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COVID-19 Counterrevolution and the Nature of the Pandemic

Pandemics and COVID-19: Actual and Historical Data

Zero Socialism in the "ZeroCOVID" Campaign

English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.50, February 2021

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Picture on the cover: Health checks at the Guglielmo Marconi Airport in Bologna; Source: Wikipedia, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/95/Emergenza_coronavirus_%2849496308758%29.jpg

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COVID-19: A Comparison of Historical Data

An analysis of the COVID-19 death figures and those of past pandemics and climate disasters based on data from the World Bank

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 19 January 2021

Engels once commented that the struggle between the classes takes place on three levels – the political, the economic and the theoretical.¹ Lenin would later take up that idea and make it a central part of his conception of the revolutionary party.² Recognizing this elementary truth is particularly important today – in the age of the dystopian COVID-19 Counterrevolution.

It would be *impossible* for the ruling class to impose unprecedented mass curfews, state of emergencies, massive restrictions of democratic rights, etc. *without* waging a total war on the ideological level. You can not look at a news website, open a daily paper or watch news without facing a bombardment of shocking stories about victims of the COVID-19 pandemic, without horrific mortality figures and without hysteric warning about the dangers for each and everyone. In other words, the ruling class is waging – and is forced to wage – a gigantic offensive of one-sided information, semi-information, and lies in order to justify their counterrevolutionary offensive.

Understandably, sectors of the population have been scared, particularly in the first period, albeit their numbers are declining, and more and more people begin to look through the fog of ideological class war of the bourgeoisie. Shamefully, large sectors of the Lockdown Left – i.e. those “socialists” who criminally support the anti-democratic policy of the ruling class – repeat the bourgeois propaganda.³ In contrast, many people who oppose the Lockdown policy tend to deny the existence of a pandemic at all. In our opinion this is a mistaken response to the barrage of lies which the ruling class is waging.

Today it is crucial for us as Marxists, for all advocates of a socialist future, indeed for each and every defender of the democracy to answer the ideological warfare of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution on all levels, including science and theory. This is why the RCIT has analyzed the pandemic from the very beginning in much detail.⁴ We have not only explained the political meaning and the background of the anti-democratic offensive and outlined the necessary strategy and tactics for the struggle of the workers and oppressed. In addition, we also studied on a scientific level the real severity of the pandemic. We demonstrated in numerous works that the claims of bourgeois governments and their supporters among the Lockdown Left about the supposedly “unprecedented and highly dangerous COVID-19 pandemic” is simply a propaganda lie. We have shown on the basis of official statistics and analysis of other pandemics in past decades that the current pandemic is serious (i.e. it is not a “fake” or a “hoax”) but it is neither devastating nor unprecedented.

Problems of Calculating the Mortality of the Pandemic

In the last months we have published several articles in which we analyzed the development of total mortality in various countries.⁵ As we explained, there exists a controversy about the methodology of counting COVID-19

deaths and comparing countries. There are several reasons for this. First, countries do not all use the same methods. Some countries have demonstrably unreliable statistics. In addition, it has happened in various countries that one and the same government has changed the methods of counting. For some periods, only those were counted as COVID-19 death who had demonstrably died because of the virus. In other periods, all those were counted as COVID-19 death who had this virus, irrespective if the virus was the cause of death or not. As we did explain, such changes were done for political reasons.

For all these reasons there is a strong argument to look at the development of total mortality, i.e. the number of total death in the current period (irrespective of the official causes) in relation to the total number of death in the past. Such a method circumvents the issue which death causes have been officially attributed to fatalities in the past few months.

Of course, as we did explain, even this counting method has certain weaknesses. It is known that the draconic lockdown has caused a number of unnecessary deaths. For example, people who were ill or could not move died in their homes as nobody came to help them; people with other illnesses died because they could not go (or were too afraid to go) to hospital in this period, etc. Hence, the figures for excess mortality have definitely a certain tendency to overestimate the deadliness of the Corona Virus. Furthermore, it is also necessary to add a word of caution. When statistics about excess mortality are provided, it is always important to look which years are used for comparison. Currently, most bourgeois statistics compare the number of deaths during the current pandemic only with the last 2-5 years. This is done for political reasons in order to make the figure of COVID-19 death look more dramatic. If possible, one should try to find comparisons with the figures of the last two or three decades. In addition, one should also take into account the changes in the size of the total population. A larger number of absolute deaths are not abnormal if in the same period the size of the total population has grown in similar magnitude. Nevertheless, stating all these limitations and potential difficulties, it seems to us that the figures for total mortality are the most informative method of those currently available.

Notes about the World Bank Study

As the year 2020 has ended and figures for total mortality of the whole year get published by official agencies, it is now possible to compare the figures of the COVID-19 year with those of the past. In the near future we plan to publish several articles which will deal with the development of total mortality in various countries and regions.

We begin this series of articles with a historical comparison. We compare the available data of global COVID-19 deaths with the mortality figures of three past pandemics: the so-called “Spanish Influenza” at the end of World War I,

the 1957-58 Pandemic (also misnamed “Asian Flu”) and the 1968 Pandemic (also misnamed “Hong Kong Flu”). In addition, we also provide figures for severe climate disasters.

We compare not the absolute numbers as this would be misleading given the dramatic changes in total world population. Instead, we make a comparison on the basis of calculations of mortality per capita. For this purpose, we can use official figures which have been presented in a study of the World Bank published a few months ago. In addition we present combine these historical data with the actualized number of COVID-19 deaths from the latest official figures.

Before discussing the results of our comparison, we want to add one note. As indicated above the figures about mortality of the pandemic is a highly disputed issue. The ruling class, their media and their “experts” usually accuse their critics of “fake news” and “manipulated statistics”. It is therefore important for Marxists to present the figures with complete transparency (providing all sources as exact as possible, explaining the method of calculation, etc.). Furthermore, it is particularly helpful to provide data published by bourgeois institutions which are free from any suspicion of being critical against the governments’ Lockdown policy.

The World Bank is such an institution beyond any doubt. It is not only one of the key institutions of global capitalism. It has also been a strong supporter of the Lockdown policy since the beginning. Even more, it has closely collaborated since long with other important institutions known for their pro-Lockdown stance. As we elaborated in past works, the World Bank jointly created with the World Health Organisation the so-called *Global Preparedness Monitoring Board* (GPMB). The board members of the GPMB include leading health politicians of major powers (ministers resp. leading government advisors of the U.S., China, Russia, Japan, India, etc.) as well as representatives of multinational corporations (like the *Wellcome Trust* behind which is *GlaxoSmithKline*) and the well-known *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*. In other words, the GPMB is not an obscure Think Tank but rather a representative institution of the world bourgeoisie.⁶

Telling Figures

Let us now move to present the figures from the World Bank study.⁷ First, we present the figures as they have been published in the study. As readers can see in Table 1, the authors use figures of global mortality per capita (calculated as “death per million habitants”) for COVID-19, the “Spanish Influenza”, the 1957-58 Pandemic and the 1968 Pandemic. It is important to note that as the study was published in July 2020, the figures for COVID-19 are from mid-May last year (i.e. they are outdated).

The World Bank study also provides the figures for death per million habitants for three different severe climate disaster. We reproduce these figures – again in combination with the COVID-19 figure – in Table 2.

The next step in our analysis is that we actualize the figures for COVID-19 death. The figures in the World Bank study provided above date from 14 May 2020. At that time, the official figure was 301,000 death.¹⁰ According to the latest official data, the worldwide coronavirus death toll surpassed 2 million a few days ago.¹¹

Hence, when 301,000 death in May 2020 equalled 39 death per million habitants, we can calculate that 2 million death (the actual figures) equal 259 death per million habitants. In Table 3 we present the actualized data in comparison to other pandemics and severe climate disasters.

Most likely world population has continued to grow in the past year. Hence our calculation of global death per million habitants is not totally exact as the world population has become larger. We can therefore assume that the figure for COVID-19 death per million habitants is slightly smaller than 259. However, as we are not in possession of the most actual data for the world population, we stick with the figures of the World Bank study. And since this study was published a bit more than half a year ago, we can safely assume that the difference to the actual figure is rather small.

Conclusions

What can we conclude from these data which compare the global mortality rates for the COVID-19 pandemic with other pandemics as well as severe climate disasters which occurred in past decades?

1) The figures of the global mortality rates for the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate that the Corona Virus is not a “fake” or a “hoax”. It is, as we have argued since the beginning, a real and severe pandemic.

2) However, the World Bank figures also demonstrate that it is utterly wrong to present the COVID-19 pandemic as unprecedented or more dangerous than past pandemics. The figures from the 1957-58 Pandemic and the 1968 Pandemic – not to mention the Spanish Influenza – show that humanity faced worse pandemics in the past. Other examples for severe catastrophes are various climate disasters as the figures above show. In addition, one could add the horrific – and in fact larger – numbers of people who die each year because of the consume of tobacco (8 million) and alcohol (3 million).¹²

Hence, the World Banks study confirms – against the intention of its authors – the position of Marxists that while the COVID-19 pandemic is a severe pandemic it is neither unprecedented nor more dangerous than past pandemics.

