed 'news' shovels up 'recovery' without any full-time jobs, the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change was a predictable farce, though we find no humor in it. Iraq is starting to go badly again for U.S. imperialism as Afghanistan and Pakistan threaten

to disintegrate on Obama's watch and all of liberalism and reformism are in a tizzy. How to answer the growing Chinese re-division of world markets without entering the road to inter-imperialist war? The bourgeois politicians and their well-wishers haven't one clue. They are helpless. Yet they rule.

As you will see in the following pages, the proletarian revolution has plenty of ideas for escaping this crisis and capitalism's cyclical crises. We have proposals for militant direct action. We have them because we have a method, the dialectical materialist method of Leon Trotsky's "Transitional Program." Working with this method and the living feedback from class struggles our members are immersed in, here and abroad, we generate political thought aimed at the heart of capitalism and alienation.

In the following articles we hope to popularize our view of the next tasks for our class and allies.

Zanon: The Two-Step the Argentinian Bourgeoisie Is Trying to Dance With the Workers



Workers Voting at a Factory Floor Meeting at FASINPAT (Formerly Zanon)

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Introduction

In 2001, the owner of the Zanon ceramics factory in southern Argentina closed the plant, locked out the entire workforce without paying back wages, and filed for bankruptcy. The factory workers responded by taking possession of the plant, and eventually reopening it under workers' control in March 2002 – a practice that is almost unheard of in the

US, but that has been implemented over 200 times in Argentina. Since 2002, the workers have been operating the former Zanon factory as a successful cooperative enterprise under the name FaSinPat, short for “Fábrica Sin Patrones,” which means “Factory Without Bosses” in Spanish. The legality of their operation remained in doubt, however, and the workers faced threats of eviction and other legal action by the former owner, as well as violent attacks that led to the death of at least one worker.

In August 2009, the provincial legislature of Neuquén in southern Argentina adopted a law of “expropriation” that allows the workers at the former Zanon ceramics plant the right to retain control of the factory. The passage of this law legalizing the workers’ ownership of the plant has been celebrated as a victory by many so-called “progressives” and reformists. (See, for example, <http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/2052/1/> ; <http://www.latinlasnet.org/node/305> ; <http://www.onesolutionrevolution.org/?p=385&language=en> ; and <http://www.marxist.com/argentina-workers-owners-ceramica-zanon.htm> .)

What the cheerleaders are downplaying, however, is the price that the workers are being forced to pay for their ownership. Instead of declaring the former owner’s debt cancelled, the law obligates the provincial government of Neuquén to pay up to 23 million Argentinean pesos (roughly 6 million US dollars) to the creditors that held claims against Zanon when it went bankrupt. The same law obligates FaSinPat to reimburse the government for this entire amount by selling the factory’s products to the government “at

cost,” for public purposes. What this means is that ultimately, the debt incurred by the capitalist former factory owner will have to be paid from the earnings of the factory after wages and depreciation.

In other words, what the reformist “left” calls an “expropriation” or “victory” for the workers is nothing of the kind. It is the worst form of bourgeois nationalization. It is a bosses’ “provincialisation” that allows the state to retain final control and takes the workers’ surplus value for the pockets of the Neuquén state – which is itself nothing more than the committee of the Neuquén provincial bourgeoisie!

When the law was passed in August 2009, the workers who had been in a long fight to defend their occupation since 2001 understandably felt a great sense of relief. They had resisted years of armed attacks of the bosses and the government, and sellouts by the union leaderships. This proved that only the struggle of the workers was capable of defending their recovered factory. It was the workers of Zanon, with the support of their community and the unemployed “piqueteros,” who won this factory, not any law or ruling class court decision. These and other factory occupations and takeovers in Argentina were the result of the untold suffering and heroic deeds of the revolutionary working class since 2001.

As our colleagues in the LOI(CI) have explained in their newspaper *Democracia Obrera*, after the mass revolutionary offensive that brought down the regime in 2001, over 200 companies in Argentina were forced into bankruptcy. Many of them were recovered and put into pro-

duction by the heroic struggle of the workers to keep their jobs, in the face of an unemployment rate of 26% or more in Argentina at that time. This offensive left the bourgeoisie in control of the productive forces and the nation's key businesses, such as banks, transnational corporations, and privatized services. As a lesser evil, however, the bosses tolerated worker takeovers of bankrupt companies that had been abandoned by their owners, the workers' former employers.

After the bourgeoisie had regained their control of the state, they attempted to regain their control of their property and rebuild all the institutions of domination. So while some bankrupt companies were repossessed, others continued to operate under some form of workers' cooperative. They remained under the legal control of the legislatures and judges, however, often exploiting themselves by paying poverty wages, doing piecework, or working with obsolete equipment, and in many cases suffered miserable living conditions. Thus, although the workers of Zanon, Brukman, Chilavert, and the like had fought to recover their jobs with great heroism and sacrifice, they remained without any real workers' control, and subject to the bosses' laws.

