



SPEAK OUT NOW

SPEAKOUTSOCIALISTS.ORG

Capitalism IS The Problem

We are living in a world that is overwhelmed with crises. We live in a world threatened by mass extinctions brought on by ecological destruction. We live in a world permanently at war, fueled by the need of corporations and banks to amass ever-greater profits. We live in a world where corporations and banks bring in record profits while millions of people who are willing and able to work can't find jobs. Millions of people around the world face poverty, homelessness, hunger, disease while the richest 67 people own more wealth than the bottom half of the world's population combined.

These crises are not simply the results of poor decisions by so-called world leaders. These crises are the permanent features of the capitalist system, a system that has far outlived any usefulness it may have ever provided – a decaying system that must be completely transformed.

A System of Misery and Exploitation

Capitalism is a system under which all the resources humans need for our survival are privately owned. The very purpose of producing anything under capitalism is to make a profit. Profit isn't the result of creativity and ingenuity. Profit comes from one source: exploitation. The only way profit is made is through exploiting workers all over the world. The more work that can be squeezed out of people and the cheaper that labor costs, the more profit can be made. The more workers are unemployed, competing for ever-fewer jobs, the cheaper those workers' wages. In its endless drive for profit, the system of capitalism constantly imposes exploitation and misery on the world's population.

A System of Constant War

We live in a world ravaged by endless war. The estimated death toll from wars in the 20th century was 187 million, not to mention the millions of people whose lives were ruined in the aftermath of these wars. War, devastation, domination – these are all necessary for the functioning of capitalism. The world's banks and corporations rely on war as a means to dominate regions of the world, to murder resisting populations, and overall, to impose their rule over the people of the world.

A System of Death Around the World

Today the U.S. spends 47 percent of the entire federal budget on the military, about \$1.3 trillion dollars per year. This is more than the military spending of all other countries in the world combined. The U.S. government maintains about 900 military bases in 150 countries around the world.

The impact of these wars for domination has been horrific. The U.S. wars and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan have ripped these countries apart, killing millions of people. The population is now divided along religious and ethnic lines and ruled over by groups who use these identities as a means of control, turning the entire region into a war zone.

In the last decade, under the banner of the so-called "war on terror," in addition to the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. government has carried out military strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, Mali, Sudan, Somalia, Libya, Syria and other countries. The U.S. military continues a reign of terror using drone-strikes and targeted assassinations, killing mostly innocent civilians with every strike.

This violence is not an accident. This violence is the normal functioning of a system of imperial domination which ensures that the banks and corporations maintain their profit. This system is responsible for terrorizing and killing millions of people all over the world – and the U.S. military stands at the head of this violent system of exploitation.

A System of Ecological Destruction

There have been five mass extinction events on earth where most of the larger plant and animal species were wiped out. The last mass extinction event killed the dinosaurs. An asteroid crashing into earth and drastically changing the climate caused that extinction. Now we are living in what could be the sixth extinction. But this time, our species would be the cause of disaster as well as a victim.

Scientists explain that ongoing carbon emissions into the atmosphere are causing a worldwide change in climate patterns that threaten another mass extinction event. The extreme level of environmental devastation, greenhouse gas emissions, climate change and global warming are leading to an acceleration of habitat destruction and species extinction at rates that have never been seen before.



The ultimate cause of severe climate change is not simply carbon emissions but the capitalist system that profits from them. Capitalism is a system that must increasingly produce in order to sell more to continuously turn a profit. And the fossil fuel industry, along with all of the industries that are tied to it, is not simply some small piece of the global economy, but is the vast majority of it. This includes the energy industry, agriculture, transportation, pharmaceuticals, the banking industry, shipping, plastics, armaments, and more. These are industries that make trillions of dollars every year. The people who own this wealth are the ruling class around the world, and their governments exist to represent their interests at all costs, even potential mass extinction.

As a species, we have arrived at a crossroads. The ruling class has no choice but to try to maintain capitalism, even though it is incompatible with a climate that can sustain life. Either we put an end to capitalism or we will likely have to face our own extinction.

A System of Divide and Conquer

To maintain their control, those in power have always used a "divide and conquer" strategy – pitting one group of people against another. Divide and conquer is a mechanism used by elites to maintain their position, to keep the rest of us angry and frustrated and powerless. It can lead us to turn against each other instead of organizing ourselves to fight back against the system that supports their dominance.

In the U.S., one of the main divisions is based on race. Often we are told "things have always been this way," but this is an outright lie. Racism hasn't always been a part of human existence – racism began as a way to justify slavery.

