

## SOCIAL CONTROL AND REPRESSION

The crisis of overproduction forces a drastic reduction in the living and working conditions of the world working class, and an increase in the industrial reserve army. Between the months of April and June, the ILO itself foresees the destruction of 195 million jobs:

**"ILO: the virus will eliminate 195 million jobs worldwide. (...) Strict or partial quarantine measures currently affect 2.7 billion workers, representing 81% of the world workforce. (...) By regions, the greatest reductions in working hours have been registered in Arabian countries, with an 8.1% that equals to five million full-time workers. In Europe, 7.8% of working hours will be lost, representing twelve million employees. In Asia-Pacific, the most populated area in the world, 7.2% of working hours will be lost. In other words, 125 million full-time workers will lose their jobs."** (Expansion, 08-04-2020).

In fact, there will be many more jobs destroyed and workers who will lose their jobs due to part-time hiring.

In anticipation of the clashes (even spontaneous) that will occur in reaction to these reductions, as well as for the preparation of the militarization necessary for the third world war, worldwide bourgeoisie has implemented a series of control measures that were prepared even before Covid-19 came on stage and that this bourgeoisie now intends to legitimize with the excuse of preventing the spread of the virus.

The first and most obvious measures have been the restrictions of movement, the massive house arrest of the population at their homes, the curfew imposition, the imposition of specific time slots to go outside, and the deployment of the police and the army in the streets to make sure that all these measures are fulfilled.

Through technological development, the bourgeoisie controls, and is controlling, the movement of the population through mobile phones and the data collected by telephone companies or through Internet search engines, such as Google: *"The governments of all over the world are looking for how to use big data (...) Google, on the other hand, only has to use the data it already has from billions of users of its maps to know, as published yesterday, what is the degree of mobility of citizens of 131 countries and their regions (...)"* (La Vanguardia, 04-04-2020).

The pandemic fits the bourgeoisie and its states like a glove to eliminate without difficulty all the previous criticism about the use of data for population control.:

*"Telefónica and seven other telecommunications operators will provide the location data of their mobile phone users to the European Commission to facilitate monitoring of the spread of the coronavirus. (...) In fact, in Austria, Italy or the United Kingdom statistical studies are already being carried out based on mobile phone data, not without some controversy. Last week in Italy, it became known, for example, that 40% of Lombardy citizens (...) continued to move regularly despite the confinement decree, information obtained through the geolocation of their mobiles."* (La Vanguardia, 27-03-2020).

In the Spanish state: *"The Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE) [Official State Gazette] published yesterday an order from the Ministry of Health for the State Secretariat for Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence to entrust the INE [Statistics National Institute] with a study of the mobility of citizens before and during the state of alarm that will be based on the geolocation data of mobile phones available from telecommunications operators"*. (La Vanguardia, 30-03-2020).

With the pretext of preventing the spread of the virus, the figure of the so-called *tracer* has been created. This "medical police" has been established worldwide and is dedicated to interrogate the supposedly infected people and obtaining information from them about where they have been, who they have seen, etc. and from there call all the contacts and continue with the interrogations. In this way, on the one hand, "snitching" and "denunciation" are normalized and, on the other, a facelift is made to these "medical police". It is no coincidence that several countries have trained the military to carry out this task.

**"Belgium.** *The Belgian government has announced that it will hire 2,000 people to work in call centers tasked with investigating suspected cases of coronavirus. (...)*

**U.S.** *There are estimates that raise to 300,000 the people needed to comply with a minimally effective tracing. (...) In North Dakota, for example, authorities are recruiting medical personnel from the reserve, seniors and military personnel to turn them into a legion of tracers. (...) San Francisco has also launched a pilot program with 250 tracers, while Massachusetts (...) will hire about 1.000. (...)*

**In Ireland.** *The Army trains its youngest personnel to carry out follow-up tasks and phone calls to possible contacts of an infected person. (...) The tracers include Cadets from the Defense Force and so far, more than 60,000 personal contacts have been made.*

**Germany.** *(...) Angela Merkel's government has concluded that it needs a team of five people for every 25,000 inhabitants, and has announced the creation of 105 mobile teams financed by the Ministry of Health.*

**UK.** *The government plans to hire 18,000 contact tracers and aims to convince more than half the population to download and use a new Covid-19 app. (...)*

**France.** *Mobile teams will be used to trace the contacts of people infected with coronavirus, but they have not specified how many contact tracers the country currently has. (...) A contact tracing application is also running to combat the coronavirus outbreak. The planned smartphone app would warn users if they come into contact with someone infected with the coronavirus, The Telegraph reports.*

**South Korea.** *In South Korea, where daily new case totals have been mostly lower than the day before since late February, authorities have rigorously traced individual's movements after testing positive. They have done this through interviews, GPS phone tracing, credit card records, and surveillance camera footage. Once possible virus carriers are identified, they are tested.*

*Anonymous data showing patient movements are also posted online, allowing others to identify whether they may have come into contact with an infected person. (...)*

**Singapore and Hong Kong** *have also advocated testing and contact tracing, and have had relatively low death rates so far. The World Health Organization says it should be the "backbone of the answer" in all countries.* (El diario.es, 04-05-2020).

