

No to the anti-China campaign! For international solidarity against the pandemic and capitalism!

Joseph Kishore—Socialist Equality Party candidate for president
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The Socialist Equality Party and my election campaign reject the chauvinistic attacks against China aimed at shifting responsibility for the mass death due to the coronavirus pandemic from the American ruling class.

The Trump administration is spearheading the anti-China campaign, promoting the lie that China, either purposefully or through negligence, “seeded” the virus into Europe and the United States. During remarks yesterday at a Ford plant in Michigan, Trump suggested that China deliberately allowed the virus to spread globally in order to undermine the US economy.

Trump is not alone, however. The Democrats are seeking to outflank Trump in the xenophobic anti-China campaign. Democratic nominee and former Vice President Joe Biden has released a series of campaign ads that accuse Trump of not only putting “his trust in China’s leaders” but also “rolling over for the Chinese.”

In Michigan, Democratic Senator Gary Peters has released a series of ads focused on attacking China. “I’ve always been tough on the Chinese government,” declares Peters, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Homeland Security Committee. “Supporting the China travel ban, demanding the truth about the spread of COVID-19, and I’m fighting to take back production of life-saving drugs and medical supplies from China, so we’ll never be held hostage.”

An internal Democratic Party National Committee memo from April lays out the Democratic Party strategy, stating: “There is no question that China must be held accountable. But Trump has proven that he’s not capable of doing that. He spent weeks and weeks offering absurd flattery of China and unwarranted

praise for its transparency as the crisis developed.”

The anti-China campaign is an outright lie motivated by three interrelated aims. First, it is aimed at deflecting responsibility for the catastrophic impact of the pandemic from the Trump administration and the American ruling class.

It is a matter of public record that the Chinese government released the gene sequence of the virus on January 13, one week after identifying the virus that causes COVID-19. By the mid- to late-January it was clear to the entire world the danger that the virus posed. On January 28, the *World Socialist Web Site* published a statement warning, “The outbreak has exposed the enormous vulnerability of contemporary society to new strains of infectious disease, dangers for which no capitalist government has adequately prepared.”

However, no measures were taken in response. As late as February 28, Trump was still claiming that the coronavirus “is going to disappear” like “a miracle.” By March 4, only 1,000 tests for coronavirus had been administered in the US. This was two months after the first warnings from China about the threat.

The Trump administration did not take any measures to protect the population from the pandemic because it did not want to spook Wall Street. Tens of thousands of people have died as a consequence.

Second, the American ruling class wants a political scapegoat on hand when there is an inevitable surge of deaths as a result of the back-to-work campaign.

In late March, the Democrats and Republicans unanimously passed the CARES Act, which sanctioned the multi-trillion-dollar bailout of Wall Street. Immediately, the line from the Trump administration and the media turned from the danger of the pandemic

to warnings that “the cure can’t be worse than the disease.” Workers had to get back to work to pay for the massive sums turned over to the rich.

With unbridled recklessness and criminality, the Trump administration, along with Republican and Democratic governors throughout the country, are reopening manufacturing facilities and businesses. By claiming that China is responsible for the coronavirus, the representatives of the ruling elite are seeking to create a narrative that China is to blame for the tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of deaths that will follow.

Third, the ruling class is seeking to use the pandemic to escalate its geostrategic conflict with China. The financial oligarchy sees the emergence of China as a major threat to its economic interests. American imperialism has mobilized its military resources to contain China and assert US dominance over the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Under the Obama administration, this policy was pursued under the framework of the “pivot to Asia.” Trump has escalated the conflict with China, implementing trade war measures and threatening military action. US military strategists have declared an end to the “war on terror,” which has been replaced with “great power conflict”—including preparations for war against China and Russia.

For the past three and a half years, the Democratic Party has sought to channel mass opposition to the Trump administration behind the reactionary anti-Russia campaign spearheaded by the intelligence agencies and the military. Now, it is jumping onboard the anti-China narrative.

The Socialist Equality Party rejects the anti-China campaign. We insist that the American financial oligarchy is responsible for the massive toll of the coronavirus pandemic. The fight against the pandemic is inseparably linked to a struggle of workers against the ruling class and its dictatorship over economic and political life. It is, therefore, a fight against capitalism and for socialism, the restructuring of society on the basis of social need, not private profit.

The SEP fights for the international unity of the working class. The pandemic is a world problem and can only be fought through the international collaboration of workers and all those committed to defending human life.

In the fight against the pandemic, workers must reject all efforts to divide them along racial, ethnic and national lines. In particular, the campaign by the American ruling class to blame China for the crisis and divert attention from its own criminal role must be opposed.



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