Meanwhile, in Argentina, a cycle of growth began in 2003 that saw the rate of profit rise, at the expense of much greater exploitation of the working class. Super-exploiting the working class and plundering the nation allowed the bourgeoisie and transnationals in Argentina to accumulate a huge mass of surplus value over the years, forcing 50% of workers onto the labor black market, working long shifts, while the regime paid off loans to the IMF and bonds to foreign creditors.

This brought about enormous inflation, which led in turn to a fall in real wages. In these circumstances, the recovered factories have remained isolated. The workers cannot earn more than \$400 to \$1,000 per month in wages. They have no retirement pension.

The truth is that Zanon, like the rest, is only a partial victory. If the workers who control an occupied factory are required by the state to pay compensation to the bosses as the price of recognition of their ownership, then these workers are bound to remain as super-exploited as the rest of the working class. The only ones who have "expropriated" anything are the capitalists, bankers and big corporations, who continue to expropriate the surplus value of the workers. This is the truth we must tell the working class, not because we have not fought, and have taken back our jobs, but because our struggles have been betrayed, and our forces divided, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labor, the courts, and the bourgeois parliament.

[Editor's Note: The remaining portion of this article is reprinted without substantive change from Redrave's adaptation of the original article published in Spanish in OOI.]

All class-conscious workers now know this to be the truth. The crisis has begun, big layoffs, suspensions, salary cuts and other attacks on the entire working class come every day. Very soon we will be taking and making new Zanons to preserve jobs, as the workers did recently in France, the USA and Greece. We will occupy the factories and take the bosses hostage to keep our jobs.

This crisis demonstrates that despite all the miserable wages, accidents, unemployment and slave conditions forced upon the workers to boost their profits, the bosses' system cannot prevent profits from falling. All hope that this cycle of expansion could allow the workers to pressure the bourgeoisie to make concessions is shown to be false. The promises of the Bolivarians and the Castroists to negotiate new deals with 'democratic' imperialists to reduce the debt and increase living standards have exploded. Along came the world crisis, inflation, unemployment, wage cuts and new mass layoffs. The imperialists and the national bourgeoisies are now forced to take back all hard won concessions to survive. So for the workers to survive the capitalist system must die.

It follows that the workers of Zanon cannot escape this law of the capitalist system. Either capitalism will take back all the partial gains of the occupations, including making the workers suffer to keep their jobs, or the partial gain of the occupation has to be defended by a revolutionary struggle that takes the working class to power. If the working class does not take power, it stands to lose everything.

“A Law of the Legislature In the Service of Employers or an Historic Triumph of the Workers?”

So comrades, how is it possible for the entire Argentina reformist left that the new law on the expropriation of Zanon is a great historic achievement for the working class? This cannot be true. What property is expropriated here?

. We argue that the law of this bosses' provincial government and the bosses' political parties of Neuquén (MPN, the PJ and UCR) serve the interest of the transnational oil companies and the provincial bourgeoisie in Neuquén. The purpose of the law is to enable the Zanon bosses to pocket the money owed to them by the bankrupt factory (\$23,406,566 million pesos). This will be paid by the workers out of their labor as 'compensation' for their 'cooperative ownership.'

You cannot play hide and seek with the interests of the working class. We must tell the truth. The first truth is that we are facing a reactionary law to serve the bosses, not the workers. True the law does not openly rob the workers because they operate the cooperative, and that is a victory that the employers do not have the strength to take back right now. But the law creates the conditions that will bring the cooperative to ruin. As a legal "cooperative" like any capitalist enterprise without capital, it will have to get loans from capitalist banks or form joint ventures. Then it has to compete in the market and risks failure and bankruptcy like any other cooperative in capitalist society.

So the truth is, as we say above, that this law creates conditions where the workers of Zanon have to exploit themselves to pay compensation to the capitalist creditors. At the same time the workers have to drop all claims against the employer of more than 20 million pesos in compensation for layoffs, pensions and wage arrears owed to the 380 workers when the factory was abandoned. That is, the bosses' law only recognises the debts of the capitalist creditors of the

factory, and not the debt that the capitalist factory owner owes the workers.

This means the workers have to pay their former bosses' creditors and drop all claims against the boss in order to get legal title to the factory. Of course they had to do this because the employers and the government put a gun to their heads and said, pay up if you want to keep your cooperative. We can see that this 'law' is really the law of the bosses' gun, because otherwise why would the workers agree to pay again the debts of the former boss when they had already provided from their labor, his profits and his assets? It is their class's law that uses a gun against us.

This act of expropriation i.e. the "provincialization" of the Zanon plant required by the law means that the workers have to pay compensation, that is buy the plant from the creditors. How will they pay? From the surplus labor beyond their necessary labor, and income set aside for the depreciation of machinery [the cost of replacing worn-out machinery]. But they are not allowed to charge for the depreciation of their bodies to pay every cent of the 23 million that the state recovers from their surplus-labor.