3) Finally, the World Banks study also confirms another important conclusion which the RCIT has emphasized from the beginning of the crisis in spring 2020. As humanity has experienced similar or worse catastrophes in the past decades why does the ruling class (and the foolish Lockdown Left in its tow) claim that this is an unprecedented catastrophe which requires unprecedented instruments of state repression?! As we explained in past documents, the ruling class did not respond to the 1957-58 Pandemic or the 1968 Pandemic with any similar dictatorial methods.

Not only this, at that time such pandemics did not even cause any big public hysteria by the bourgeois media. To provide an anecdotal evidence. A comrade of the RCIT did live in his youth with his parents in Hong Kong at the time of the 1968 Pandemic. He reports that at that time this did not cause any considerable public attention, not to speak about any mass curfews or any similar draconic measures of state repression.

So why is the ruling class causing such a huge public hysteria now?! And why does it do so little in order to expand

the public service health sector?! The answer is obvious as the RCIT has emphasized again and again: the ruling class utilizes the COVID-19 pandemic to justify a political and economic counterrevolutionary offensive resulting in unprecedented attacks on democratic rights and an expansion of the police and surveillance state. The COVID-19 pandemic is used as a cover to create again a gigantic Leviathan, a capitalist state monster, which shall save the monopoly bourgeoisie against the collapse of its political and economic world order and the rebelling popular masses!

The task of revolutionaries is to expose their pseudo-scientific lies and to work towards stopping their offensive!

Footnotes

1 "It must be said to the credit of the German workers that they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a workers' movement has existed, the struggle is being waged pursuant to its three sides — the theoretical, the political and the economic-practical (resistance to the capitalists) — in harmony and in its interconnections, and in a systematic way. It is precisely in this, as it were concentric, attack that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies." (Friedrich Engels: Supplement to the Preface of 1870 for The Peasant War in Germany, in: MECW Vol. 23, p. 631)

2 "At this point, we wish to state only that the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory. To have a concrete understanding of what this means, let the reader recall such predecessors of Russian Social-Democracy as Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, and the brilliant galaxy of revolutionaries of the seventies; let him ponder over the world significance which Russian literature is now acquiring; let him ... but be that enough! Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic move-

ment. Engels recognises, not two forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (political and economic), as is the fashion among us, but three, placing the theoretical struggle on a par with the first two." (V. I. Lenin: What Is To Be Done? (1902), in: LCW Vol. 5, p. 370)

3 For our criticism of the Lockdown Left see e.g. chapter V of our book by Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>; see also by the same author the last chapters in the above mentioned essay: The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution; COVID-19 and the Lockdown Left: The Example of PODEMOS and Stalinism in Spain, 24 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-lockdown-left-podemos-and-stalinism-in-spain/>; Social-Bonapartism in Argentina. The Partido Obrero (Tendencia) of Jorge Altamira supports the State of Emergency, 29 April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/social-bonapartism-in-argentina/>; When Ultra-Leftism marries Social-Bonapartism and Gives Birth to "Post-Marxist" Obscurantism. A reply to the CWG/ILTT, 5 May 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-when-ultra-leftism-marries-social-bonapartism/>; Brazil: Social-Bonapartism of the Lockdown Left in Practice. How the leaderships of the trade unions, PT, PCdoB, the pseudo-Trotskyist PSTU and PSOL sabotage the struggle against the Bolsonaro government, 10 June 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-social-bonapartism-of-the-lockdown-left-in-practice/>; Lockdown Left says: "Cops Need to Enforce Laws". The ex-revolutionary L5I as another example for shameful social-bonapartism in the era of the COVID-19 counterrevolution, 24 July 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/lockdown-left-l5i-says-cops-need-to-enforce-laws/>; COVID-19: Zero Socialism in the "ZeroCOVID" campaign. Following the model of China and Australia, some British Stalinists and "Trotskyists" call for a "total and indefinite lockdown", 22 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-zero-socialism-in-the-zero-co>

Table 1. Global Mortality Rates for Selected Pandemics (COVID-19 Figures as of 14 May 2020) ⁸

<i>Pandemic</i>	<i>Death per Million Habitants</i>
COVID-19	39
1968 Pandemic	280
1957-58 Pandemic	390
Spanish Influenza	57,140

Table 2. Global Mortality Rates for Selected Severe Climate Disasters (COVID-19 Figures as of 14 May 2020) ⁹

<i>Severe Climate Disaster</i>	<i>Death per Million Habitants</i>
COVID-19	39
Severe Climate Disaster I	124,0
Severe Climate Disaster II	415,0
Severe Climate Disaster III	671,0

Table 3. Global Mortality Rates for Selected Pandemics and Severe Climate Disasters (COVID-19 Figures as of 15 January 2021)

<i>Pandemic & Severe Climate Disaster</i>	<i>Death per Million Habitants</i>
COVID-19	259
1968 Pandemic	280
1957-58 Pandemic	390
Spanish Influenza	57,140
Severe Climate Disaster I	124,0
Severe Climate Disaster II	415,0
Severe Climate Disaster III	671,0

[vid-campaign/](#); COVID-19: The Current and Historical Roots of Bourgeois Lockdown “Socialism”. Police State and Universal Basic Income are key elements of the new version of reformist “War Socialism” of 1914, 19 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/covid-19-the-current-and-historical-roots-of-bourgeois-lockdown-socialism/>

4 The RCIT has analyzed the COVID-19 counterrevolution extensively since its beginning. Starting from 2 February we have published more than 60 pamphlets, essays, articles and statements plus a book which are all compiled at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>. In particular we refer readers to the RCIT Manifesto: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counterrevolutionary Offensive. We are at a turning point in the world situation as the ruling classes provoke a war-like atmosphere in order to legitimize the build-up of chauvinist state-bonapartist regimes, 21 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-a-cover-for-a-major-global-counterrevolutionary-offensive/>. In addition, we draw attention to our book by Michael Pröbsting: *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It*. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>. See also our very first article on this issue by Almedina Gunić: Coronavirus: “I am not a Virus”... but WE will be the Cure! The chauvinist campaign behind the “Wuhan Coronavirus” hysteria and the revolutionary answer, 2 February 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/wuhan-virus/>; Michael Pröbsting: *The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution*. On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspectives of the workers and popular resistance, 20 July 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/the-second-wave-of-the-covid-19-counterrevolution/>; by the same author: *The Police and Surveillance State in the Post-Lockdown Phase*. A global review of the ruling class’s plans of expanding the bonapartist state machinery amidst the COVID-19 crisis, 21 May 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/police-and-surveillance-state-in-post-lockdown-phase/>; COVID-19: The Great Barrington Declaration is indeed Great! Numerous medical scientists protest against the reactionary lockdown policy, 11 October 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-the-great-barrington-declaration-is-indeed-great/>.

5 See e.g. Michael Pröbsting: COVID-19: Some Interesting Facts (Which Governments & Media Conceal) Some Calculations about Total Mortality in Europe in 2020 compared with 2016 and 2018, 23 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-and-total-mortality-in-europe/>; by the same author: COVID-19: How Severe is the Pandemic in Sweden Really? Once again, a comparison demonstrates that the mortality rate in 2020 is barely larger than in 2018, 8 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-how-severe-is-the-pandemic-in-sweden-really/>; COVID-19: Revealing Figures from Sweden. A comparison of the mortality rates of the first 9 months in 2020 with previous years confirm that this is a serious but not unprecedented pandemic, 23 November 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-revealing-figures-from-sweden/>; see also the chapter “Telling figures for Europe, Sweden and Ischgl” in the above-mentioned essay “*The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution*.”

6 See on this e.g. Almedina Gunić: How could WHO and World Bank exactly predict COVID-19? The shady role of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board, 26 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/how-could-who-and-world-bank-exactly-predict-covid-19/>; Michael Pröbsting: How the Ruling Class Prepared for COVID-19. A number of events before and after the beginning of the pandemic demonstrate the political nature of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution, 3 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/how-the-ruling-class-prepared-for-covid-19/>.

7 World Bank: Global Productivity, Trends, Drivers, and Policies (2020), Edited by Alistair Dieppe

8 World Bank: Global Productivity, Trends, Drivers, and Policies (2020), Edited by Alistair Dieppe, p. 109. The exact figures are taken from the Excel file which is linked to the World Bank graph.

9 Ibid.

10 Joseph Stepanyk, Saba Aziz and Ted Regencia: Global coronavirus death toll exceeds 300,000: Live updates. More than 4.4 million coronavirus cases confirmed worldwide, at least 301,000 deaths and nearly 1.6 million recoveries, 14 May 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/5/14/global-coronavirus-death-toll-exceeds-300000-live-updates>

11 Shaina Ahluwalia, Kavya B: Global COVID-19 death toll tops 2 million, Reuters, 15 January 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-global-casualties/global-covid-19-death-toll-tops-2-million-idUSKBN29K2EW>

12 See WHO: Tobacco, 27 May 2020 <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>; WHO: Alcohol, 21 September 2018 <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/alcohol>

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution

What It Is and How to Fight It

A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle

In *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution* Michael Pröbsting analyses the dramatic events in spring 2020 which have opened a new historic era. A triple crisis has shocked the world. The Third Depression has begun, characterized by a devastating economic slump of the capitalist world economy which is certainly no less dramatic than the crisis which started in 1929.