In the Spanish state, *"The Ministry of Defense will train tracers to control possible outbreaks of the coronavirus in the field of the Armed Forces and collaborate with the administrations that may request their support."* (El País, 25-07-2020).

If this were not enough, applications for mobile phones have been created in order to directly and individually control all the

contacts and the movements that are made and that also encourage denunciation through the application. As examples we can find the monitoring and control applications that have been launched in Germany this June, those that are being tested in the Spanish state, those that the Russian state in Moscow has been using which granted permission to go out to the streets by means of the application, or the applications that have been made of mandatory use for mobility and access to public establishments in China.

Under the pretext of the pandemic, the world bourgeoisie has taken the opportunity to take the armies out onto the streets to clean their image, on the one hand, and to better control the social situation on the other.

The bourgeoisie makes use of technological advances to improve direct police control of the population by means of police robots, facial recognition cameras and computers that can detect whether somebody is lying, etc. All these technologies had already been developed and were being implemented for years and now they are suddenly legitimized with the excuse of transmission control:

*"China has a new police robot that patrols train stations and identifies criminals. (...) It informs the closest agents when it identifies the face of a person in the criminal records (...)." (EuropaPress, 21-02-2017).*

The Chinese bourgeoisie was among the first to fill streets and buildings with facial recognition cameras, reaching more than 300 million of this type of cameras. The bourgeoisies of other countries have not spared criticism about the use that the Chinese bourgeoisie made of these cameras... until they themselves have been able to implement it in their own countries:

*"The London Metropolitan Police (Scotland Yard) announced this Friday that it will begin to use the controversial live facial recognition (LFR) camera system to identify criminals in the city streets within a month. (...)." (El País, 24-01-2020).*

*"The Ifema fairgrounds, one of the busiest places in Madrid, where four million people pass through in a year, is installing facial recognition cameras. It is the latest addition to a growing list of buildings in the capital and its surroundings that already have smart cameras capable of identifying people by comparing the image on the camera with the ones included in a database." (El País, 27-11-2019).*

Last year the existence of a lie detector that uses artificial intelligence was published: *"A machine that asks questions to travelers and controls their micro-expressions to determine their sincerity is being tested. (...) It records the responses by analyzing information such as their facial expressions, tone of voice and verbal responses, and look for "signs of deception" such as involuntary micro-expressions that trying to deceive could provoke. The machine then makes a decision about the honesty of the interviewee, categorizing him as green, yellow or red. At a border control, those classified as green could go ahead and everyone else would be questioned by a human guard." (Expansion, 11-08-2019).*

In addition to all this, the bourgeoisie is fully aware of the need to recruit an army among the working class that can launch against the working class itself whenever it needs it, this is the true character of the so-called "civic agents" that the governments of various countries are recruiting:

*"(...) The [Italian] Executive has announced the recruitment of 60.000 volunteers who will watch over the streets throughout the country for compliance with safety and social distancing regulations. (...) This week the Government wants to publish the announcement for recruitment, which will be aimed especially at people without work who are receiving the citizen income that*

*the 5 Star Movement (M5S) implemented as a flagship measure. That part of the population that is receiving the mentioned subsidy will be forced to accept this "voluntary" work (...) each civic assistant will have to control 1,000 citizens." (El País, 26-05-2020).*

*"Yesterday, the Turkish Parliament approved a law that expands the prerogatives of the bekçi, a neighborhood and market watchmen squad whose functions were until now similar to those of the "serenos" [old Spanish watchmen]. But from now on they will be able to go armed, identify and register suspects, reduce them using violence if they resist and detain them until they are handed over to the security forces (...)" (El País, 12-06-2020).*

This is not new, this is a repetition of the steps of control and preparation of the repression against the working class taken by the Paris bourgeoisie after the February 1848 revolution and before the repression on June of the same year: *"The February Revolution had cast the army out of Paris. The National Guard, that is, the bourgeoisie in its different gradations, constituted the sole power. Alone, however, it did not feel itself a match for the proletariat. Moreover, it was forced gradually and piecemeal to open its ranks and admit armed proletarians, albeit after the most tenacious resistance and after setting up a hundred different obstacles. There consequently remained but one way out: to play off part of the proletariat against the other.*