Is this a victory? Up to now the conquest of the occupation was maintained by the workers struggle. The bosses were not able to force the workers out at the point of a gun. But now the occupation is legalised under a law which requires the workers to buy Zanon for 23 million pesos. This is not a nationalization, or provincialisation, and certainly not an expropriation. It is not a victory for the workers because the workers have agreed to pay with their surplus labor for

private property and were not able to guarantee their occupation by force of a workers expropriation.

For Trotskyists expropriation means:

"...the expropriation of companies monopolizing the war industry, railways, the main sources of raw materials, etc.

The difference between these claims and the stupid reformist slogan of nationalization is the following:

- 1.- We oppose compensation.
- 2.- We warn the masses against the demagogues of the Popular Front, who hypocritically advocate nationalization, but remain in reality agents of capital.
- 3.- We call upon the masses to rely only on their own revolutionary strength.
- 4.- We link the question of expropriation with the seizure of power by the workers and peasants."

(Transition Program of the Fourth International, 1938).

The conquest of Zanon was won by the workers' struggle and now they will lose their money and their labor, and worse, their class consciousness if they believe that the parliament of the ruling class can pass a law that is favorable to the workers. Today the reformist left passes off this defeat as a victory for socialist reforms. This means that workers will be looking at Zanon as a model for workers expropriations, and when they fail, the reformists will blame the bosses, the lawyers, the workers, everybody but themselves – betrayers of the revolution.

The Zanon workers have every right to sign this deal, as they are isolated and do not have the power to say no, yet. But you cannot call it a victory. Instead of passing off this deal as a victory we need

to prepare for the harmful consequences that this bill will have on the workers of Zanon, of Neuquén, Argentina, and further afield. What the workers of Zanon need, is the unity of the working class nationally and internationally to change the balance of power that forced them to accept this law that only benefits employers.

We must speak out; we must tell the truth to the working class. How did the bosses get you to accept this law? Learn the lesson of the bosses' using their agents the union bureaucracy to betray our struggles. The workers of Zanon were left isolated for 8 years while the bureaucrats looked for a way to settle the occupation. What other reason is there to explain why after an uprising that overthrew 5 presidents we end up with the bare minimum, a law which says we can work provided we buy the bankrupt property from the creditors?

Let's see, in the U.S. the super banks that exploit and plunder the world go bankrupt, along with General Motors and Chrysler. The ultra-liberals who spoke of the free market now demand that the state pays their debts and saves their profits. The bank bailouts will be paid by the workers out of their future wages. The bosses of GM demand as part of the bailout that the workers "share the pain" with loss of benefits, redundancies, transfer of pensions, loss of holidays etc.

Can you tell us what is different between Obama's law to rescue General Motors and Citibank for the bosses, and the MPN Neuquén law to rescue Zanon for the workers? Apart from the scale, they are the same. But this means that we have to call the expropriations of

Chavez such as the steel plant of SIDOR in Venezuela a victory. In that case the Rocca family was paid compensation out of the cash reserves of the state owned PDVSA. In Argentina we would have to speak of the victory of the nationalization of British owned railways by the Roca-Runciman Perón government, for which they paid a huge amount of compensation.

What they all have in common is a bourgeois nationalisation to save the bankrupt capitalists and make the workers pay their debts out of their wages, by giving up compensation, decent wages, jobs, holidays, pensions etc. Victory? Balls! The only way the workers can win a victory is to make the bankrupt bosses pay, and to struggle to expropriate the bosses' property by their own hands. Such a victory cannot be delivered by the parliament of the bosses!

To defend a reactionary law of capitalist parasites as a workers' victory is to throw out Karl Marx's Capital. How far is the PTS prepared to go in its break with Marxism?

A PTS lawyer, Pedrano, a member of the SOECN-PTS, wrote in an article on the 20 August with the title "Zanon has been expropriated from the capitalists," that "The Zanon expropriation law has finally been passed. It's a step forward for workers' management, because the Law No. 2656 of the Legislature provides that the land Neuquén, (...), and plant will be transferred without charge to workers" . . . It is important to note also that the workers of Zanon ceramics do not have to pay anything as the state will sell the factory production for construction sites (homes, schools, etc.) at cost,

which includes salary and depreciation of machinery.”

First, this is not an expropriation as Marxists understand the term. The PTS lawyer should know that compensation of 23 million pesos to the creditors is not expropriation. Both the former owner Zanon and his creditors get 100% compensation. No other creditors in Argentina get 100% compensation. An expropriation happened in 2001 when the workers took over the plant. That was a victory. Now they are paying 23 [million pesos] to transfer the property rights to the collective. That is not expropriation.

Revision 1: Hiding Exploitation

Second, when a ‘marxist’ lawyer says that the workers do not ‘pay’ he is lying. This ‘marxism’ says that workers do not pay because they still get a wage and can replace and maintain their machinery. That is they are guaranteed to reproduce their labor and fixed capital. But what is being hidden by this phony ‘marxist’ is the exploitation of their wage-labor. The basis of capitalist exploitation as explained by Karl Marx is being conveniently covered up to make this law a ‘victory.’ The Zanon workers work necessary labor time to make their wages and to keep their machines running, but they do not get any benefit from the surplus labor time they work and the surplus-value that they produce. Such a victory would mean that socialism can be legislated for by the employers.