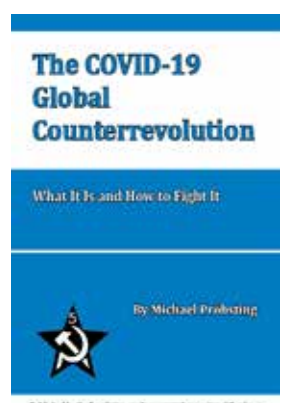
In addition, there is a wave of anti-democratic attacks of a scale which has not been seen in the imperialist countries since 1945. This has triggered a global turn towards Chauvinist State Bonapartism and the creation of a monstrous Leviathan-like state machinery.

And finally, the world faces COVID-19 – a pandemic which endangers many lives and which is exploited by the ruling classes in order to spread fear, to deflect attention from the capitalist causes of the economic crisis and to justify the turn towards chauvinist state bonapartism.

The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution also shows that large sectors of the reformist workers movement and the

so-called left fail to understand the meaning of this triple crisis. Similar to the situation in 1914 after the beginning of World War I we can observe a gigantic wave of opportunist capitulation by many self-proclaimed socialists as they support or at least do not denounce the global lockdown and the suppression of democratic rights which the ruling classes are imposing in the name of combat against the pandemic. *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution* offers a Marxist analysis of this historic crisis and elaborates a revolutionary perspective for the struggles ahead.

The book contains an introduction and 6 chapters plus an appendix (176 pages) and includes 5 figures and a diagram.



COVID-19: Sweden's Total Mortality in 2020 Compared with Past Years Once again, the figures demonstrate that this is a serious but not unprecedented pandemic

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 23.01.2021

As we explained in a recently published article, a central ideological pillar of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution rests on the assertion that the extraordinary state of emergency measures would be justified by the extraordinary nature of the current pandemic. Hence, the bourgeois governments and their supporters among the Lockdown Left claim that humanity is in the midst of a supposedly "unprecedented and highly dangerous COVID-19 pandemic". Hence, we think that it is important for Marxists to counter this ideological warfare of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution, among others, with scientific arguments.

For this reason, the RCIT has analyzed from the very beginning not only the political character of this counterrevolution but also the nature of the pandemic.¹ We demonstrated in much detail that the claims of bourgeois governments and their supporters among the Lockdown Left about the supposedly "unprecedented and highly dangerous COVID-19 pandemic" lacks any factual basis.

As the year 2020 has ended and figures for total mortality of the whole year get published by official agencies, it is now possible to compare the figures of the COVID-19 year with those of the past. For this reason, we have begun a series of articles which deal with the development of total mortality in various countries and regions.² As we explained in our last article on this issue, the development

of total mortality in a given year is the best approximation in order to understand the severity of the pandemic.³

In this article we will analyze the effects of the pandemic for total mortality in Sweden and compare the results with past years. As we have noted repeatedly, Sweden has been one of the few countries which have not imposed any lockdown (nor any other enforcement measures) until now. Unsurprisingly, it has become a main target of attack both by the global bourgeoisie as well as by the Lockdown Left.⁴

We did already analyze the development of Sweden's mortality figures in the past few months.⁵ This article will update our analysis by the latest official data from *Statistics Sweden* – the official statistical authority of the country.

The latest data on the country's total mortality has been published three days ago. It is possible that the figures for the last month of 2020 might be altered. However, according to our experience, we do not expect significant changes since we are already in late January and Sweden's statistical authorities are known for fast and reliable work.

In the table below we reproduce the mortality per capita in Sweden for each month in 2020. In addition, we compare these figures with those for the years 2016 and 2018. We add the monthly figures in order to get the total for the whole year. Furthermore, we calculate the growth rate of the 2020 figure with those of 2016 respectively 2018.

Table 1. Number of deaths per 100,000 inhabitants per month in Sweden (2015-2020)⁶

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	86,0	85,4	89,9	84,2	79,2	78,2
February	88,9	82,0	85,9	88,2	78,3	75,5
March	85,9	80,1	79,7	90,1	73,6	80,1
April	79,2	76,4	77,1	76,9	71,9	102,0
May	72,8	69,8	72,2	66,3	67,4	83,4
June	70,0	67,7	68,1	65,6	64,6	71,9
July	70,4	70,6	66,7	71,1	65,4	66,2
August	67,3	69,8	67,3	66,3	66,1	65,1
September	71,4	69,1	68,6	68,2	66,5	65,3
October	71,3	72,8	72,7	70,5	70,7	67,9
November	74,6	75,7	74,1	69,5	72,1	79,1
December	78,1	82,0	79,0	75,9	74,0	93,5
Total	915.9	901.4	901.3	892.8	849.8	928.2

Increase in 2020 (January-December) compared with the same period in 2019: +9.22%

Increase in 2020 (January-December) compared with the same period in 2018: +3.96%

Increase in 2020 (January-December) compared with the same period in 2017: +2.98%

Increase in 2020 (January-December) compared with the same period in 2016: +2.97%

Increase in 2020 (January-December) compared with the same period in 2015: +1.01%

Conclusions

What do these figures of Sweden's mortality rate tell us? Basically, this data confirms once more our analysis of the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.

First, the increase in mortality rate per capita reflects that the COVID-19 pandemic is not a "fake" or a "hoax" but a real and severe pandemic.

Secondly, while the increase is real, it can hardly be characterized as extraordinary large. The mortality rate per capita in 2020 was 9,2% larger than last year. However, 2019 was an extraordinary year as it saw the lowest number of death in Sweden for decades. When we compare the 2020 mortality rate per capita with the previous years, we see an increase of only +3.96% (2018), +2.98% (2017), +2.97% (2016) and +1.01% (2015). This confirms our analysis that the COVID-19 pandemic is neither unprecedented nor more dangerous than past pandemics.

Thirdly, these data also confirm the position – long held by us and many other democrats – that the "Swedish model" which operates without Lockdown and other enforcement measures does not result in higher mortality rates than countries with draconic Lockdowns.

Footnotes

1 The RCIT has analysed the COVID-19 counterrevolution extensively since its beginning. Starting from 2 February we have published more than 70 pamphlets, essays, articles and statements plus a book which are all compiled at a special subpage on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>. In particular we refer readers to the RCIT Manifesto: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counterrevolutionary Offensive. We are at a turning point in the world situation as the ruling classes provoke a war-like atmosphere in order to legitimize the build-up of chauvinist state-bonapartist regimes, 21 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-a-cover-for-a-major-global-counterrevolutionary-offensive/>. In addition, we draw attention to our book by Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>. See also our very first article on this issue by Almedina Gunić: Coronavirus: "I am not a Virus"... but WE will be the Cure! The chauvinist campaign behind the "Wuhan Coronavirus" hysteria and the revolutionary answer, 2 February 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/wuhan-virus/>; Michael Pröbsting: The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution. On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspectives of the workers and popular resistance, 20 July 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/the-second-wave-of-the-covid-19-counterrevolution/>; by the same author: The Police and Surveillance State in the Post-Lockdown Phase. A global review of the ruling class's plans of expanding the bonapartist state machinery amidst the COVID-19 crisis, 21 May 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/police-and-surveillance-state-in-post-lockdown-phase/>; COVID-19: The Great Barrington Declaration is indeed Great! Numerous medical scientists protest against the reactionary lockdown policy, 11 October 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-the-great-barrington-declaration-is-indeed-great/>.

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3 See chapter "Problems of Calculating the Mortality of the Pandemic" in the above-mentioned article "COVID-19: A Comparison of Historical Data".

4 For our critique of the Lockdown Left see e.g. chapter V of our above-mentioned book by Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It; see also by the same author the last chapters in the above mentioned essay: The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution; COVID-19 and the Lockdown Left: The Example of PODEMOS and Stalinism in Spain, 24 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-lockdown-left-podemos-and-stalinism-in-spain/>; Social-Bonapartism in Argentina. The Partido Obrero (Tendencia) of Jorge Altamira supports the State of Emergency, 29 April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/social-bonapartism-in-argentina/>; When Ultra-Leftism marries Social-Bonapartism and Gives Birth to "Post-Marxist" Obscurantism. A reply to the CWG/ILTT, 5 May 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-when-ultra-leftism-marries-social-bonapartism/>; Brazil: Social-Bonapartism of the Lockdown Left in Practice. How the leaderships of the trade unions, PT, PCdoB, the pseudo-Trotskyist PSTU and PSOL sabotage the struggle against the Bolsonaro government, 10 June 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-social-bonapartism-of-the-lockdown-left-in-practice/>; Lockdown Left says: "Cops Need to Enforce Laws". The ex-revolutionary L5I as another example for shameful social-bonapartism in the era of the COVID-19 counterrevolution, 24 July 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/lockdown-left-l5i-says-cops-need-to-enforce-laws/>; COVID-19: Zero Socialism in the "ZeroCOVID" campaign. Following the model of China and Australia, some British Stalinists and "Trotskyists" call for a "total and indefinite lockdown", 22 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-zero-socialism-in-the-zero-covid-campaign/>; COVID-19: The Current and Historical Roots of Bourgeois Lockdown "Socialism". Police State and Universal Basic Income are key elements of the new version of reformist "War Socialism" of 1914, 19 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/covid-19-the-current-and-historical-roots-of-bourgeois-lockdown-socialism/>

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Down with the Campaign for Total Lockdown! To Hell with Joe Biden, the Racist Police and Private Security Murderer!

