

The Communist Party of Norway are pleased to participate in the extraordinary teleconference of the International Meeting of Communist and Worker's Parties (IMCWP).

The Norwegian government, in line with the EU and other neoliberal countries, has been blocking the WTO from approving the TRIPS Waiver of patents and trade secrets since the proposal was first made more than a year ago. The waiver would allow unrestricted worldwide manufacture of vaccines, tests and medical equipment for the duration of the Covid 19 pandemic. In a characteristic example of social-democratic moderatism, the newly appointed minority government led by the Labour Party of Norway, taking over after 8 years of a conservative minority government, now only considers supporting the waiver if it doesn't encompass medical equipment in general, thus falling in line with the USA rather than the EU on the same matter. This illustrates very clearly the significance of the "regime change" from unapologetic neoliberal conservatism to the red tinted neoliberalism of social democracy.

In domestic matters, not much has changed for our own healthcare workers since the previous government. As we are currently entering a new period of lockdown and peak Covid hospitalization numbers, medical personnel are once again hazardously overworked, with hospital capacity at best unchanged throughout the pandemic. Two major hospitals on the north and south ends of the country are also planning to lay off 150 and 250 healthcare workers respectively due to lack of funding, while an important and centrally located hospital in Oslo is being decommissioned, against years of protests from the nurses' and healthcare workers' trade unions.

This is a consequence of the implementation of New Public Management (NPM) in the public sector, a process which started with the conservative government in the 1980's, but which has later been consequently supported and maintained by the Labour party and its coalition governments whenever they've been given the chance. Involuntary part-time contracts combined with the dependence of temporary workers through the private sector has been the norm since then, but increasingly so as the contradictions in capitalism and its inability to extend its increasingly fictitious growth are intensified by a genuine international humanitarian challenge.

Our party cooperates actively with the trade movement, in which there is a strong support for the struggle against NPM and neoliberal policy.

In our contribution to the 20th IMWCP, we mentioned our party's active participation in the leadership of the movement against the EU, especially in the struggle against the ACER energy union. As a consequence of Norway's increased incorporation into the international energy market, the price of electricity has increased by up to 1000% since last year, with the most drastic increase happening over the last few weeks. For working families who have already been shouldering the losses in the free market over the past years and enjoyed none of the gains, this is particularly devastating during a cold winter.

This is also becoming a threat to Norwegian industry, which has traditionally been centered around affordable, clean and stable electricity of high capacity, which is a resource we are able to produce in abundance through hydroelectric power. When the only motivation is immediate profit and speculation in the power market, water reserves are drained long before they are naturally replenished in the spring, harming cornerstone industry and workers alike. Our party and the trade movement supports the industrial movement for a democratically controlled electric power industry.

The Communist Party of Norway considers our active participation in these popular movements against the EU and neoliberalist policies, along with progressive trade unions, to be essentially important. It is becoming increasingly clear to the workers of Norway that capitalism cannot be reformed through the limited means allowed by bourgeois democracy, especially not when traditionally worker oriented parties protect it with increasing bluntness. Similarly, the nature of capitalism in its imperialist stage is becoming clear at a greater rate than bourgeois propagandists are able to convincingly conceal it. But it is up to us to show the necessity of socialism-communism as the goal of this struggle.

We hope to extend our role as an active participant in these movements, in a period when the importance of class consciousness and scientific socialism is becoming increasingly clear. We support the joint actions of the IMCWP, and we are currently in a position when we can actively do so on several points.

Together for workers' rights, peace and internationalism!  
Thank you for your attention!