Pedrano hides the fact that the state is extracting the surplus value from the workers to pay the debt to the creditors. The state is taking the Zanon ceramics at cost and using it in its infrastructure,

building of schools, clinics etc. This means that the Zanon workers are subsidising the social wage for the Neuquén bosses who do not have to pay higher wages or higher taxes, since the Neuquén state is nothing but the organizing committee for the provincial bosses.

Well, we challenge Mr. Pedrero to find a capitalist factory that sells its products at cost. No capitalist parliament in the world would pass a law that makes the capitalists sell at cost. It is the opposite, they will legislate to make sure that the workers pay for the employers’ losses i.e. rescue the bosses from bankruptcy.

Revision 2: Hiding the Ruling Class State

We have shown then that the law of expropriation of the legislature has been a blatant Neuquén business bailout of creditors, and that far from being a step forward and a victory for the Zanon workers it will mean they must endure greater sacrifices.

But the ‘marxists’ of the reformist left have made another revision of Marxism. If the Neuquén state can legislate for a victory for the workers of Zanon, this means the state can reform capitalism, and that the state can represent the interests of workers. Workers don’t need to create their own organisations independent of the state, instead they just let the reformist left negotiate deals with the state.

What this means is that Marx is replaced by Gramsci, so that workers don’t need to overthrow the state, they just need to put more pressure on the state to bring about socialism. We can see the



Working Class Solidarity Behind the Zanon Workers

PTS, as part of the reformist left of the World Social Forum, is promoting the social democratic illusion that workers can pressure the capitalists into accepting workers' occupations of factories as long as they agree to allowing the state to exploit them. They mask this exploitation by saying the state can be pressured to meet the interests of both employers and workers. All that is required is that workers have good reformist lawyers to represent their interests in the state.

There is an intimate connection between these two revisions. If the state has no necessary requirement to protect the bosses' property or suppress class conflict, then 'nationalisation' can be presented as potentially favorable to the working class. How the state uses the surplus value extracted from the Zanon workers is then a matter of relative class strength. If the workers are strong enough they can earn a living wage and make bosses pay taxes to pay for workers' needs: education, health, housing, etc., i.e., the social wage. If the bosses

are stronger they can force down the wages and extract surplus which goes straight into the pockets of the bosses or is used to subsidise the social wage. Socialism can be legislated!

This is pie in the sky reformism. We have seen how only class struggle can guarantee workers occupations. The same is true of their wages and conditions. It is not possible to negotiate with the bosses' state for a living wage and living social wage, especially in the middle of a global crisis.

The Zanon workers have no power to maintain a living wage, and no power to ensure that their surplus value goes to improve the lives of Neuquén workers by creating more jobs etc. The only way this can be changed is for the workers to create their own power, 'dual power,' against the bosses' state, to expropriate not only Zanon, but all bosses property, the banks and the land, to create their own workers' state and plan for socialist production for need and not profit.

Marxists are committed to the postulate on the state which says: "The state is an organ of class rule, an organ of oppression of one class by another, is the creation of" order "that legalized this oppression and secured by reducing conflict between the classes. ..."

"The attitude towards the state is one of the most patent signs that our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are not socialist in any way (what the Bolsheviks have always said), but Democrats with a quasi-socialist phraseology." (The State and Revolution, V. Lenin)

We say to all the working class in Argentina and worldwide, that although for now the Zanon cooperative has been forced to give up control over their salaries and allowances, we will fight to defend their hard won class consciousness that the state is the state of the bourgeois class, from the corrupting influence of the left reformists.

Stand With the Workers of Zanon!

It is our urgent task that the entire working class stands alongside their brothers and sisters of Zanon to fight to make the capitalists, and not the workers, pay for the crisis. There is an "alternative" to the bosses' law.

- Open the Books! It is imperative that the Zanon workers vote for an Independent Investigation Commission to open the books of the employer and to discover the business secrets and deals made by the Zanon family.
- End the Isolation of Zanon! All organizations that call themselves working class must fight to get the four ceramics factories of Neuquén united to make the government pay the market price for their products and provide cheap credit for new machinery.
- Zanon workers do not pay 23,406,566 pesos! Instead of compensating the bosses, put tax on all the oil companies, the banks and the wealthy.
- Fight for a base salary of 4,500 [pesos a month] for the workers of Zanon and the other three ceramics factories in the area. And for all workers in the country.
- Declare the factory has provincial heritage status, and that workers are paid the wage and social benefits of all state workers. Build standing committees to fight for the real "Provincialization" of Zanon, without compensation and under workers' control now!
- Work for all! Distribute working hours among those who want to work! A living wage pegged to inflation! Workers from the plant, with its union (SOECN) in the lead must respond to all the appeals of the oil and construction workers in Patagonia who have been fighting against the imperialist multinationals, facing layoffs, pay cuts and suspensions!
- Re-nationalise without compensation and under workers' control, Repsol, Total Fina, APACHE, Pan American, Plus Petrol, etc., to stop the plundering of the nation and to make the capitalists pay for their crisis!
- Throw out the union bureaucracy of the CGT and CTA, servants of the



