After the pandemic, what comes next?

By: Arnaldo Musa / Special for CubaSí
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Some venture to predict the end of neoliberalism is now or will come soon after we overcome a new coronavirus pandemic that is wreaking havoc worldwide — ravaging those with less resources — those who are useless human beings who should be eradicated in the opinion of some old-style, radical far-right individuals.

However, both those useless human beings and those who consider themselves special are exposed to a pandemic whose magnitude — though expected — was actually neglected. It corroborated the general abandonment in the health sector and sent tremors to the world's economy and politics.

So far, and as perfect advocates of the unhealthy influence of capitalism, those with huge fortunes still survive and hold profits while most of the population suffer the state abandonment, which leads to the paradox that the necessary isolationism is just a mechanism to protect life, but also — within a neoliberal society — provokes suffering as people's life is left helpless due to the system greed.

This is logical if we take into account that, in order to reach a general wellbeing and regardless of ideological constraints, this is far from its goal if the macroeconomy is pumped up to the exclusive benefit of the wealthy, as in neoliberalism.

It does not make sense if we grow and grow and present high rates of development but misery keeps growing and benefits are distributed unevenly despite large revenues as a result of mineral and agricultural exploitation.

It is being said that poverty rate has dropped. But it means nothing if sustainable development is not achieved, as negative numbers may rise once again.

And it grows to the point of despair in times of a disease that kills and where survivors, many or few, still have to face the economic and then political crisis.

If neoliberalism evanesces, it would not mean the end of capitalism. Nonetheless, it would lead to a new beginning

of something that results in a more coherent and human society, without standing still waiting for the end of neoliberalism.

WITH NO IDEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Capitalism prevails worldwide. In our continent, the lack of ideological training paved the way for the opposition to depose from power pro-state governments whose goal was to eradicate poverty by providing proper care to the masses.

Such ideological weakness opened the way for corrupt politicians serving the empire, or even military forces by requesting foreign invasion if necessary.

Today, the pandemic strikes hard unprotected people in those nations, which includes the world's dominant military and economic power on Earth, the United States.

There, well in advance, the disaster was foretold. But an unprincipled president ignored the situation and made his country the epicenter of the disease in the world, which has not yielded an inch his reelection pretensions.

The saddest thing is that he has real chances to be reelected, even when he has been the worst president in addressing this pandemic.

The end of Trump's era in the US presidency would be an incomplete victory, but a positive outcome, nonetheless. He is the ultimate expression of neoliberalism especially after he denied — in the early days — some of its precepts and introduced himself with a pro-worker and protectionist rhetoric. But he was actually hostile towards the working class at the expense of a strong preference for the capital world.

Trump has undertaken a trade war with China where he argues that he is allegedly protecting American bullied workers. But it has not prevented him from continuing the dynamics of neoliberal globalization, which gives priority to bilateral agreements — allowing the US to gain greater control of its terms instead of free trade agreements with several countries.

Hence, Trump represents the ultimate expression of neoliberalism with a huge power to put in jeopardy the wellbeing of the world's working class, including that of the United States.

In the words of Spanish researcher, economist and professor Vicent Navarro, these popular classes are the first victims of capitalism, "with a Darwinian idea characterized by a huge social insensitivity, lack of solidarity, with an ode to unbridled capital accumulation."

This takes us back to the sometimes forgotten German heroine Rosa Luxemburgo, who pointed out that there were two alternatives for mankind: barbarism (the evolution of capitalism could really lead us there) or socialism. Neoliberalism and its ultimate expression are leading us to the first, regardless of the pandemic aftermath.

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