The Internationalist Socialist League (Section of the RCIT in Israel/Occupied Palestine), 31.12.2020

The propaganda of the capitalists is that we are all together in the war against the COVID19-pandemic. In the real world, under the cover of fighting coronavirus they are engaged in a war against the working class and the oppressed people all around the world. Each imperialist attack was and is an attack against the life of our brothers and sisters. The very same life that imperialists claim to protect when implementing bonapartist attacks in the name of fighting COVID.

It is very clear for example that the USA had no hesitations to kill civilians: "On Sept. 16, 2007, during the occupation of Iraq, American Blackwater guards stopped traffic in Bagdad for a U.S. diplomatic team. At 12:08 p.m. Nicholas Slaten, the team's sniper, began firing. Over the next 20 minutes, the guards used heavy-caliber machine guns and grenades to kill 17 Iraqi civilians — including two children — and wound 17 others. It took nearly eight years for five members of this killers group to be convicted in the case and sent to prison."¹ Last Tuesday President Trump pardoned four of them, a decision that reflects the state of US military violence and again the inhuman character of the US imperialist state.

This attitude of the American killers is related to the history of the US on capital punishment. "Capital punishment" is another name for the "death penalty," the legal execution of persons waiting in death row. The word capital comes from the Latin word for head. In ancient times, capital punishment was often carried out by beheading. This method has never been used in the USA. Today, the method of beheading is linked to barbaric groups like DAESH. But workers, poor and blacks have been put to death by shooting, hanging, electrocution, poison gas, and lethal injection — often enough crueler methods than the fast death by beheading. "In the American colonies, during the British rule legal executions took place as early as 1630. The death penalty was imposed for many crimes, such as picking pockets or stealing a loaf of bread. During the 1800's, 270 crimes were crimes punishable by death. Thousands of people sometimes attended public hangings."²

The aim of these cold blood killings was to terrorize the population and let them know who the rulers are and what awaits those who do not accept the tyranny of the masters. "During the 1950s and 1960s as result of protests against capital punishment the number of executions in America gradually declined. In 1967, there were only two. No executions took place in the United States from 1968 through 1976. In the 1972 case of *Furman v. Georgia*, the Supreme Court declared capital punishment unconstitutional. The court said the death penalty was a violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment."³

This decision reflected the mass mobilization during the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. When the capitalists were afraid of the popular classes, their courts issued legal decisions aimed at calming down the masses. However, in 1976 when the mass movement left the streets the Supreme Court in *Gregg v. Georgia* ruled that execution based on both mitigating and aggravating circumstances, was constitutional. "It declared unconstitutional

North Carolina's and Louisiana's mandatory death sentences. The court said a mandatory sentence was unduly harsh and rigid and made no allowance for the particular circumstances of each case. Executions began again in 1977. In the Georgia case of *McCleskey v. Kemp* (1987) a study, by University of Iowa Professor David Baldus, showed that blacks who had killed whites had been sentenced to die seven times more often than whites who had killed blacks. Even after accounting for other variables, such as the viciousness of the crime, blacks had been sentenced to die more than four times as often as whites. In recent years, about 50 prisoners have been executed each year. More than 3,000 inmates wait on death rows in prisons across America."⁴

But this is only one form of cold blood murder by the imperialist state. Another common form is the police killing, especially of Black people (see Appendix for details).

Pandemic is not pressing pause on the murder of Black people

Police shootings, killing of Black people and Native Americans have not decreased during the COVID-19 epidemic; if at all the police got more power as part of the attacks on civil democratic and social rights. "Fatal shootings by police officers did not appear to ease up even amid the coronavirus pandemic, and Blacks, Latinos and Native Americans continue to be disproportionately affected by deadly police shootings compared to white people, a study released Wednesday by the American Civil Liberties Union found. Such shootings are "so routine that even during a national pandemic, with far fewer people traveling outside of their homes and police departments reducing contact with the public so as not to spread the virus, police have continued to fatally shoot people at the same rate so far in 2020 as they did in the same period from 2015 to 2019," according to the report, which was based on data analysis from the University of Nebraska at Omaha."⁵

The USA has a long history of racism against Black people from the time of slavery, lynching and Jim Crows discrimination. May the imperialist propaganda say that the United States are "the land of the free", this "freedom" was and is based on a history of slavery and a presence of oppression, exploitation and brutal murder of numerous people. Very few events have taken place where oppressed people have gained a victory in their struggle for freedom. "Between 1525 and 1866, 12.5 million people were kidnapped from Africa and sent to the Americas through the transatlantic slave trade. Only 10.7 million survived the harrowing two month journey. Though Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, the decree took two-and-a-half years to fully enact. June 19, 1865 — the day Union Gen. Gordon Granger informed the enslaved individuals of Galveston, Texas, that they were officially free — is now known as Juneteenth."^{6,7}

In 2017, Black unemployment was higher than in 1968, as was the rate of incarcerated individuals who were Black. The wealth gap had also increased, with the median White family having ten times more wealth than the median Black family. This is part of a long history of systematic racism Black people face in all areas of life. "We are re-

segregating our cities and our schools, condemning millions of kids to inferior education and taking away their real possibility of getting out of poverty," said Fred Harris, the last surviving member of the Kerner Commission, following the 2018 study's release.⁸ A study released in 2017, found that in late 1920s Chicago and Cook County, Illinois, that while African Americans constituted just 5 percent of the area's population, they made up 30 percent of the victims of police killings.⁹

However, it is not only the police which is a threat to the lives of our Black brothers and sisters. As it was the case with the racist murder of Ahmaud Arbery last year in Georgia or the killing of the teenager Trayvon Martin in 2012, Black lives are threatened by both police officers and white civilians. This is as well rooted deeply in American history. "More than 4,400 lynchings—mob killings took place in the U.S. between the end of reconstruction and World War II. Between 1918 and the Justice for Victims of Lynching Act's eventual passage, more than 200 anti-lynching bills failed to make it through Congress."¹⁰

It is not surprising that the capitalist class society is providing a racist legal frame that enables violence against Black people and oppressed. False accusations combined with harsher convictions for Black people have always been part of the US legal system. "Between the turn of the 20th century and the 1920s, multiple massacres broke out in response to false allegations that young black men had raped or otherwise assaulted white women. In August 1908, a mob terrorized African American neighborhoods across Springfield, Illinois, vandalizing black-owned businesses, setting fire to the homes of black residents, beating those unable to flee and lynching at least two people. Local authorities, argues historian Roberta Senechal, were "ineffectual at best, complicit at worst."¹¹

No wonder that opposite to the brutal treatment of Black people (likewise other oppressed like Native Americans), White people have been untouched by any legal consequences for their brutal and highly criminal behaviour. "In spring 1921, the Tulsa Race Massacre claimed the lives of an estimated 300 black Tulsans and displaced another 10,000. Mobs burned down at least 1,256 residences, churches, schools and businesses and destroyed almost 40 blocks of Greenwood. As the Sidedoor episode "Confronting the Past" notes, "No one knows how many people died, no one was ever convicted, and no one really talked about it nearly a century later."¹²

COVID-19 in the United States reflects the deep-rooted structural inequities, where Black Americans now account for two times greater a share of deaths from the virus than they do of the population. Black people suffer from higher rates of hypertension, obesity, chronic lung disease, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease as a result of the systemic racialized inequality. Racists claim that this is a question of the genetic structure of Black people, while scientists affiliated with the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities recently observed in a JAMA "Viewpoint"¹³ article, that genetic or biological factors "must be considered in the full context of systemic factors such as historical and ongoing discrimination, and chronic stress and its effect on hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis and immunologic functioning."¹⁴

Furthermore, it is the working class that faces a bigger danger to be infected with Corona. "A report¹⁵ released by the city of New York outlines the demographics of the city's essential workforce. Roughly 75 percent of essential workers are people of color, and black or Hispanic workers represent the majority in

each essential job category outlined in the report. Those disproportionately burdened by COVID-19 are also those who have been mandated to work throughout the crisis, often in public-facing jobs that necessitate travel on crowded public transportation. In this context, many of those whose work is deemed "essential" during this pandemic have realized this means, instead, that they are themselves sacrificial. A second example of how structural racism drives disproportionate death rates in this period can be seen in the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade. Black men, over the life course, have a 1 in 1000 chance of being murdered at the hands of police, and black Americans are incarcerated at five times the rate of whites."^{16,17}

Lockdowns are only here to cover the capitalist crisis

COVID-19 is not the first and will not be the last pandemic. "In the twenty century three influenza pandemics occurred at intervals of several decades, the most severe of which was the so-called "Spanish Flu" (caused by an A(H1N1) virus), estimated to have caused 20–50 million deaths in 1918–1919. Milder pandemics occurred subsequently in 1957–1958 (the "Asian Flu" caused by an A(H2N2) virus) and in 1968 (the "Hong Kong Flu" caused by an A(H3N2) virus), which were estimated to have caused 1–4 million deaths each.¹⁸ These waves of pandemics reflect the decay of the capitalist system. Anyone who study history knows that plagues were associated with the decline of the former class societies.