Workers in Solidarity with Zanon Workers in Occupation of Factory

- Kirchner government, servants and thugs of the agrarian bourgeoisie, and of the imperialist monopolies: Cargill, Monsanto, Dreyfus, etc!
- Oppose the bosses' law that protects the gunmen of the trade union bureaucracy, business chambers, government and provincial governors!
- Stand up and fight for a strong unified National Coordinating Committee for all fighting workers, led by the workers of Terrabusi (Kraft-Foods), and the subway. Confront and defeat the treachery of the union bureaucracy, which betrays the workers struggle to save the capitalist profits.
- For a National Congress of employed and unemployed workers to defeat the isolation and division imposed by the union bureaucracy!
- Self-Defense Committees, to defend ourselves from the repression of trade union bureaucracy and state management!
- Immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, and the dropping of charges against workers and popular fighters!
- For Workers' and People's Courts to judge and punish the murderers of Teresa Rodriguez and Carlos Fuentealba!

Call for Solidarity with Terrabusi and Subway Workers



Terrabusi Workers Blockading Road

Argentina: Emergency appeal to all the fighting workers' organizations!

**The struggle of the workers of
Terrabusi (Kraft-Foods) and
Subway trains must win!**

**Kick out the armed thugs of the UTA
and STIA bureaucracy
paid by the bosses!**

**This is the same struggle as that of all
workers for a living wage, against the
layoffs and against the betrayals of the
labor bureaucracy that sell out the
workers' fight to save the capitalists'
business!**

Stop the repression against workers!

**Freedom for all political prisoners and
drop the charges against all worker and
popular militants!**

Reinstate all sacked workers!

**Long live the fight of the Terrabusi and
Subway workers!**

**Recognise the delegates committee of
the Subway as the only representative
of the workers!**

**For a National Coordinating Commit-
tee of all sectors in struggle now!**

**Workers organizations break with
the Labor Ministry and its compulsory
conciliation!**

The Terrabusi workers must win!

Fighting to get the jobs of 160 fired workers back, the Terrabusi workers are up against the giant US imperialist monopoly, Kraft-Food. Kraft-Food has 120 branches around the world. It reports profits of \$37 billion a year and aims to monopolise the key sectors of the food industry on a worldwide basis. Kraft is negotiating to buy the British monopoly Cadbury for \$17 billion. Its plans require the ruthless restructuring of its global production, putting many more thousands of workers into the street and forcing the remaining workers to produce more than all those who have been sacked.

This plan isn't just that of the food monopolies, since all monopolies must do the same to survive the current crisis. They bankrupt their competitors, concentrate their market share, and attack their workers to increase their exploitation and make them pay for the crisis, backed by their states and governments. To defend their property and that off the imperialist monopolies, they pay for the services of the union bureaucrats of the CGT and CTA as their armed thugs to control the factories as virtual concentration camps to overexploit the working class. At the same time, millions of workers are forced into the industrial reserve army and are used by the bosses to drive down wages.

The Subway workers must win!

At the same time the Terrabusi workers block the road without support of other workers, the Subway workers are on strike to defend their wages and to defend their delegates against the treacherous "sell-out" bureaucracy of the UTA. This action of the rank and file workers and their delegates is to defend

the victory of the 6 hour day won by the workers' struggle. The Subway workers have proved that only rank and file militancy can win and defend the gains of the working class. They cannot win anything by appealing to the judge Zafaroni, or to the bosses' justice with its "union freedom" law, or to the agent of the imperialist monopolies, Tomada, and his Ministry of wage-slavery. These agents of the bosses keep a lid on the workers' struggles. Victory only comes from the power of the workers.

The Subway and Terrabusi struggles, by confronting the betrayals of the union bureaucracy, prove to all workers that only by trusting their own forces and defeating the union bureaucracy that sells out the workers' wages and jobs, can they defend their wages and other conquests.

To win a living wage, to defend our jobs, and to stop the bosses' attacks, we must coordinate the struggle, unify the workers' ranks, and defeat the union bureaucracy!

Long live the Terrabusi and Subway workers' struggles!

The Bosses, Kirchner Government and the Agrarian Bourgeoisie Attack the Working Class

The Kirchner government with its infamous "social pact" regime, supported by the CGT and CTA union bureaucracy, leads the attacks of the monopolies to save them from their own economic crisis. The agrarian bourgeoisie, while it may fight over who gets what share of the profits from exports, agrees on attacking the workers. Cristina Kirchner, Carrio,

Macri, Reuteman, the government and the Liaison Board (Mesa de Enlace), the church, the bankers, and all the bosses' parties, emboldened by the victory of the regime in the last elections, have a common policy: to unite as one fist to smash the workers' movement with layoffs, suspensions, wage cuts, inflation, high cost of living, high prices, hunger, misery and repression to boost the profits of the capitalist parasites.