*For this purpose the Provisional Government formed twenty-four battalions of Mobile Guards, each a thousand strong, composed of young men from fifteen to twenty years old. They belonged for the most part to the lumpen proletariat, which in all big towns forms a mass sharply differentiated from the industrial proletariat, a recruiting ground for thieves and criminals of all kinds living on the crumbs of society, people without a definite trade, vagabonds, gens sans feu et sans aveu [men without hearth or home], varying according to the degree of civilization of the nation to which they belong, but never renouncing their lazzarone character – at the youthful age at which the Provisional Government recruited them, thoroughly malleable, as capable of the most heroic deeds and the most exalted sacrifices as of the basest banditry and the foulest corruption. The Provisional Government paid them 1 franc 50 centimes a day; that is, it bought them. It gave them their own uniform; that is, it made them outwardly distinct from the blouse-wearing workers. In part it assigned officers from the standing army as their leaders; in part they themselves elected young sons of the bourgeoisie whose rodomontades about death for the fatherland and devotion to the republic captivated them.*

*And so, the Paris proletariat was confronted with an army, drawn from its own midst, of 24,000 young, strong, foolhardy men. it gave cheers for the Mobile Guard on its marches through Paris. It acknowledged it to be its foremost fighters on the barricades. It regarded it as the proletarian guard in contradistinction to the bourgeois National Guard. Its error was pardonable" (The Class Struggles in France, K. Marx, 1850).*

### **In the educational sector, more social control with the same or lower budget:**

For a few months now, we have been witnessing an international debate on how and when to reopen schools of all ages. A debate that leads to plenty of controversy in the details: total face-to-face course or combine it with online lessons, assistance in alternate weeks, age at which to impose the mask use, student-to-teacher ratios, distances and a long etcetera.

All these controversies and reopening plans take us away from the real grounds of the decision: the need to open or close

depends on the capability of the working class to take care of their children in the current situation of crisis and general closure. Many families, during the period of confinement-arrest, have had to choose between leaving their children with their grandparents (despite the fact that it was contraindicated), a reduction in working hours with the consequent reduction in salary, or requesting voluntary leave to be able to care for them. Financial aids for salaried employees with dependent children have been and currently are testimonial, as well as the possibility of taking them to schools which, according to the bourgeois press, was carried out in United Kingdom. "UK colleges and universities remain closed (...). Despite the fact that an exception was established for the children of "essential workers" (health personnel, postal service employees, some civil servants and journalists, among others)." (El País, 16-04-2020). With the destruction of millions of jobs and with a large part of the unemployed working class being able to take care of the children, there may not be an urgent need to reopen the centers. Nor will there be a greater investment in schools to improve the already terrible conditions in which the children of proletarians were, and will find themselves when they return: high student-to-teacher ratios, junk food, lack of good internet connectivity and devices for all students, etc.

To this must be added the contradiction of two sectors of the bourgeoisie: the one from the sector that cries out for the resumption of economic activity and the other one from the sector that is committed to maintaining the general alarm: "This week, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, warned that the world faces "a generational catastrophe" due to the closure of schools and called for their reopening when the transmission is controlled. On the contrary, WHO warned that a hasty return "would only worsen the situation" (La Vanguardia, 07-08-2020). The "generational catastrophe" of which the UN Secretary General speaks is a catastrophe only for the proletariat. The children of the bourgeoisie continue and will continue (with or without confinement) eating well, in spacious houses and with the necessary means to continue their school training wherever they are since they have all the human and technical resources to cover the educational needs of their school and their social class.

**But, was this ever not the case?** "Equal elementary education"? What idea lies behind these words? Is it believed that in present-day society (and it is only with this one has to deal) education can be equal for all classes? (...) If in some states of the latter country [USA] higher education institutions are also "free", that only means in fact defraying the cost of education of the upper classes from the general tax receipts." (Critique of the Gotha Programme, K. Marx, 1875).

The historical origin of universal and compulsory education responds to the industrial capitalism need of equipping itself with prisons for the children of workers where they can "park" them and inoculate the dominant ideology: "The only provision made for them is the law, which fastens upon them when they become obnoxious to the bourgeoisie. Like the dullest of the brutes, they are treated to but one form of education, the whip, in the shape of force, not convincing but intimidating." (The condition of the working class in England, F. Engels, 1845).

