



## SPECIFICATIONS

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# There is an Alternative

Economic policies and labour strategies beyond the mainstream

*Edited by Nicolas Pons-Vignon*

Since the start of the global economic crisis, economists and trade unionists have sought to engage in dialogue with government and business, hoping to arrive at the adoption of balanced policies that would deliver an equitable and sustainable recovery. But some years on, countries have failed to break with the economic regime that caused the crisis, and in many, austerity programmes are being adopted and social and labour rights are under attack.

Achieving a meaningful reduction in inequality and the power of finance requires both the formulation of convincing policy alternatives and the determination to see them realized. The short articles here, from the Global Labour Column, show that one-dimensional thinking has been a major reason for the severity of the crisis. The contributions give an insightful overview of current labour struggles around the world as well as the institutional measures that have proven successful. The programme the authors propose is ambitious, as it implies reversing deep trends such as the exclusion of many workers from wage negotiations, growing casualization and increasing wage inequality, but such ambition is necessary if there is to be an alternative.

*Also available in French and Spanish.*

*There is an Alternative* and the Global Labour Column perform an invaluable service in enlightening those of us not blessed with recondite economic expertise. They offer ways to understand how a crisis of global proportions seems to have only benefited the perpetrators, and, far from generating resistance, has further dismantled the labouring classes.

– Pr. Michael Burawoy, University of California Berkeley, and author of *The Extended Case Method*

The mainstream economics discourse has failed workers north and south. Nevertheless, thanks to the strength of vested interests and ideological beliefs, it is still there dominating public debate and policy choices. *There is an Alternative* challenges these misguided policies, analyses the shortcomings of the current system, and provides new ideas and proposals for the necessary changes. A valuable source of inspiration for trade unionists around the world.

– Leroy Trotman, General-Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union

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