This is clear in the Terrabusi and Subway struggles where the bosses' justice system, the repressive police, the armed thugs of the union bureaucracy and all the bosses' organizations, including the ARI and Agrarian Federation (FA), are united behind the Labor Ministry to smash every single action that the working class organizes against the attacks.

In Metcom, GM, Acindar and the Córdoba Car Industry, the Bureaucracy and the Reformist Left Stopped a Workers' Counter-offensive Against the Bosses' Intensifying Attacks

The heart of the industrial proletariat in Metcom, GM, and Cordoba auto-industry has been fighting against the plan of the "sliding scale of suspensions, layoffs and lower salaries" imposed by the bosses for months. In all these factories, the workers dug in their heels to stop the sacking of contract workers, because they knew that next would be the workers on the payroll. This showed the bosses that they would have to destroy this unity to impose their plans. For that, the bosses used the union bureaucracy and the reformist left parties. So the union bureaucracy told the payroll workers that if they

would keep their jobs, they must allow the contract workers to be sacked. The left reformist parties went to every workers' struggle to tell them have faith in the bureaucracy and that it was not necessary to "open 2 fronts," i.e., it was not necessary to face the sell-out bureaucracy because this would weaken the struggle against the bosses. Thus they brought this wave of struggles against the capitalists' attacks to defeat. They prevented any attempt to set up organs of direct democracy and even closed down those that had been formed. They told the workers that out of these "tactical defeats" the bureaucracy would prepare the ground for victory. This treachery enabled the bosses to advance their common plan to isolate the struggles of the workers' movement and smash them sector by sector.

However, the attack and betrayals did not stop there. In March [2009], the CTA – a yellow union, and a guard dog of the interests of the state budget – betrayed the fight of the teachers of 14 provinces for higher wages. Again the reformist left parties, which lead and influence hundreds of unions and branches of CTERA and CTA all around the country, prevented the coordination of the fighting forces.

In July, the government, UIA, the agrarian Liaison Board (Mesa de enlace), and the CGT and CTA bureaucracy met with the Salary Council to sign a wage-slave agreement which will put a ceiling of \$1500 on the minimum wage, driving down workers' wages in this way.

All these betrayals disarm the workers, with the treacherous leaders diverting the workers into the electoral trap.

Thus, we reached the point – only a month ago – where the UOM bureaucracy, despite 50% inflation, went for a 25% increase in wages only to then settle for an 18% rise. This was agreed to beforehand in the Labour Ministry, to be paid in installments, provided the workers agreed to mass layoffs in exchange! And the only reason that they made this concession was that they were afraid that the fight of the metalworkers in Cordoba would set off an explosion in the working class. The metalworkers physically confronted the Varas bureaucracy (the UOM in this province), marched to the union headquarters shouting, “Everybody out, nobody left.” Again, the left reformist raised the policy of putting pressure on the bureaucracy through collective bargaining to stop any unified struggle in the working class for living wages and jobs against the repressive regime.

We have to be clear: the union bureaucracy and the left reformist parties were responsible for stopping the workers’ organised fightback against the bosses’ brutal attack. The reformists refused to unite the workers’ movement, leaving it to fight in the worst conditions that demoralised the most advanced and combatant sectors of the working class, subordinating them to state collective bargaining and the Labour Ministry.

That explains how the workers ended up in the present conditions. It was not any lack of willingness or capacity to struggle on the part of the working class. It was the treacherous stabs in the back of the workers’ movement that allowed the bosses and their servants to launch a decisive attack.

Terrabusi and Subway: The Bosses and Their Government Unite Their Forces to Break the Back of the Working Class

As we can see, we are not facing just another struggle. In the Subway, as in Terrabusi, the imperialist monopolies, the government and the agrarian bourgeoisie with their bosses’ parties, their opposition politicians and bureaucrats, have decided to launch an attack to smash the vanguard in order to terrorise the masses. They are very conscious that if they win on these two fronts, they can advance to defeat the entire workers’ movement. They are telling the working class that the coming attack on them will be even bigger. They want to drive down working conditions to the same slave-like level, or even worse, than those of the half million farm workers oppressed under the agrarian bourgeoisie and its agents, Bussi and De Angeli.

The bourgeoisie is trying to break the back of the proletariat in Subway and Terrabusi with the clear aim of using their armed thugs to defeat the internal commissions and drive back that victory of the revolutionary struggles of December 2001. This is why the bureaucracy of Yaski-Maldonado wants to contain the workers of Suteba La Plata and smash the rank and file rebellion of the teachers against the bureaucracy. The bosses want to take back all concessions. If they succeed in this plan, the bosses will be able to smash the resistance of the activists, starve and terrorise the masses and impose much greater levels of exploitation. This is what the bosses are trying to do in Terrabusi and Subway,

where the workers' resistance threatens to unite the demands of the entire workers' movement. Thus, the bosses attack but with carefully calculated methods. The bosses know that if they press too hard they can unify the workers' resistance and undo the work of the bureaucracy and the reformist parties in dividing the workers' ranks. They can lose everything under the current conditions if their attacks unite the rank and file around the fights in the Subway and Terrabusi.