The Antonine Plague, which may have been smallpox, laid waste to the army and may have killed over 5 million people in the Roman empire at the time of its decline. The black death of the 14th century took place in time of the decline of European feudalism.

In the epoch of decay of capitalism, the stage of imperialism, many pandemics took place. "By early 1958 it was estimated that 'not less than 9 million people in Great Britain had ... Asian influenza during the 1957 epidemic. Of these, more than 5.5 million were attended by their doctors'¹⁹."

However, it is the first time that a pandemic has created such a coordinated attack by capitalist governments all around the world. This is especially remarkable as pandemics in the past have caused far more deaths than COVID. "The CDC estimates that as of May 18 this year approximately ninety thousand Americans have died of COVID-19. Adjusted for population size, that comes out to a mortality rate of 272 per million. This is (so far) less than half the mortality rate for the 1957–58 flu pandemic. In that pandemic, it is estimated that as many as 116,000 Americans died. Yet, the US population was much smaller then, totaling only 175 million. Adjusted for population size, mortality as a result of the "Asian flu" pandemic of 1957–58 was more than 660 per million. That's the equivalent of 220,000 deaths in the United States today... The 1957–58 pandemic was such a rapidly spreading disease that it became quickly apparent to U.S. health officials that efforts to stop or slow its spread were futile. Thus, no efforts were made to quarantine individuals or groups, and a deliberate decision was made not to cancel or postpone large meetings such as conferences, church gatherings, or athletic events for the purpose of reducing transmission. No attempt was made to limit travel or to otherwise screen travelers. Emphasis was placed on providing medical care to those who were afflicted and on sustaining the continued functioning of community and health services...there were no reports that major events were canceled or postponed except for high school and college football games, which were often

delayed because of the number of players afflicted²⁰.

The 1968 pandemic was caused by an influenza A (H3N2) virus comprised of two genes from an Avian Influenza A virus. It was first noted in the United States in September 1968. The estimated number of deaths was 1 million worldwide and about 100,000 in the United States. It is important to note that the world population at that time was about 3.5 billion people (less than half of today) and the US population was also significantly smaller with nearly 200 million people (compared to more than 330 million today). *“From our current perspective, with shelter-in-place rules in much of the country, the most striking thing about the contemporaneous accounts was the absence of any discussion of lockdowns or even social distancing. I saw a few photos of nurses and office workers wearing masks, but that apparently wasn’t mandated either...Even the occasional school closings were one-offs; not a single state ordered that schools or businesses be closed en masse. The virus swept across the world, causing tens of millions of people to become sick — and killing nearly three times the number of people who have died so far of COVID-19 — and the world’s chief mitigation effort was to race to make a vaccine. By the time one was ready, the pandemic had largely fizzled out.”²¹*

These figures raise the question why the capitalist used the lockdown in 1918 but not in 1958 and in 1968. Why is the lockdown used again today? The reason is simple. The years of 1958 and 1968 occurred in the period of the economic boom. Today the capitalist system is in a deep crisis and the capitalists are once again afraid of uprisings like they have been in 1918. We should not forget the biggest fear capitalists had in 1918: The fear of a socialist revolution worldwide following the October revolution in Russia.

Betrayal of the Left against workers and oppressed in general and Black people in particular

Today, instead of fighting for a socialist revolution the centrists move to the right, some of them even disappear completely or run into the arms of the liberal bourgeoisie (see the ISO, ICL and the LRP that all their activities were articles in support of Biden). Their support for the lockdown will push them further to the right, as the concept of lockdowns by the ruling classes is obviously an attack on democratic rights and a gate to enlarge the bonapartist state apparatus.

Joe Biden (coming from the liberal but still imperialist Democratic Party) is known for his support for the police. He helped author the racist 1994 crime bill²², still the reformists and many of the centrists in the USA called to vote for him, using the old reformist argument of the lesser evil. However, he and his party are not the lesser evil, just the more cautious evil. During his election campaign he nevertheless openly said: *“What I support are the police having the opportunity to deal with the problems they face and I’m totally opposed to defunding the police offices.”* Later, he lauded police officers. *“The vast majority of police officers are good, decent, honorable men and women,”* he said. *“They risk their lives every day to take care of us, but there are some bad apples. And when they occur, when they find them, they have to be sorted out. They have to be held accountable.”²³*

Over the summer 2020, there have been widespread calls for cities to defund and even outright abolish the police

departments, resulting in daily protests, riots, and city hall encampments. While the slogan itself is limited by its reformist character it reflected a progressive and widely popular sentiment that is not echoed by Biden. He made it clear that he stands on the opposing side of this progressive movement and wants to give the police even more money and resources.

In a June op-ed for *USA Today*²⁴, Biden wrote the following: *“While I do not believe federal dollars should go to police departments violating people’s rights or turning to violence as the first resort, I do not support defunding police. The better answer is to give police departments the resources they need to implement meaningful reforms, and to condition other federal dollars on completing those reforms. I’ve long been a firm believer in the power of community policing — getting cops out of their cruisers and building relationships with the people and the communities they are there to serve and protect. That’s why I’m proposing an additional \$300 million to reinvigorate community policing in our country. Every single police department should have the money it needs to institute real reforms like adopting a national use of force standard, buying body cameras and recruiting more diverse police officers.”*

Thus, the reformists like the Stalinists and many centrists (fake “Trotskyists”) who called to vote for Biden are standing behind the capitalists against the workers and the oppressed. At the same time many of them support the lockdown even when they understand that the capitalist policy of the lockdown serves the capitalist attacks on the democratic and social gains of the working class and the oppressed. For them the model to implement is the one that exists in the right-wing totalitarian regimes like China. Even the Wall Street Journal observed: *“The oddity is that the left in most of the world has been so intensely critical of Sweden’s experiment. If this model works, it would hold out some hope that the coronavirus could be managed without putting millions of members of the left’s own blue-collar base out of work. Yet the prevailing attitude is less “let them try” and more “excommunicate the heretics.”²⁵*

The IMT of Allan Woods says: *“All non-essential production should be immediately brought to a halt.”²⁶*

The ISA says: *“The failure to arrange a proper early response leads to the danger that later more extreme measures to deal with the outbreak need to be introduced, as is already seen in Italy with the local lock-downs and restrictions on the right to strike.”²⁷*

Socialist Action says: *“The countries that have successfully suppressed the virus to one extent or another, ranging through Australia, China, South Korea, New Zealand, Thailand and Vietnam all took similar measures of strong lockdowns (including travel bans), closed schools and non-essential workplaces, and have effective testing, tracing and isolation regimes. They learnt the lessons of China’s containment of the virus largely to Hubei province²⁸.”*

The Socialist Equality Party says: *“The Socialist Equality Party must act upon the revolutionary implications of the present crisis. Opposition to the policies of the ruling class is growing. Even as the pandemic rages out of control, the Trump administration, with the backing of the Democratic Party, is demanding a reopening of the schools in the fall, risking the lives of hundreds of thousands of teachers and students.”²⁹*

Solidarity says: *“Why is it that a few months later there is a bipartisan consensus in opposition to another round of lockdowns when we know that it would drastically slow the trans-*

mission and death rates?³⁰

This is the same policy of the Stalinists and centrists in Britain (The *Morning Star*, Cliffite SWP/IST, "Red Flag"-the British section of the L5I, the "League for the 5th International"). As the RCIT has observed, those centrists praise models for a lockdown strategy from countries mostly ruled by right-wing governments or countries with a strong tradition of authoritarian regimes. The "Zero-COVID" campaign even argues openly: "There is a simple alternative to this chaotic policy of 'living with the virus', with its on-off lockdowns, ineffectual testing programme and constant economic insecurity. The alternative is the strategy currently in place in Australia, China, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam, who have almost entirely eliminated the virus and whose citizens enjoy life without the need for draconian lockdown restrictions. This means full lockdown and safe working conditions in essential workplaces until community transmission is near to zero, then suppression of small outbreaks via local public sector. Find, Test, Trace, Isolate and Support, and 100% protection of livelihoods."³¹

Never stop the revolutionary struggle

We in the RCIT have pointed out time and time again that there were other pandemics which have never resulted in mass curfews and total surveillance for the total population like the severe influenza waves in 1957-58, or HIV/AIDS in the 1970s. The capitalist tactic of creating panic is motivated by the deep economic crisis and the counter revolutionary strategy to cover the true cause for the crisis.