A society based on artificial scarcity and inequality must ensure that some get more and most get less. A society run in the interests of a tiny minority must keep the majority divided and turn people against each other. One way is to seem to reward one group for accepting the degradation of others. Racism has been a very effective strategy to do this. Race has often stood in the way of people coming together to make a collective fight for a better life. The prejudices coming from the racism of this society haven't been aimed just at Black people. The ignorance and hate that racism is based on knows no limits – it can be used against anyone who can be labeled as different or "other."

A System That Must Be Replaced

As long as capitalism continues, the crises we see around the world will continue as well. A future under capitalism is simply a future of more crises, more misery, more exploitation, more wars – a future that is guaranteed if the capitalist class remains in power. Continued efforts at trying to reform capitalism will run into the same dead ends they have in the past. This is a system that can't be reformed to ever meet the needs of humanity.

The future of humanity cannot be left up to the tiny elite who own the world's resources. Our future depends on us, on ordinary people, on the millions of workers who make this society and our world run. Collectively we have the power to put an end to capitalism and run the world in our own interests, not for the profits of a few.

The Future is Socialism

The functioning of capitalism, its ceaseless quest for ever-greater profit, the engine of the entire global economy, is at the center of every major problem human society faces today: from wars and violence and ecological decay to economic crises and poverty and prejudice. To confront these problems, a complete social transformation of society is necessary, a revolutionary change of the entire foundation of society, to create a new society, democratically run by the majority to serve the interests of all. There is a name for this kind of society, and it is called socialism.

A Workers Democracy

A socialist society would mean a society collectively run by the majority of people to meet the needs of humanity. Decisions would be made democratically by those who do the work and are directly affected by the consequences. Workers would elect their own representatives, from their own class; they would be immediately recallable if people wanted a change in policy; they would not receive any more pay than the average worker, in order to prevent careerism and bureaucracy. A socialist democracy is not only political, it is economic. The working class would take hold of the resources and means of production and collectively decide how much to produce based on democratic planning. The Paris Commune of 1871 and the beginning of the Russian Revolution of 1917 provided examples of what a democratic, socialist workers government would look like before they were ultimately defeated.

A Complete Transformation of Society

A socialist society means a complete end to capitalism, on an international scale. There is no such thing as “socialism in one country”; just as capitalism is an international system, in order for socialism to thrive, it too must be international, stamping out every last vestige of the capitalist order. Problems that seem insurmountable under capitalism could begin to be addressed and ultimately eliminated on a global scale. War – an enormous waste of human life and resources – would be unthinkable in a society that truly represented the interests of the world’s people. The basic necessities of life could be guaranteed to all. The problem today is not a lack of goods and services – in fact there is an abundance of waste. Inequality today stems from class division, and the logic of profit. If the purpose of production was to meet social needs, then production could be planned, and waste could be eliminated. Today many advancements in research and technology sit idle on some shelf because they may not have an obvious profitable outcome, especially if they reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and other valuable resources owned by the capitalists. In a socialist society, innovation could finally be freed from the traps of profit. Not only could waste be eliminated, but life would be transformed.

Limitless Human Potential

Imagine what it would be like if no child was told they weren’t good enough to explore their own talents. Imagine if every child could try any sport, play any instrument, do science experiments and art projects without limitation. Imagine if every child had access to all necessary tools, instruments, pieces of equipment. Imagine if learning was collective and not competitive, where we could learn with experts in their fields: music with musicians, sports with the athletes, biology with biologists, physics with physicists, and so on. There would no longer be any workers and owners – only people working and deciding together how they want to live. Work could be as engaging and meaningful as creating art if it were decided upon collectively, if its unpleasant features were reduced to a minimum, if it expressed the creative input of entire communities, even the whole world. A socialist society would finally provide the basis for humanity to unleash its full potential.

Living in Harmony with the Planet

A socialist society would allow humanity to take conscious control of how it uses the Earth’s resources. Rather than treating the Earth as the sewer for capitalist waste, humanity could make the conscious decision to live in harmony with nature and the planet. This would mean stopping all fossil fuel industries as quickly as possible and introducing truly renewable energy sources on a massive scale. It would mean rapidly phasing out the individualized automobile industry



and introducing free mass transit throughout the world. It would mean eliminating industrial agriculture that destroys habitats. It would mean organizing the way food is produced and distributed so that it is sustainable. The social and economic changes necessary to confront the environmental destruction of capitalism requires an end to capitalism and the production for profit.

A Society Without Prejudice

Before a socialist revolution succeeds in establishing a new society, the revolutionary movement of the working class must begin to challenge all of the divisions and prejudices used to maintain the social hierarchy. Racism, the legacy of colonial domination and slavery, would have to be rooted out of every institution and custom. Women, often the backbone of any real social movement, would claim their place as equals in a movement to break every economic and cultural constraint that keeps them shackled to the home and dominated by men. Gender, no longer imposed by marriage and inheritance laws and customs, would not be imposed as it is under capitalism. The fight for socialism places none of these struggles second to the struggle against capitalism. How could it? A culture of revolutionary solidarity opposed to all divisions and prejudices among human beings is necessary if a revolution is truly going to succeed. But so long as capitalism remains, these social divisions will stay in place as the tools of the ruling class to maintain the capitalist order.