Terrabusi and Subway: A Decisive Battle of the Entire Working Class to Defeat the Bosses' and Government's Attack

The fight of the workers of Terrabusi and Subway is the most advanced expression of the mood of revolt in the depths of the workers' ranks. It is the most advanced expression of hundreds of factory revolts against the bosses' attacks and over-exploitative pay rates and miserable salaries. It is the direct expression of the hate of millions of workers against the privileged union bureaucracy. Thus, if these two conflicts are immediately coordinated, they will inspire the enthusiasm for fight back among thousands of workers who want to fight the bosses' attacks, but are currently kept in isolation by the treacherous union bureaucracy. Thousands of workers are now realising through their own experience of struggle there that is no possibility of winning decent wages and stopping the layoffs without a common action against the bosses and their government.

In the Subway, in the middle of the stoppage, the workers were heard singing "Subway and Terrabusi, one heart."

This is the feeling of unity of the rank and file workers and is echoed in the blockage by the workers of Emfer and Tatsa of the General Paz highway in solidarity with Terrabusi. The bosses are afraid of such solidarity! They know that even isolated and divided, the working class is not yet defeated. The workers have far from exhausted their fighting capacity and when they unite and break from the bureaucracy, they will be able to launch a workers' counteroffensive against the bosses to make them pay for the crisis.

Stop isolating the fights! From Subway and Terrabusi, let's regroup all those who are fighting against the bureaucracy and untie the hands of the working class!

**The Subway workers in struggle have adopted the slogan:
"Subway and Terrabusi,
a single heart!"**

They know that workers united can defeat the bureaucracy and reinstate the Terrabusi workers and stop the layoffs. They know they can defend the delegates committee of the Subway workers and win decent wages for all the workers. The lesson of the defeats of isolated struggles at the hands of Labor Ministry conciliation and at the hands of the hired gunmen of the bureaucracy, are being learned. To fight and win, we must rely exclusively on our own forces, our own methods of struggle. We will not win jobs, decent wages, housing, education and health for workers via the laws of the bourgeois parliament, compulsory conciliations, or with the bosses' justice and

its “union freedom.” We will only win our demands by defeating the scab union bureaucracy and its gunmen, freeing the hands of the workers, and confronting the bosses and government in decisive combat.

**Down with the CGT and CTA
union bureaucracy!
Down with compulsory
conciliation !**

**Down with the social pact!
Down with the Wages Council!**

It has been clear in the last 20 days of the Terrabusi workers’ struggle and in the Subway fight that the internationalist Trotskyists of Democracia Obrera are correct: when the working class is staking everything on their struggle, the reformist parties refuse to fight for the unity and solidarity called for by the workers, thus demoralizing our class in one defeat after another. Enough! It is not possible to fight with these leaderships let alone fight.

Each minute we continue fighting and resisting alone, sector by sector, divided from each other, the bosses gain time and the power to defeat us one by one. Enough! These attacks must be stopped!

For that reason, the leaderships of Terrabusi and Subway have the duty to call for immediate coordination of the Terrabusi and Subway ranks under a single demand to unite all the workers who want to fight but are currently isolated and condemned to defeat, to send their delegates of all the factories and workplaces to a national committee of struggle.

**A Program to Unify the Rank and
File Workers: National
Coordinating Committee
of Struggle NOW!**

We need to set up a program that unites rank and file workers. The suffering, the high cost of living, and the oppression and exploitation of our class is unbearable. The workers’ struggles have proven that under these crisis conditions is it impossible to defend existing gains let alone win new economic demands in isolated sectors. It is time for the working class to rise up in a mass political struggle as one fist against the bosses and their government. The demand for a “sliding scale of wages and working hours” is on the order of the day to unite the Terrabusi workers’ fight against layoffs with those of Subway who are fighting for a wage increase, and with the unemployed workers of the piquetero movement who want to get a decent, secure job.

**For the non-recognition of the
fake collective bargaining
signed by the bureaucracy that
sells out the workers’ wages!**

**For a sliding scale of wages,
4500\$ of basic salary for all!**

**No more dismissals
or suspensions!**

**Jobs for all! For additional
shifts in all the factories
and workplaces!**

For all the factories to vote this program and call to unite the piquetero movement with the employed workers! Nationalization without payment and under workers control of all factories of companies that close or suspend or dismiss workers!

For cheap food for people: Expropriate without compensation the agrarian oligarchy, owner of 80% of the land! Smash the profiteers in the food chain! Cancel the VAT!

Down with the skyrocketing taxes! Re-nationalization without compensation under workers control of Telefónica, Rep sol and all the privatized companies! Kick out the transnationals that plunder the nation!

