

MLPD: Resolute health protection instead of double standards!

Statement of the Central Committee of the MLPD, 29 October 2020

- 1. The government's crisis management has failed.** More than 10,000 people have died in Germany; the number of seriously ill persons is clearly on the rise again. A second wave of the corona crisis is developing on a record level in an uncontrolled way. Instead of a V-shaped recovery, the world economic and financial crisis is further unfolding. It originated already in 2018, at a time when there was still no sign of corona. Monopolies are announcing the destruction of tens of thousands of jobs. The crisis of the crisis management is rooted in this: The bourgeois measures against the world economic and financial crisis and against the corona pandemic contradict each other, thwart each other. If you carry on crisis management in the interest of the monopolies, you cannot effectively combat the pandemic. The government has to try to square the circle because it submissively follows the instructions of the monopoly associations. On 2 May, in the form of an ultimatum, the Federation of German Industries (BDI) demanded the ramp-up of social life without adequate health protection measures in order to maintain "economic efficiency" – in other words, maximum profits. This way of relaxing restrictions was extremely negligent and willfully hazarded the risk of a second wave. That is what we face now!
- 2. Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel called on 28 October for a "national effort."** However, the decisions of the Chancellor and Minister-Presidents speak a different language: **this effort is to be expended solely by the working class and all working people, their children, young people, families and refugees, self-employed persons, artists and performers, and small business owners.** They are supposed to bear all burdens, restrictions, risks and costs. The ruling class of this nation, first and foremost the big monopolies, are excepted from them. **The government program of Merkel/Seehofer and Scholz serves the rigorous enforcement of monopoly interests.** The principle: everything the monopolies need will continue undisturbed. That means industrial production and trade – and for this purpose public transit, schools and child daycare facilities must continue operating without effective health protection measures. Exactly they, however, are the major places where people converge. Steffen Kampeter, CEO of the monopoly association Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA), declared on 28 October: "Production must not come to a standstill." He said he supports restrictions for private parties and other activities which do not contribute to value creation. Drastic restrictions accordingly are placed on people's freedom of movement, on the social life of the masses. Now only a maximum of ten persons from two households are allowed to come together. Vacation trips, sports, visits to pubs and restaurants – all **strictly prohibited**. Yet all that would be possible with suitable hygiene concepts, sufficient distance from others, masks, ventilation. The government trusts industry to do this! Its decision graciously states that "as comprehensively as possible" it wants to "make safe work possible" for industry and other sectors. But, no, it does not want to prescribe any rules to corporations, of course, except that they should "draw up hygiene concepts." However, much more resolute protection is needed precisely in enterprises. As far as the population is concerned though, apparently not. **For effective health protection – against the shifting of all restrictions and burdens on to the population!**
- 3. The government decisions are largely unsuited to effectively and persistently combat the corona virus.** Merkel declares: "The most important measure to contain a pandemic is to track the contacts." Undoubtedly important – however: The most important

measure to contain the pandemic would be **resolute enforcement** of hygiene measures, testing, education and persuasion work **in all areas of social life**. That would have lasting benefit, unlike short-term knee-jerk action. There are an increasing number of reports that the reporting and tracking of infections among nursing staff, industrial workers or schoolchildren are consciously suppressed and disorganized in order to cover up the true causes of the spread of the pandemic and so, against better knowledge, continue along the present line.

4. The monopolies are conducting an **exploitation offensive against the workers**. The Daimler Group, which is expressly planning mass layoffs, has just announced outstanding profits of 2.2 billion euros. Through the short-time compensation payments the monopolies have shifted the burdens of this crisis on to the whole of society. At the same time, millions of workers in enterprises had to continue working without adequate protection or are on short time for 60 or 67 percent of their regular wages. We demand: **Allow work only with adequate health protection and its implementation!** And not through irresponsible additional burdening of the workers, but through the reorganizing of work at the expense and under the responsibility of the management: **Reduce cycle times in industry; five minutes break every hour due to the extra burden; reorganize work processes to observe the distance rules. Full payment of wages during quarantine, including times when children are in quarantine! Fight the shifting of the burdens of the economic and corona crisis on to the working class! Fight for every traineeship and job! Fight for the 30-hour workweek with full wage compensation, which would create new jobs, preserve existing jobs, and weld employed and unemployed together!**
5. **A battle won: right to demonstrate and assemble defended!** In March, demonstrations still were banned for the most part. However, the working-class and people's movements waged a successful fight, in which the MLPD played a crucial role, for democratic rights and freedoms at assemblies and demonstrations, observing stringent hygienic standards. May Day 2020 marked the breakthrough. In its new decisions, so far the government has not dared to nullify the right to demonstrate. That is an important success! However: with the contact bans, gatherings of workers in enterprises, for example, are now being suppressed even if all health protection measures are observed. The MLPD remains vigilant and will continue to support and initiate demonstrations, struggles, protests and strikes, and will do persuasion work so that they take place under all necessary protective measures.
6. Under the pretext of the corona pandemic the rightward development of the government and bourgeois parties and the **fascistization of the state apparatus** are pursued further. With the massive deployment of police, the authorities want to make "*comprehensive*" and "*random*" checks in future. Large numbers of Federal Police are to be sent into urban centers. In the next budget, 666 million euros additionally are earmarked solely for the purpose of equipping the apparatus of violence; the bulk of it for the Federal Police. The assignment of soldiers to public health departments is intended to get people used to the deployment of the Federal German Army in the interior. Despite corona, deportations are being increased; refugee accommodations are overcrowded.
 - **Health protection, yes – undemocratic emergency measures – no!**
 - **Fight the militarization of society!**
 - **No special powers for ministries and the federal government that amount to political emergency laws!**
 - **For the defense and extension of democratic rights and liberties!**
7. The government decisions are a **scandal** as far as **youth policy** is concerned. The profits of the monopolies are to be protected while our children sit poorly protected in jam-packed buses and classrooms! More and more studies have identified schools and child daycare facilities even as very special centers for the transmission of infections.