Socialism – Not Social Democracy

Socialism has nothing in common with “social democracy”, embodied by parties with a policy of reforming the worst aspects of capitalism. In the U.S., this is often incorrectly referred to as “socialism,” using some various European countries as examples. Social democracy is nothing but capitalism with social welfare programs. Most often, these reforms are made available when massive social movements threaten to take a revolutionary direction. The capitalists will promise anything to save their system. And when the time comes, they will take away every gain these movements have made, as is happening today across Europe.

Socialism – Not Stalinism

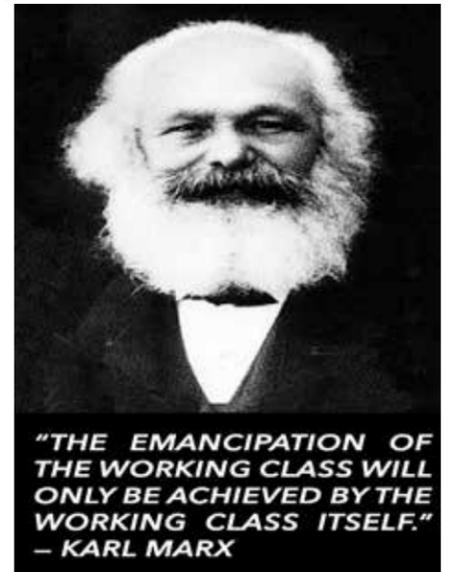
Likewise, socialism has nothing in common with the brutal dictatorship imposed on the population of Russia by the bureaucracy led by Joseph Stalin. The exhaustion of the Russian working class and ultimately the failure of revolutions elsewhere in the world led to the rise of the bureaucrats. Stalin and the bureaucrats rose to power by imprisoning and executing revolutionaries who fought to maintain the Russian Revolution’s democratic foundations.

Stalin was the grave-digger of the Russian Revolution, and the Soviet Union resembled socialism as much as a graveyard resembles a living city. The revolutions of the 20th century in China, Cuba, and elsewhere heroically fought imperialism, but their model was not the Russian Revolution led by the working class. These revolutions may have flown the red flag, but they don’t have anything to do with real socialism. The liberation of humanity can only be achieved by the majority – by the working class – acting for itself, in its own name, leading its own struggles.

The Future is Ours to Decide

If humanity is to have any future at all – our future is socialism. But it will not happen automatically. We’re living in a social system that is in decay. In the past we’ve seen anger and outrage against this system burst open into massive social movements. But even the deepest social movement will not create a new society without consciously fighting for revolution. A revolution will take conscious revolutionaries to provide that perspective. It will require individuals to swim against the stream, and be active both during times of quiet and also during mass upheavals. During these movements, it will take revolutionary organizations urging people not to leave the levers of society in the hands of the banks and corporations, even under new faces, with new false promises. It will require individuals today to decide to take up the task of building a revolutionary organization.

History is filled with plenty of examples of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. The future is ours to bring about, and it’s up to each of us to decide what role we want to play.



“THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS WILL ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY THE WORKING CLASS ITSELF.”
– KARL MARX

Where We Stand

The world we live in today is increasingly ruled by prejudice and fear, under a system of widespread violence and war, where exploitation and oppression are the rule, with the many dominated by the few. The name of this system is capitalism.

The Force For Change Exists Today

Everywhere, working people’s labor makes society run. Working people have the power to bring this system to a halt and bring about the changes needed. Like slavery, feudalism and other systems that enriched the minority at the expense of the majority, capitalism’s removal is long over due. The time for socialism has come.

We Stand For Socialism

- A world based on peaceful collaboration and international cooperation of working class people -- not the exploiters who rule today.
- The common ownership and sharing of the world’s resources and productive capacity.

- An egalitarian and democratic government, organized and controlled from the bottom up.
- Protection of the world’s ecological systems, putting science to work to sustain life, not destroy it.
- A society where human relations are based on respect, equality and dignity of all peoples, not racism, sexism or homophobia.

Who We Are

We believe the international working class is the social force that can transform society and create a new world. But to do so, revolutionary organizations must be built in the working class. For this reason our group aims its activity primarily at workplaces, where struggles have the most potential to transform the world. Our newsletters are a tool to begin this work. What a handful of people decide today can determine our future. Join us to work for a better future – that is both necessary and possible.

SPEAKOUTSOCIALISTS.ORG