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Labor and COVID-19: An International Perspective

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How can we examine COVID-19 crisis from a global labor perspective? Several hundred people tuned in on April 9, 2020, for a discussion on this topic. It's a perspective you won't hear on the mainstream media! This program was sponsored by the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor at Georgetown University.

Joseph McCartin, executive director of the Kalmanovitz Initiative, and esteemed editor of the journal Labor: Studies in Working-Class History introduced and moderated the session. Fink is scholar in residence at the Institute and professor emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He led an in-depth and sobering discussion with international labor experts from Taiwan, Germany, Spain, and the U.S. about the impact of Covid-19 on the workers worldwide.

Professor Fink asked the panelists what each country's biggest needs were with respect to its workers, both those still employed and those suddenly unemployed;

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how their governments have responded, or not, to the immediate conditions workers were facing; and, what further steps need to be taken to advance the world's recovery from the pandemic.

The panelists answered the questions thoroughly by way of individual presentations followed by an informative Q & A with audience members following. Panelists included

- Cathy Feingold, the director of the AFL-CIO International Department and deputy president of the International Trade Union Confederation;
- Lucia Ortiz Sanz, labor attaché for the Embassy of Spain;
- Joseph Liu, project researcher with the Chinese Management Association, Taiwan;
- Anja Wehler-Schoeck, labor attaché for the Embassy of Germany; and
- JJ Rosenbaum, the director of Global Labor Justice.

You can watch the April 9 discussion here.

Find out more about next month's discussion at https://lwp.georgetown.edu.

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