The virus has fully justified this whip that is coming to us, the one with the most social control: transfer of own data and close contacts, transfer of medical data for classification as suitable or unfit for work, installation on the phones themselves of virus control and monitoring applications and a lot of obedience. The

next step will be the acceptance of the vaccine injection if you want to keep your job.

**Repression against the immigrant proletariat:** In the world there are approximately 164 million immigrant workers<sup>1</sup>, most of whom live in the worst conditions: "The most vulnerable group in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the one of immigrant workers, conformed largely by Pakistanis, Bengalis, Indians and Filipinos." (La Vanguardia, 04-21-2020), "Immigrants in the Persian Gulf are well aware that the transmission rate is much higher within their collective, which often live and work in overcrowded conditions. Just look at the nationality of the last five victims in Kuwait: two Indians, a Pakistani, a Bengali and a Jordanian." (La Vanguardia, 05-05-2020), "While escaping from their villages poverty, most of these nearly 100 million workers reside in squalid houses, in congested urban ghettos." (BBC, 31-03-2020).

When businesses are going well, the different fractions of the bourgeoisie fight for the immigrant proletariat in order to put the supply and demand of available workforce in their favor and thus be able to lower wages and working conditions. But when business goes bad and the crisis deepens, then immigrant proletarians begin to become a burden for the different fractions of the bourgeoisie, since they represent a focus of possible protests and social problem aggravation.

Bourgeoisie organizations, such as ILO or the World Bank, have already foreseen the misfortune that the global bourgeoisie will suffer from the effect of the current deepening of the overproduction crisis among the immigrant proletariat, announcing and reporting on their website<sup>2</sup> the "biggest drop in remittances in recent history". "The value of remittances will fall up to 7% this year in Latin America. The remittances that immigrants send home are the key to the regional economy. In areas of Mexico they reach 10% of GDP. In Honduras they reach 20%." (Expansion, 20-04-2020). With the loss of work and wages, the proletariat that has emigrated cannot send money to their families in their countries of origin. According to the World Bank, "remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached a record figure of USD 554 billion in 2019," which is not an insignificant number. But why does the bourgeoisie worry about this?

1) because all these remittances are a source of financing for its country bourgeoisie (the one in which they enter). In 2019, remittance inflows in low- and middle-income countries exceeded Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) volumes.

2) because all these remittances allow the bourgeoisie to continue paying very low wages while the remittances alleviate the poverty of a part of the proletariat of the country they are entering and mitigate masses discontent.

If there is something that the international working class has been able to learn from the current crisis of overproduction, it is this fundamental fact: THE WORKING MEN HAVE NO COUNTRY. WE CANNOT TAKE FROM THEM WHAT THEY HAVE NOT GOT. And when we say this in the Manifesto of the Communist Party, we are not referring only to immigrant workers, but to the entire working class. We have been able to see how the Philippine state stopped the repatriations of thousands of Filipino proletarians who worked in Kuwait (La Vanguardia, 05-05-2020), how the Indian state closed its borders and airports, also within the country itself, forcing a large mass of immigrant proletarians to walk back to their homes in the town of origin (BBC, 31-03-2020), how more than 60,000 Venezuelan proletarians have had to

<sup>1</sup> <https://news.un.org/es/story/2020/06/1476452>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bancomundial.org/es/news/press-release/2020/04/22/world-bank-predicts-sharpest-decline-of-remittances-in-recent-history>

resort to the so-called "trochas" (illegal passage), being the extortion prey for all types of criminals, in order to return to the country due to the crisis and the lack of work while they were classified as bioterrorists by the very patriotic Chavism or the army party (Infobae, 17-07-2020).

We have also been able to see how the bourgeoisie skips its own law for its own benefit, as the bourgeoisie of the Spanish state has done, with the Covid-19 excuse, by changing decrees-laws. Which allows them to hire hundreds of temporary workers, ex-ward minors, given the lack of workforce suffered from border closures. (El País, 26-05-2020).

Redoubled exploitation and increased repression has been unleashed against the immigrant proletariat, with the acceleration of forced immigrant proletarians expulsions by the Spanish state since 2019 (El País 15-07-2020), massive expulsions in the USA, the fires in immigrant fields in Greece, the fires in Lepe (Spanish state), the fires in Borgo Mezzanone

(Italian state) in the agricultural workers camp of tomatoes harvesting, the crushing of revolt of the Egyptian workers under confinement in Kuwait, the repression against Bulgarian workers in Mondragone (Italian state), the confinement of 670 Bulgarian, Polish and Romanian workers due to infections detected in the Verl slaughterhouse (German state), etc.