Repudiate the external debt that this Bolivarian Kirchner government pays with the muscles and bones of the working class!

Expropriate the banks and monopolies under workers control to pay for the jobs, wages, education and health for the exploited masses!

Set up self-defence committees against the repression by the guard dogs of the bosses and the gunmen of the union

bureaucracy! Stop the repression against fighters!

Immediate freedom for political prisoners! Throw out the charges against the popular and worker fighters!

A motion of unity for the entire workers' movement: Either them or us!

We must raise an emergency motion right now in all the workers' movement, in all the assemblies of rank and file workers, in all the factory committees, in every mobilization and road block, in each stoppage and every militant action.

The Terrabussi and Subway workers must take the lead to make an appeal to all workers in struggle.

First, the Internal Commission of Terrabusi and the Delegates Committee of the Subway have the responsibility and duty to immediately call for a Coordination Committee of Struggle to regroup the thousands of workers, who despite and against their leaderships, want to stop the bosses' attack.

Such a motion from the Subway and Terrabusi workers is necessary to unite with the Emfer and Tansa workers that blocked the General Paz; the employed and unemployed workers that blocked streets in La Plata supporting the Terrabusi struggle, and the 400 fired workers of Mercedes Benz; the workers of Mahle who are resisting in isolation in Rosaria; to unite with the workers of Zanon who under ter-

rible isolated conditions have been forced to accept a law of the Neuquén legislature to buy the firm to keep their jobs. This law is to make workers pay for the crisis.

This is the motion to unite the teachers of Suteba La Plata defending themselves against the intervention of the Celeste bureaucracy of CTERA/CTA, and the health workers that have led a struggle for rank and file control in Tucuman that confronts the bureaucracy.

This appeal would give moral support for thousands of workers to re-open their fights, such as the Port, Fate, Firestone, and Pirelli workers, that hate the sell-out union leaders of UOM, SUTNA and other treacherous bureaucracies. Such a motion would coordinate with the militants of the metal and municipal workers' struggles of Cordoba who have led huge combats in the factories and the streets.

Without doubt, an appeal like this would have the support and energy of the combatant students, and the youth killed in the workers neighbourhoods by the repressive forces of the Federal and Buenos Aires police, Naval Prefecture and gendarmerie.

The militant piquetero movement must take into their hands this appeal for a Coordinating Committee of struggle because we cannot allow any longer the bosses a free hand in firing thousands of workers and creating a massive reserve army of labor. Without uniting employed and unemployed alike, we will face more savage repression like that against the picketers of Caleta Olivia by the oil police.

The piquetero movement must stand up again and march to the factories to ally with their employed brothers and sisters to fight for work for all!

Down with the piquetero bureaucracy, those administrators of the unemployed workers' misery!

We must re-launch the struggle and the 21 point-program of the picketers of the North of Salta!

By winning a National Committee of Struggle now, we will be able to centralize a call for setting up a National Workers' Congress of employed and unemployed workers, that is, set up the Third Piquetera National Assembly to vote for a National Plan of Struggle and build for a general strike so that everybody goes out, nobody stays on the job, because the Kirchners and all the bosses' sectors – like the agrarian bourgeoisie – and their corrupted politicians disguised as “opposition,” want the workers to pay once again for their crisis.

Enough!

There is no time to lose! Either them or us! Make the capitalists pay for their own crisis

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Historic Defeat for the SACP at the Cosatu Congress



The objective reality of the working class impacted on the Cosatu Congress to deal the SACP a major defeat (the first in a long time). The SACP in Cabinet voted unanimously with the nationalists that they support the mass dismissal of soldiers as well as for the smashing of their unions. The workers at the Congress united and unanimously rejected this proposal. The very lives of many workers, having been shot at and brutalised by the regime during strikes and protests over the last period, have taught workers that we need unions in every sector as a first point of defence against the capitalists-imperialists.

The capitalist crisis has forced together the forces of the bosses within the workers' movement to openly side with the capitalists and to refuse to organise resistance, to allow high food prices and mass retrenchment to go unchallenged.

Workers adopted a fighting programme, but made a crucial error to return to office the very ones who will now drag their feet over the programme and who will do everything in their power to delay and water down the demands of the masses. The failure to adopt a call for a general strike for an emergency workers' plan is another limitation. Nevertheless, the basis has been laid for the start of a fightback by the working class. Now we need to draw the lesson up to the end of the class role of the SACP and of the need for working class independence.

It is not only labour brokers who are the problem but the very system of capitalism.

Forward to a workers' summit of all unions, unemployed representatives and soldiers to adopt a programme of action to implement an emergency plan for the working class!

Forward to a general strike to defend the lives of the working class from the capitalist-imperialist attacks!

Forward to the rebuilding of a revolutionary International based on the lessons of the Fourth International!

Down with the regime that conciliates with the imperialists to keep the working class in starvation and slavery!

**Forward to a workers' government!
Forward to Socialism!**

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