We demand: **Halving of classes with daily, reduced classroom teaching in a shift system. Involvement of trainee teachers and educational science students with appropriate payment. Regular rapid tests, free of charge, for teachers, pupils and educators. Equipping of schools and child daycare facilities with air purifiers and windows that can be opened. We need safe routes to school: significantly more school buses and observance of a maximum number of passengers; expand public transit by intensifying cycle times and creating new jobs!**

8. **Nothing learned! The health system is in crisis.** There are more intensive care beds, but far too little nursing staff. There is information that in some hospitals employees even have to appear for work if they have a positive test, but show no symptoms. That is grossly negligent! In all the decisions taken by federal and state governments nothing is said about the expansion of testing capacities.
Some 150,000 persons participated in strikes of the ver.di public service union during the collective bargaining round. They obtained more extra pay and single improvements especially in the health sector. Instead of expanding the strike, the federal government, municipalities and union leaders agreed a shabby compromise. You have to fight to win! Fail to fight and you've already lost!
 - **Free, regular testing everywhere!**
 - **Free protective masks for the population!**
 - **Mobilize additional staff and helpers such as medical students, with appropriate payment!**
 - **Create 150,000 jobs in the nursing sector!**
 - **Purposeful collective research for a vaccine, strictly observing the necessary tests prior to approval of a vaccine!**
9. **Protection of small freelancers, artists and performers, and small business owners – instead of lockdown of social life.**
Massively affected by the crises are small restaurant owners and cultural sector workers. It is estimated that by the end of the year 1.1 million people in small businesses will lose their jobs; a gigantic wave of bankruptcies threatens. The government promises new financial assistance amounting to ten billion euros. A drop in the ocean! The crisis programs have a total volume of 1.3 trillion euros – 130 times the amount! The bulk of the funds benefits mainly big corporations and banks! Ingrid Hartges, managing director of the German Hotel and Restaurant Association, criticized on 28 October that restaurant operators are forced into making a “special sacrifice in order to prevent a general lockdown for the German economy.” Efforts taken in the restaurant sector to provide hygienic protection are disregarded.
 - **Adequate and sustained assistance for the small self-employed, artists and performers, and small business owners!**
 - **Support of restaurants and catering businesses, and of conferences, events, vacations and recreational activities, which meet the demands raised by corona!**
10. **Condemn the corona deniers' contempt for human life!** In spite of 1.1 million deaths – in a grossly misleading, negligent way the corona deniers continue to speak about a “*staged pandemic*.” They sing the same tune as the ultrareactionary and fascist presidents Trump/USA or Bolsonaro/Brazil. Suddenly disguised with the image of hyper-democratic protesters, they are merely the stooges of those who trample on people's health protection. **Protest against the government, yes – but from the left! Ban all fascist organizations!**
11. **Trendsetter MLPD – Don't give anticommunism a chance!**
The MLPD proved as pioneer how it is possible to demonstrate, strike, and hold events and meetings in a responsible way, meeting all the demands raised by corona. The MLPD pointed out early enough that, the way it is being approached, crisis management would fail. This is because one cannot solve a problem with the same mode of thinking that gave rise to the problem! The progressive change of mood among

the masses is reviving. Hundreds of millions of people currently are demonstrating solidarity, selflessness, discipline. Towards sections of the population which do not abide by this, systematic educational work and persuasion work must be carried out. In a socialist society, planned action would be taken, beyond rivalry and profit logic. The knowledge gained by science, the requirements of health protection, and the economic, social and cultural needs of humans would be in harmony with each other.

In capitalism even the search for a vaccine is based on the premise of competition for maximum profits. Donald Trump now even makes communism responsible for corona. And anyone who demonstrates against him is in his eyes a potential communist. So it is all the more important: Don't give anticommunism a chance! High time for an open societal debate about socialism/communism in place of the capitalist crisis chaos.

Time to give new momentum to the fight for genuine socialism! Get organized in the MLPD or the Youth League *Rebell!*