In Lleida (Spanish state) the local bourgeoisie refused to accommodate sub-Saharan seasonal workers, and a series of infections were given due to the overcrowded conditions at work and on the porches where they are forced to sleep. In Albacete, also in the Spanish state, workers were locked up in abandoned industrial warehouses in which they were housed overcrowded. Apparently, the measures were taken because of the local population fear to the Covid-19 transmission, but the reality is that the repressive ferocity against the undocumented proletarians is the classic method for the employer to impose draconian working conditions on them for derisory wages.

## USA MAINTAINS ITS DYNAMIC OF PROGRESSIVE ISOLATION

The deepening of the crisis of capitalism is reflected inside the United States in the impoverishment of the population, in the resulting social clashes, as well as in the internal war between the different fractions of the bourgeoisie.

The United States has reached 40 million unemployed workers in the month of May 2020, this data adds up to the social situation that the United States was already experiencing, immersed in an epidemic of massive consumption of opioids and heroin that causes 192 daily deaths *"and an annual cost that exceeds \$100 billion dollars (€88 billion euros), (...) Since 1990, about 400,000 Americans have died from overdoses of these substances."* (El País, 28-06-2019) and whose consumption (whether prescribed directly or obtained on the black market), far from decreasing, will continue to increase with the worsening of the crisis, the worsening of working conditions, the increase of the unemployed workers, etc...

To this needs to be also added that there are more than 29 million people without health insurance and 58 million underinsured, whose insurance covers almost nothing (Público, 04-01-2020). In the month of July, 32% of households in the United States could not afford to pay their rent or mortgage and the forecast is that about 20 million renters will not be able to pay their rent in the month of September when the payment moratoriums decreed during the pandemic end.

In recent months, the meat supply has been threatened by the closure of meat processing plants because they did not have enough workers (most of them from Mexico, South America or Somalia) because they had become ill from the virus due to the terrible conditions in which they have to work and live (overcrowding and lack of hygienic measures in the workplace and in their homes, as in the rest of the world); at least 20 meat plants had to close temporarily *"The high businesses concentration of the sector explains that the closure of two dozen plants has caused so many problems. 60% of all pork processed in the US comes out of 15 facilities."* (La Vanguardia, 30-04-2020) and the government, through a decree, had to force the meat plants to remain open, which did not prevent the import of already processed and packaged meat from other countries.

This caused a rise in food prices: *"2.6% in April compared to the previous month, the highest monthly increase since 1974. (...) In some foods that have been affected by the closures of meat processing plants, the increase in prices has been remarkable: pork rose by 6.8%; beef by 7.5%, and chicken by 6.3%, while fruits and vegetables rose by 1.5%, cereals and bakery products*

*advanced by 2.9% and dairy products increased by 1.5%."* (El Economista, 14-05-2020). If that were not enough, the consequences of "natural" disasters are especially prevalent in the poorest neighborhoods and cities in the US with outdated infrastructure, badly built houses and poor or non-existent maintenance of facilities.

This social context is a powder keg and is the basis on which the street protests began last May in the United States and which were initially characterized by looting and some violence in the streets but were quickly channeled and sponsored by the democratic movement as a throwing weapon against the republican government of Trump and taken totally towards the interclassist terrain of racism vs. anti-racism. Movements like "Black Lives Matters" are financed by magnates like George Soros who has invested 220 million dollars in racial movements (El País, 12-08-2020) or like Apple that committed to invest 100 million dollars for social justice. This movement receives institutional support from the democrats who have staged televised scenes kneeling in favor of the movement. The marches and demonstrations have been constantly followed by television networks and have received all the support of billionaire athletes and Hollywood showbiz world who at the time also supported the women's march against Trump. The benefits that the bourgeoisie in general intend to obtain from the movement are the following:

- channel and control the social discontent resulting from the situation that has been exposed at the beginning.
- declass the working class: hide that society is divided into social classes with antagonistic interests (bourgeoisie and proletariat) under the lie of racial oppression in which each race is made up of both classes and race is something that equates them on their social interests' level (just as they have been insistently doing with feminism in recent years).
- that the black bourgeoisie can get more domination positions in capitalism.
- hide the true class and repressive character of both the police and the army by making the working class believe that the armed arms of the bourgeois state can be reformed to exercise their violence in a fair way.

The particular profit that a part of the bourgeoisie has wanted to get by sponsoring this movement has been to destabilize the republican government of Trump, remember that the presidential elections in the US (if they are not postponed) are scheduled for November 4<sup>th</sup>. It is no coincidence that the democrats have