That fact is that the lockdown restrictions have long-term and devastating consequences for the society – isolation and atomizing of people with devastating consequences for mental health, massive setbacks for education of future generations, destructive effects for popular culture, and violence against women.

COVID-19 must be taken seriously. But it is not such a danger which justifies mass curfews and endless lockdowns! What is needed is the expansion of the public health sector, improvement of the conditions in the care sector for old and disabled people and comprehensive safety measures in the society under control of workers and popular organizations so that they cannot be misused by those in power.

The centrist argument is likely to denounce opposition to lockdown as something only right-wing activists and businessmen demand in order to open the capitalist economy. Yet their argument supports the attacks on the democratic and social gains of the workers and the oppressed, falls into complete oblivion of the class reality that is not paused during lockdowns and forces the masses into complete passivity. If nothing else, then at least the ongoing killing of our Black brothers and sisters should be reason enough to put down the rose-colored glasses of a lockdown utopia in which only reformists and centrists can see a ceasefire in class struggle.

* Down with the reactionary policy of lockdowns! Those are only attacks to decrease democratic freedoms and criminalize social behavior!

* Expansion of the public health sector and improvement of the general living standard! Such measures are numerous times more effective than any lockdown can be!

* Safety and hygiene measures must all be implemented under

control of workers and popular organizations! Special attention must be brought to the health of our Black brothers and sisters who face numerous threats on their well-being!

* Organize self-defense unites under the control of workers and oppressed! Black people and all other oppressed face numerous threats on their lives beyond the pandemic. It is urgent to unite all workers and oppressed in order to fight back effectively against racist attacks be it by police forces, far-right organizations or individuals!

* Build a workers' party in the USA! Revolutionaries have to fight for a socialist revolutionary program!

Appendix

According to a report in BBC,³² since 2014 the following black people were murdered by the police:

17 July 2014: Eric Garner. He was wrestled to the ground by a New York police officer on suspicion of illegally selling cigarettes. While in a choke hold, Mr Garner uttered the words "I can't breathe" 11 times. The incident - filmed by a bystander - led to protests across the country. The police officer involved was later fired, but was never prosecuted.

9 August 2014: Michael Brown, 18 years old was killed by a police officer, in Ferguson, Missouri, who - had stolen a box of cigars. The officer involved later resigned from the police, but was not prosecuted. The incident led to waves of protests and civil unrest in Ferguson, boosting the Black Lives Matter movement.

22 November 2014: Tamir Rice, a boy of 12, was shot dead in Cleveland, The police claimed he was pointing a gun at them. The police confirmed that the gun was a toy after Rice had been shot dead. There were no prosecutions after this case. The police officer involved was sacked three years later for lying on his job application form

4 April 2015: Walter Scott was shot in the back five times by a white police officer, who was later fired and eventually [sentenced to 20 years in prison](#). Scott had been pulled over for having a defective light on his car in North Charleston, South Carolina, and ran away from the police. The killing sparked protests in North Charleston, with chants of "No justice, no peace".

5 July 2016: Alton Sterling from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He was killed after police responded to reports of a disturbance outside a shop.

6 July 2016: Philando Castile who was killed while out driving with his girlfriend in St Paul, Minnesota He was pulled over by the police during a routine check, and told them he was licensed to carry a weapon, and had one in his possession.

He was shot as he was reaching for his license, The officer involved was cleared of murder charges.

18 March 2018: Stephon Clark was shot at least seven times in Sacramento, California, by police who were investigating a break-in. The district attorney said that the police had not committed a crime, as the officers said they feared for their lives believing Clark was armed. Only a mobile phone was found at the scene. The release of a police video of the incident sparked major protests in the city.

13 March 2020: Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old emergency medical technician was shot eight times when officers raided her apartment in Louisville, Kentucky. The police were executing a search warrant as part of a drugs raid, but no drugs were found. Louisville police said they returned fire after one officer was shot and wounded in the incident. Of the three officers who discharged their weapons, one has been dismissed from the force and the other two put on administrative duties.

25 May 2020: George Floyd who died after being arrested in

Minneapolis, and held down by police officers, one of whom had his knee on Floyd's neck.

He pleaded that he couldn't breathe. Protests broke out in cities across the US, and there were demonstrations in other parts of the world.

May 27 2020 McDade. According to the Tallahassee Police Department, McDade, a trans man, was approached by police as a suspect in a stabbing that had taken place earlier in the day on May 27. Police Chief Lawrence Revelle reported that "the suspect was in possession of a handgun, and a bloody knife was found at the scene." Yet Facebook videos taken by witnesses at the Leon Arms apartment complex appear to dispute this."

Footnotes

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Publications of the RCIT

The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution

On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspectives of the workers and popular resistance

By Michael Pröbsting, July 2020

Introduction * The localized version of Lockdown policy is spreading * New information concerning severity (or not so severity) of the pandemic * Telling figures for Europe, Sweden and Ischgl * The worst pandemic in Africa? Really? * Capitalism and care homes as deadly traps for old people * The real nature of the ruling class bonapartist offensive under the cover of COVID-19 * Why is the ruling class opting for a local lockdown strategy? * Excuse: A crisis characteristic for the present period of capitalist decay * The nature and inner contradictions of the local lockdown strategy * Preparing for a new counter-revolutionary offensive * The Lockdown Left: a never ending embarrassment * The shameful example of the PSTU/LIT-CI * The imperialist aristocratism of the Lockdown Left * Building a Revolutionary World Party * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format

COVID-19: Some Interesting Facts (Which Governments & Media Conceal) Some Calculations about Total Mortality in Europe in 2020 compared with 2016 and 2018

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 23.12.2020

Sometimes one feels like a Statistic Sherlock Holmes. I think I am not exaggerating in saying that I have some experience in dealing with statistics. I have written a number of books and academic essays with a focus on economic issues and in this context I often use official statistics which are available by the relevant institutions. However, I can say that it never was so challenging to find the relevant statistics for mortality for various European countries resp. for Europe as a whole for the year 2020 resp. the years before.

Usually these statistics are hidden or obscured. For example it is nearly impossible to find simple facts like how many people died in total in a given period and how many died in the same period in the past years and decades. One can find figures for extra mortality but not the total mortality. One can find figures comparing mortality this year with the years before ... but these are not concrete figures but obscure "Z points", "P points", etc. reflecting which development the respective institutions "expected" and which development actually happened. One can find data for this and that week but not for a longer period. It is as if the official authorities would view such data as state secrets. In German we have a sarcastic saying for this: "*Ein Schelm, wer Böses dabei denkt.*" (Shamed be he who thinks evil of it.)

Seriously, it is no accident that one can never hear such data in the public discussion about the COVID-19 pandemic. The governments and the media want to create the impression that Armageddon is close, that so many people are dying, etc. – so that we accept being put under curfew with massive restrictions for our freedom of movement, at least until we get the redeeming vaccination (provided by big drug monopolies having good connections with governments) and until we accept total surveillance (apps on our mobile for tracking our movements around the clock).

Why is it so important to find figures about the development of total mortality? It is important because it reflects the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. If the pandemic would be very severe and devastating, this would result in qualitatively higher figures of total mortality than this has been the case in the past years and decades. On the other hand, if total mortality is not much higher it reflects that the pandemic is not as dangerous as bourgeois governments and media claim in order to justify their anti-democratic Lockdown policy.

As readers of our publications will be aware the RCIT has argued from the very beginning of this crisis in February 2020 that while this is a serious pandemic, it is neither devastating nor unprecedented. ¹ Using a number of official figures we demonstrated that the claim of bourgeois governments and their supporters among the Lockdown Left about the supposedly "unprecedented and highly dangerous COVID-19 pandemic" is simply a propaganda lie. It shall provide ideological legitimation for what we

call the *COVID-19 Counterrevolution*, i.e. a vast expansion of the police and surveillance state and massive profits for capitalist monopolies and, at the same time, impoverishment and draconic anti-democratic restrictions for the popular masses.

On the figures available and some words of caution

As the year is coming to its end, we are now more and more in a position to compare the development of mortality of the year 2020, i.e. the COVID-19 year, with past years. In the last weeks we have published two articles on this issue based on official figures of the Swedish authorities. We did show that Sweden had a mortality rate in the first ten months of this year which is barely higher than it was in the last years. (Mortality per capita from January to October 2020 was +1% higher than in 2018.) ²

This is particularly remarkable because Sweden is one of the few countries in the world which has neither imposed any lockdown nor mandatory mask-wearing – for which it has been unison denounced by the capitalist governments as well as by the bourgeoisified Lockdown Left.

Anyway, we are now in a position to provide the figures for the development of total mortality in Europe for the first 40 weeks in 2020 as well as the figures for the four years before. This is the period for which the latest publicly available data from *Eurostat*, the official statistical institution of the European Union, exist. These figures comprise 26 EU countries (except Ireland), the EFTA countries plus United Kingdom.

Before doing this we need to add a few words of caution.

