

MUTUAL AID MONTHLY

A Production of Des Moines Mutual Aid

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State Government attacks Trans Youth; Students, Teachers, Parents and the Community Fight Back

A series of laws newly passed target routine medical treatment, free speech in schools, ability to use bathrooms; Oddly, no legislators yet guillotined

by Comrade Patrick

The Iowa State government, fully under the control of right-wing faction of the capitalist class - the Republican Party - has just passed a flurry of new, transphobic laws. Perhaps the most evil is a restriction on routine hormone blockers and other lifesaving medical care for trans youth, treatment which significantly reduces the number of teen suicides (note, the law will take effect in 180 days). Trans students will no longer be able to use bathrooms which correspond to their gender. Their teachers will not be able to counsel them or teach about gender and will be legally required to 'out' children to their parents. These laws reflect the fascist inclination of the Republican Party, which wants a society of suburban, straight, cis, white people, a vision shared by their base of angry white suburban men.

These attacks on the lives, dignity, and free speech of trans kids will not be taken sitting down. On March 5th, over a thousand people rallied against the laws in front of the capitol building. The demonstration is just the beginning of the fightback though, as legal organizations plan to sue to stop the restriction on medical aid, a tactic which has been effective in other states which enacted similar bans. Teachers are strategizing on how to best violate the restriction on teaching about gender and counseling students, and trans youth are finding roads through which to resist, through walkouts, protests, and carpools to sanctuary states. This fight is far from over!

Leftover Fed Pandemic \$ given to Gentrification Efforts, rich people

Of \$95 million, over half to build housing for yuppies and a fancy new airport terminal.

Needs of regular people ignored.

by Comrade Patrick

The Des Moines City Council decided last month how to divide pandemic grant money from the federal government between various segments of the local capitalist class.

Over \$22 million was earmarked for "economic development", a phrase used by capitalists which means building unaffordable housing and places for the better-off to spend their money. We will soon see more \$1,500/month townhouses in the metro, while working people will continue to be at the mercy of slumlords. \$33 million more is set aside for "infrastructure improvement", which sounds great until you read the fine print: a significant portion of that will go to the city's own buildings for improvements, unnecessarily constructing a new airport terminal, and parking meters. Some infrastructure.

The remainder is divided among other projects, among them one which is actually worthwhile: a basic income pilot under which a handful of low-income families will be sent a monthly stipend. This is good, and will help those families. Imagine, though, if the city had invested all \$95 million in projects for the working class, rather than tossing us scraps: that sum is enough to house every single homeless person in the city, or provide public housing rather than forcing you to give your paycheck to slumlords for housing. The priorities of the capitalist city government are on full display here: stacks of cash for developers, chump change for working people.



What is Capitalism?

Capitalism is the system of markets, private property, and wage labor.

by Comrade Andrei

None of these things sound that bad, in principle. The problem is that they don't "work": when they come together in a world organized around them, they lead to worsening crises that punish normal people like us and push us to the margins of society. This "secular" crisis is not a political one that can be solved by electing "better" or more competent representatives to government.

At the "micro" level, this crisis boils down to how we are exploited in the workplace: on average, a person's wages don't reflect their net economic contribution. This is the source of profit: the difference between wages paid and the economic value created in the workday. At the same time, the employer class seeks to reduce the amount of wages paid out to workers, so they can keep more profit! This reduces the profitability of their business, since profit comes from human effort! It's not that the capitalists should "do better" - or know better, or "be" better - because it isn't a moral failing, any more than it's a failing of an apple tree to let an apple ripen and fall. They are compelled - in this world - to employ us, just like - in this world - we are compelled to work for them. The world is ripe for a new system, perhaps one that "works": it's the decision of every living person what that system should be.



This flyer is a production of Des Moines Mutual Aid, which is a local network of anarchists, communists, and socialists building community autonomy from capitalism and the state. Below are our points of unity - basically, our basic political and social outlook which binds us together.

o. We believe in working shoulder to shoulder and standing in solidarity with all oppressed communities. We ourselves are oppressed, and our mutual aid work is a fight for our collective liberation. We do not believe in a top-down model of charity. Instead, we contrast our efforts at horizontal mutual aid, the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships and communities, to dehumanizing and colonizing charity.

1. We believe in community autonomy. We believe that the communities we live and organize in have been largely excluded from state social services, but intensely surveilled and policed by the state repressive apparatus. Capitalism is fundamentally unable to meet people's needs. We want to build self-sustaining communities that are independent of the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and can resist its repression.

2. We are police and prison abolitionists. Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We don't rely on capitalist institutions or the police to do our work. We believe in building strong and resilient communities which make police obsolete, including community systems of accountability and crisis intervention.

3. We work to raise the political consciousness of our communities. Part of political education is connecting people's lived experiences to a broader political perspective. Another component is working to ensure that people can meet their basic needs. It is difficult to organize for future liberation when someone is entrenched in day-to-day struggle.

4. We have open disagreements with each other about ideas and practices. We believe there is no formula for resolving our ideological differences other than working towards our common aims, engaging with each other in a comradely manner, and respecting one another, whether or not we can hash out disagreements in the process.

If you want to get involved, let a volunteer know. For more information, including how to donate, visit <https://iowamutualaid.org/>.