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"Immigration Reform" Aims to Make the U.S. Labor Market More Comfortable for Big Business

The budget bureau is at its regular juncture for rubber stamping a request from the Executive Office of the President to release work permits to benefit employers who plan to hire provisional labor from foreign labor markets.

The so-called H2-B specialty worker visas for this year are expected to be issued in excess of 30,000 more than the formal maximum of 66,000, according to the figures apportioned by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. A similar hike in the number of H2-B authorizations granted occurred last year. The USCIS also approves tens of thousands of H1-B and H2-A visas each year. Corporations are eligible for the separate visa categories according to the type of training required for the labor they wish to employ.

The usual process is for a corporation to hire a "labor solutions" headhunter who finds them suitable labor at a cost lower than is found in the local labor market for the industry. Once the match is made, the application process is initiated. The Trump administration has set its shoulder to the wheel in order to make the United States into a talent magnet for both skilled and unskilled migrant labor. All of the provisional work visa categories have undergone a major overhaul during his time in office. One of the most recent reforms planned is to make the application process much easier for rehiring the same provisional workers year after year in order to spare corporations the expense of training new workers. Rather than setting up branch plants in other countries, many corporations prefer setting up shop in the United States because of the favorable taxes, weak labor laws and the plethora of collaborationist labor union leaders.

The aim of U.S. migration

policy is to maximize profits, to keep the price of labor-power below its value, and to continue to do so by ensuring a steady supply of migrant workers deprived of equal rights under the law.

Mistreatment of foreign workers as regards such things as denial of rest periods and meal breaks, the underpayment of wages, discrimination and harassment are everyday occurrences. So too, the U.S. migration policy enables the politicians and ruling class spokesmen to agitate for chauvinist sentiments amongst the most backward sections of the population. The U.S. monopoly capitalist class seeks to fan out enmity among people of different nationalities and to support the "labor leaders" who repeat the Big Lie that migrant workers take away the jobs and reduce the earnings of the local population. In this way, the capitalist class tries to conceal the genuine causes of the constant job insecurity, unemployment, and of the dramatic worsening of the working people's living standards brought about by the crisis of the capitalist system.

The genuine causes of the crisis of capitalism are rooted in the ever-exacerbating contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist mode of appropriation. The fact is that the capitalist system is caught in an all-sided and unresolvable crisis. This crisis arises from the fact that the development of monopoly capitalism brings to the bursting point the basic contradiction inherent in the capitalist system — the contradiction between the socialized

character of the productive forces and the capitalist social relations based on private ownership of these social, productive forces.

The economic base of our country — including its vast natural resources, its large scale factories, its transportation and telecommunications systems, its modern technology, as well as the social division of labor amongst 120 million workers which sets all these social tools in motion — is subordinated to the profit-drive of no more than a handful of big monopoly capitalists.

This contradiction becomes sharper with every new economic development. Thus, for example, as new technology stimulates the capitalists to rationalize and restructure production, workers find their jobs permanently eliminated and tremendous downward pressure is exerted against wages. For the last several years, the crisis of capitalism has become so severe that even in periods of so-called economic upturn or boom, unemployment keeps rising and wages keep falling.

Karl Marx points out, "The greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth, and, therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labor, the greater is the industrial reserve army... But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labor army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus population, whose mis-

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More Comfortable

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ery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labor. The more extensive, finally, the lazarus layers of the working class, and the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. *This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation.*"

The general law of capitalist accumulation is closely bound up with and is determined by the basic economic law of capitalism, the law of surplus-value. For it is the drive to increase surplus-value and profit that leads to greater capital accumulation and the growing wealth of the bourgeoisie.

Just as the ruling class of our country began its primitive accumulation of capital through the kidnapping and enslavement of the African peoples, through genocide against the Native peoples, by ripping the Southwest from Mexico through war, today it can only amass greater capital by attacking society as a whole. Thus, the monopoly capitalists and big bankers have been plundering the public treasury, receiving trillions of dollars in interest payments in the last decade alone, and draining our country's resources through privatization and the continuous militarization of the economy. It is the monopoly capitalists who are the source of the extremely reactionary, anti-social agenda of the Democratic and Republican parties which insists on stripping away any gains made by the working people in order to put all the resources of the country at the disposal of big business. And it is the monopoly capitalists who have set our country on the path of preparing new imperialist wars in order to expand their markets and spheres of influence — their super-exploitation and plunder of other countries and peoples.

Just as the entire program of government control and supervision over the workforce unleashed today in the name of a public health national emergency is a brutal attack on the democratic rights of the workers and a further step in the process of fascistization of the U.S., all the current policies of the two parties are leading the country in the same di-

rection. When the interests of the classes in society are antagonistic, democracy, like the state itself, serves the interests of the ruling class alone. The class which is dominant tries to create the illusion that the existing state of affairs is the best possible. The state in America is bound by its nature to secure the interests of the monopoly capitalist class. However that does not mean that the capitalist class and its government can do whatever it wants. The opposing nature of the interests of the working people and the monopolists, of the bourgeoisie and the working class, is the decisive factor that determines the political situation in a capitalist country like the United States. The situation can only be changed when the people insert themselves into the equation and bring independent working class politics to center-stage.

In opposition to the chauvinism and exploiting aims of the capitalists, the workers and people are fighting for a truly modern America which recognizes that **the rights of one are inseparable from the rights of all.** The interests of the workers require that everyone who lays down their head to rest in the U.S. enjoys equal rights. When all are assured the same economic and political rights the workers can more easily raise their standard of wages and working conditions and more powerfully develop their struggle against the rule of capital.

The American workers have such a strong and famous history of organized struggle against their "own" ruling class — which, as capitalists, base their entire social existence on denying the rights of migrant laborers as well as the overwhelming majority of the population — because there has been a long tradition of recognizing that the workers can only assert their rights by coming out collectively into the political arena to claim them in opposition to the privileges of private property. The only way forward in terms of humanizing society and winning guarantees for the collective rights of the workers and people is through the the assertion of the right of the people to hold the political

power and through the struggle to bring those people who have been locked out and excluded for decades and centuries up to the level of individual and collective rights that must be guaranteed for all. This struggle must be carried forward as a struggle against the "rights" of private property in the means of production — against the handful of individuals and collectives who, as capitalists, base their entire social existence not only on denying legitimate group rights and the rights of the entire working class, but also, by seeking to use every means at their disposal to put down any expression of the workers' discontent, calling in the police and the army and resorting to courts and prison cells for that purpose.

When you look at the experience of the recent period you cannot fail to see that the drive of the two parties of big capital to implement the ferocious anti-social agenda of monopoly capital is so much in opposition to the people that it has simply been impossible for them to implement their agenda of war, robbery and repression all at once. Nevertheless, they have been on the offensive for several decades now. This decade is ushering in a new stage in the struggle of the entire American working class against the capitalist offensive. In the course of raising the banner of full rights for all sections of the workers, we must recognize that only the self-conscious organization of the workers and people themselves can save us.

The social character of our society is demanding recognition and the social movements of the people are calling. The decisive thing is to help work out and popularize the pro-social agenda which gives political expression to the demands and aspirations of the people. The minimum necessity is that every organization of the working class be guided by the line of defending the interests of the whole working class. And the more acute the class struggle, the greater the need for the working class to create its united and powerful political party capable of consistently protecting its interests.