1) First we can only present the development of mortality (and compare them) in absolute figures but not in per capita figures. For doing this we would need to have the exact figures for the population development of these 31 countries. What we know in general is that Europe's population has slightly grown in the past years from 444.8 million (2016) to 447.7 million (2020), i.e. a plus of 0.65%. (See Table 1)

2) As we said above, the latest figures available cover the first 40 weeks of the year, i.e. we don't have the complete data for the last 12 months. As we are currently facing a "second wave" of the Corona Virus we can expect that the total figures for mortality for the whole year 2020 will go up to a certain degree.

Excess death caused by other causes than COVID-19

3) As we already pointed out somewhere else, calculating total mortality has its advantages as well as disadvantages. The big advantage is that it puts the figures of COVID-19 death in relation to total mortality instead of presenting absolute figures which might look big but look much less impressive when viewed in relation to death caused

by other factors. Furthermore, it is well known that most people who die because of COVID-19 are old people or people with a history of a disease. Hence we have seen this year that people have died because of COVID-19 who, most likely, would have died otherwise by another disease. This becomes evident if we take e.g. Sweden where a disproportional high number of people died in spring (because of COVID-19) but a disproportional low number of people died in summer. ⁴ So for such reasons it is useful to take the figures for total mortality.

However, there is also a disadvantage with such a method. A number of people die not because of COVID-19 but because of the dramatic consequences of the Lockdown policy. People with a disease die because they can not go to hospital (or are afraid of it), can not receive regular treatment, are neglected in care homes, etc. It is very difficult to get a full overview how many people are victims of the Lockdown policy. However, we have one figure which demonstrates that we are talking about a highly significant issue.

As is known the official figure for COVID-19 death in England and Wales is currently about 62,000. What is much less known is that, according to official figures of the ONS, a total of 30,785 *extra* deaths *not* linked to Covid-19 were registered between March 7 and November 13 in care homes in England and Wales. This means more than 30,000 – half the number of the total COVID-19 deaths! – died more than usually die within this period in care homes for *other* reasons than the virus. The causes of these deaths are mostly heart disease and prostate cancer (for men) resp. dementia and Alzheimer's disease as well as breast cancer (for women). ⁵ It is pretty clear that these excess deaths have been caused by the Lockdown policy and the neglect (or lack of resources because of the capitalist austerity policy in the health and care sector) to treat other diseases than COVID.

So while we still consider the figures for total mortality as the best approximation to understand the severity of the pandemic we should be aware that the numbers of death are very likely to be lower without a Lockdown policy

Table 1: Population of EU-27 (2016, 2018 and 2020) ³

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>
2016	444,802,830
2018	446,098,424
2020	447,706,209

Table 2. Weekly Deaths in 31 European Countries, 2016, 2018 and 2020 ⁷

<i>Week \ Years</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>Week \ Years</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2020</i>
1	112327	120875	111499	24	90999	90924	95059
2	108593	121078	117144	25	97173	91895	93781
3	109761	120711	114839	26	92186	92716	96923
4	109521	118083	112400	27	91698	94404	96874
5	107619	118106	114751	28	92814	92850	93715
6	108139	118207	111122	29	93826	94345	93647
7	105627	120409	111708	30	92833	97160	95764
8	106356	122865	108144	31	90502	102639	100828
9	107650	127745	109262	32	89439	99218	99131
10	106609	131179	110698	33	91735	92408	104075
11	107027	122675	115902	34	93971	92608	98735
12	104200	116098	125238	35	89920	89425	95930
13	105692	111039	137187	36	91401	92637	94078
14	104256	108998	147557	37	90750	92187	98636
15	101109	107621	143048	38	89111	94176	100445
16	97668	102392	135143	39	93325	92689	98500
17	96915	98135	123856	40	94467	97438	102306
18	96393	95780	112509				
19	97949	93681	104586	<i>Total</i>	<i>3,932,522</i>	<i>4,152,493</i>	
20	94683	94010	103505				<i>4,320,306</i>
21	95053	94931	100029				<i>Growth from 2016 to 2018: +5.59%</i>
22	91563	94287	94640				<i>Growth from 2018 to 2020: +4.04%</i>
23	91662	93869	97112				

and with an expansion of the health and care sector (more personal, better wages, more ICU's, etc.). This is, we note in passing, another confirmation of the Marxist position against the capitalist Lockdown policy which the RCIT – in contrast to the shamefully Lockdown Left – has been advocating since the beginning of the crisis.

A rise of mortality in 2020 but neither dramatically nor unprecedented

Having said all this let us move now towards the actual figures for mortality in Europe. Below we reproduce the official figures of Eurostat which report the weekly death in 31 European countries in the first 40 weeks of 2020. (See Table 2) The results are highly interesting!⁶

According to these figures a total of 4,320,306 people have died in 31 European countries in the first 40 weeks of 2020. In 2018, 4,152,493 people died in the same period and in 2016 it was 3,932,522 people.

This means that in the first 40 weeks of 2020 – the COVID-19 year – +4.04% more people died than two years before.

Let us note – as we made similar calculations for Sweden some weeks ago – that total mortality in this country increased in January-October 2020, compared to the same period in 2018, by +3.3%.

It also means that in 2018 +5.59% more people died than two years before.

As we noted above we can expect, on one hand, that the growth of death in 2020 will be higher to a certain degree since the actual Eurostat figures do not cover the developments in the last weeks which saw an increase of COVID-19 caused mortality. On the other hand, mortality per capita might be slightly lower because of the growth of the population.

Nevertheless we can draw several important conclusions.

1) There has been an increase of total mortality in 2020. However this growth is not dramatic. All the public hysteria which governments have created lacks any factual base.

2) This is even more true when we take into account that such increase of death figures is nothing exceptional or unprecedented. As we have demonstrated, the increase of mortality from 2016 to 2018 (a year where COVID-19 or any other pandemic did not exist in Europe) has been even higher than the growth in the COVID year compared with two years before! In other words, the myth of "*the unprecedented year of death*" crumbles before our very eyes!

3) The increase of death figures in Europe in 2020 (compared to 2018) is higher than the same figures for Sweden – the country which had neither lockdown nor any other enforcement measures! Readers will remember that Sweden's response to the COVID-19 pandemic is denounced by all governments and media in Europe and usually called a failure.

In conclusion, the latest data from the statistical office of the European Union strongly confirm the Marxist analysis of COVID-19 as a serious pandemic but neither very dangerous nor unprecedented. Naturally, we don't expect the governments to correct their course because of such facts. Their policy has never been driven by facts nor concern for public health but solely by thirst for more power and profits.

However, we hope that progressive activists who lend trust to the official propaganda of bourgeois governments and media will reconsider their position and break with any social-bonapartist support for the COVID-19 Counter-revolution. In any case, there are already substantial sectors of the working class and the oppressed who mistrust the official propaganda and who increasingly despise the draconic Lockdown policy. This is the camp of which Marxists are part of and it is our tasks to combine such justified hatred against the ruling class with a scientific socialist analysis and program!

Footnotes

1 The RCIT has analyzed the COVID-19 counterrevolution extensively since its beginning. Starting from 2 February we have published more than 60 pamphlets, essays, articles and statements plus a book which are all compiled at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>. In particular we refer readers to the RCIT Manifesto: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counterrevolutionary Offensive. We are at a turning point in the world situation as the ruling classes provoke a war-like atmosphere in order to legitimize the build-up of chauvinist state-bonapartist regimes, 21 March 2020, <https://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-a-cover-for-a-major-global-counterrevolutionary-offensive/>. In addition, we draw attention to our book by Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecomunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>. See also our very first article on this issue by Almedina Gunić: Coronavirus: "I am not a Virus"... but WE will be the Cure! The chauvinist campaign behind the "Wuhan Coronavirus" hysteria and the revolutionary answer, 2 February 2020, <https://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/global/wuhan-virus/>; Michael Pröbsting: The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution. On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspectives of the workers and popular resistance, 20 July 2020, <https://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/global/the-second-wave-of-the-covid-19-counterrevolution/>; by the same author: The Police and Surveillance State in the Post-Lockdown Phase. A global review of the ruling class's plans of expanding the bonapartist state machinery amidst the COVID-19 crisis, 21 May 2020, <https://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/global/police-and-surveillance-state-in-post-lockdown-phase/>; COVID-19: The Great Barrington Declaration is indeed Great! Numerous medical scientists protest against the reactionary lockdown policy, 11 October 2020, <https://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-the-great-barrington-declaration-is-indeed-great/>.

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4 See the relevant figures in our above-mentioned articles on mortality in Sweden.

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6 Eurostat: Weekly death statistics, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Weekly_death_statistics&stable#Number_of_deaths_higher_than_in_previous_years (accessed on 22.12.2020)

7 The source is Eurostat as indicated in the previous footnote. The weekly data are from the Excel table which can be downloaded at this link. The calculations for the total of the weekly data as well as the figures for growth are our own.

COVID-19: Zero Socialism in the “ZeroCOVID” campaign

Following the model of China and Australia, some British Stalinists and “Trotskyists” call for a “total and indefinite lockdown”

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 22.12.2020

Sometimes you think it can't get worse. But then you find out, it can. This is how I felt when I came across the so-called “ZeroCOVID” campaign which has been launched by some “left-wing” organizations in Britain.

This supposedly progressive campaign criticizes the Johnson government for inconsistently imposing draconic Lockdowns. Naturally, this government is indeed a reactionary and incompetent bunch of fools. However, the organizers of this campaign do not focus their criticism on the anti-democratic Lockdown policy and the never-ending austerity policy in the public health sector. Instead they demand more and longer lockdowns! “A full UK-wide lockdown until new cases in the community have been reduced close to zero”.

“Lock the people up!”

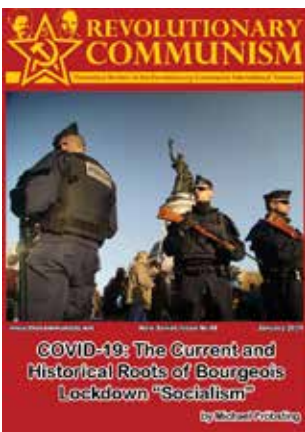
At least this campaign has the advantage that it openly states which regimes are its model. The organizers declare that their models for a Lockdown strategy are countries mostly ruled by dictatorships resp. right-wing governments or countries with a strong tradition of authoritarian regimes. “There is a simple alternative to this chaotic policy of ‘living with the virus’, with its on-off lockdowns, ineffectual testing programme and constant economic insecurity. The alternative is the strategy currently in place in Australia, China, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam, who have almost entirely eliminated the virus and whose citi-

zens enjoy life without the need for draconian lockdown restrictions. This means full lockdown and safe working conditions in essential workplaces until community transmission is near to zero, then suppression of small outbreaks via local public sector Find, Test, Trace, Isolate and Support, and 100% protection of livelihoods.”¹

It is telling that this campaign is supported by various Stalinists and pseudo-Trotskyists.² The *Morning Star* – a friend of China's Stalinist-capitalist regime – is praising the “ZeroCOVID” campaign as well as the Cliffite SWP/IST and “Red Flag” (the British section of the L5I).³ In fact, these forces – like many other so-called “socialists” – have supported the reactionary Lockdown policy since long.

The SWP has repeatedly called for a “full and indefinite lockdown” (of course except for the “essential workers” who should continue delivering things to the middle class at their homes!). “The Tories could have begun the necessary full lockdown of schools and non-essential workplaces over half term. But they squandered the chance. There has to be a full lockdown combined with a furlough scheme that pays 100 percent of the wages of workers who are laid off. And it must be indefinite, not just for a month.”⁴

And another ex-Trotskyist group – the “League for the 5th International” – not only fully supports the Lockdown policy but even calls the capitalist police to enforce it as energetically as possible! “Cops need to enforce laws that actually do protect the population from morons who think that their “right” to infect the rest of us is sacrosanct.”⁵



Publications of the RCIT

COVID-19: The Current and Historical Roots of Bourgeois Lockdown “Socialism”

Police State, Universal Basic Income & a new version of “War Socialism” of 1914

By Michael Pröbsting, January 2021

Introduction * 1. An Overview of the Policy of the Lockdown Left * 2. A Marxist Critique of Lockdownism and Universal Basic Income * 3. The Bourgeois Ideology of the “Caring State” (The Capitalist Handout State) * 4. The Objective Basis for Lockdown Socialism: Changes within the Political and Economic Physiognomy of Capitalism * 5. A Historical Analogy: The Mobilization of the Imperialist State for World War I * 6. War Socialism in 1914: The Social-Chauvinist Lensch-Cunow-Haenisch Group in German Social Democracy * 7. Lenin and other Marxists Declare War on War Socialism * 8. The Lockdown Left: A Worthy Successor of Social-Chauvinist War Socialists * 9. Once Again, the State Question: Marxism versus the Opportunist Left

A RCIT Pamphlet, 32 pages, A4 Format

In other words, the SWP, L5I and others preach the reactionary police state methods – “successfully” deployed in China, Vietnam, Australia, etc. – of atomizing and isolating the popular masses. This is Lockdown “Socialism” in its purest – and worst – form, based on the principle “*Lock the people up!*” It is an arch-reactionary policy based on wrong presumptions and wrong methods!

The real nature of the pandemic

First, as the RCIT and others have demonstrated repeatedly, the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic is dramatically and consciously exaggerated. ⁶ In most European countries, total mortality in the first ten months of 2020 is barely higher than it has been in past years. Sweden, a country which has not imposed any lockdown or any other enforcement measures until now, has a mortality rate per capita of +1.0% percent in January – October 2020 compared to the same period in 2018! Similar figures exist for Germany and Austria. Probably the figures will now go up a bit as the virus has spread more in the last months. ⁷

But, as we explained in our works, this is hardly an unprecedented catastrophe by any reasonable standards. Bear in mind that certain ups and downs in annual total mortality are nothing untypical. And bear in mind that humanity has experienced various other pandemics and diseases which had often far worse consequences and which have never resulted in mass curfews and total surveillance for the total population – e.g. the severe influenza waves in 1957-58, in 1968, HIV/AIDS, etc., not to speak about the mortality resulting from consuming alcohol or nicotine! In addition, it should be clear to everyone that the dramatic restrictions have long-term and devastating consequences for the society – isolation and atomizing of people with devastating consequences for mental health, massive setbacks for education of future generations, destructive effects for popular culture, etc.

Yes, COVID-19 is a pandemic which must be taken seriously. But it is not such a danger which could in any way justify mass curfews for the people and Lockdowns without end! It rather necessitates the expansion of the public health sector (more personal, better wages, more ICU’s, etc.), improvement of the conditions in the care sector for old and disabled people (who suffer most from the virus) and comprehensive safety measures in the society (free masks, free tests, etc.) All these measures must be under control of workers and popular organizations so that they can not be misused by those in power.

Police state “socialism” which only serves power and profit!

In contrast, the reactionary policy of nearly all capitalist governments has very different goals. Lockdowns, restrictions of democratic rights, compulsory vaccination, compulsory tests and comprehensive surveillance of the population – this is the policy which the ruling class all over the world wants to enforce by any means necessary. Such a policy does not serve the interests of public health – it only serves power and profit!

a) It is a pretext to expand the police and surveillance state and to isolate and atomize the popular masses (so that they can not resist the social and economic attacks in

times of the worst capitalist crisis since a century).

b) It serves the business interests of drug corporations to give people vaccinations which have not been properly tested (as this takes years in order to find out long-term effects). Likewise, lockdown and surveillance policy serves the business interests of online retail and high-tech corporations (Amazon, Google, Bill Gates, etc.) which have already dramatically increased their profits since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis.

It is shameful as well as telling that there are police state “socialists” who see China and Australia as a model. At least, this helps to clarify that such a Lockdown Left is on the side of the capitalist class enemy – the bonapartist state and its monopolies – and not on the side of the workers and oppressed. ⁸ Everything bad has its good side.

Footnotes

1 ZERO COVID: The campaign to beat the pandemic, Model Motion, <https://zerocovid.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ZC-Model-Motion-v2.docx>

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4 Charlie Kimber: Panicked Tories announce lockdown - but it is too little, too late, 31 Oct 2020, Socialist Worker No. 2729, <https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/50849/Panicked+Tories+announce+lockdown+++but+it+is+too+little%2C+too+late>

5 Marcus Otono: Coronavirus - The Looming Economic Emergency, Workers Power (L5I Section in the USA), <https://www.workerspower.net/us-politics/coronavirus-the-loomi->

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6 The RCIT has published more than 60 documents on the COVID-19 crisis – including one book and several pamphlets. They are all compiled at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>. In particular we refer readers to the RCIT Manifesto: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counterrevolutionary Offensive. We are at a turning point in the world situation as the ruling classes provoke a war-like atmosphere in order to legitimize the build-up of chauvinist state-bonapartist regimes, 21 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-a-cover-for-a-major-global-counterrevolutionary-offensive/>. In addition, we draw attention to our book by Michael Pröbsting: *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It*. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>. See also by the same author: *How the Ruling Class Prepared for COVID-19*. A number of events before and after the beginning of the pandemic demonstrate the political nature of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution, 3 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/how-the-ruling-class-prepared-for-covid-19/>; *The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution*. On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspec-

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7 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: *COVID-19: How Severe is the Pandemic in Sweden Really?* Once again, a comparison demonstrates that the mortality rate in 2020 is barely larger than in 2018, 8 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-how-severe-is-the-pandemic-in-sweden-really/>; by the same author: *COVID-19: Revealing Figures from Sweden*. A comparison of the mortality rates of the first 9 months in 2020 with previous years confirm that this is a serious but not unprecedented pandemic, 23 November 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-revealing-figures-from-sweden/>

8 See on this also our new pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting: *COVID-19: The Current and Historical Roots of Bourgeois Lockdown "Socialism"*. Police State and Universal Basic Income are key elements of the new version of reformist "War Socialism" of 1914, 19 December 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/covid-19-the-current-and-historical-roots-of-bourgeois-lockdown-socialism/>

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: *The Great Robbery of the South* Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH*. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital*. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is *Michael Pröbsting* who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

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has such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

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