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Capitalism is the Problem

We live in a time of extreme contradictions. On the one hand, our civilization has eliminated smallpox, brought us cell phones, robotics, and space travel, and boasts immense resources and wealth. On the other hand, we face the worst crises in human history. We are experiencing a calamitous level of species extinction brought on by massive ecological destruction. Wars of domination have torn whole regions of the world apart, killing millions of people. Around the world billions of people face poverty, homelessness, and disease while in 2017 the richest eight people own more wealth than the poorest half of the world's population combined. In the U.S., millions of people have jobs that barely provide a living wage. Homeless people occupy the streets throughout our cities. Less visible are the hungry, and yet, one in six people in the U.S. face hunger today. These crises are not the result of poor decisions by world leaders. They are the result of the functioning of the capitalist system in its relentless drive to generate profits.

The Profit Motive

While we are told that profit is the result of creativity and ingenuity, in reality profit has only one source: exploitation. Under this economic system, the basic resources humanity needs for survival are privately owned by corporations. Without the incentive of profit, the owners and stockholders will not invest in production. These profits have one source: the exploitation of labor. The more work that can be squeezed out of workers, and the cheaper the price of their labor, the higher the profit. At the same time, the greater the number of unemployed workers competing for jobs, the easier it is to lower workers' wages. Ingenious inventions, often the result of the work of salaried engineers whose patents belong to the corporations that hire them, are not the sole source of profit. All wealth ultimately comes from the labor of working people.

Divide and Conquer

Those in power have always attempted to use a "divide and conquer" strategy – pitting one group of people against another to maintain their power. The elites use their well-developed propaganda tools to turn us against each other, fueling the fires of resentment among those who have the least. One way is to give some rewards to one group for accepting the degradation of others. Sexist attitudes encourage the acceptance that women do the unpaid work in the home, face discrimination and lower wages at work, and are subject to violence rarely experienced by men. Racism too has created an enormous divide. Racism was used to justify the slaughter of the native population in the Americas, and to maintain and justify slavery. Racist ideology has infected our society like a virus, and created a racial caste system. The same lies, ignorance and frustration that fuel racism have also been used against anyone who can be labeled as different or "other" in our society. As capitalism continues to create fear and insecurity, virulent voices use racism, xenophobia, sexism and homophobia to divide us.

The War Machine

War plays a basic role in the functioning of capitalism. To maintain control over resources and populations, the world is ravaged by endless war. The history of the U.S. has been one of systematic war and violence, beginning with the expropriation and murder of the Native peoples in North America, and the enslavement of millions of African people, followed by wars around the world. The estimated death toll from wars in the 20th century was 187 million, without counting the millions of people whose lives were ruined in their aftermath.

Military spending is enormously profitable. Today the U.S. spends 28% of the Federal budget on the current military, projecting to spend over 700 billion dollars for the coming year. The cost of past wars account for another 20%. On average U.S. spending

"collateral damage." This is the basic functioning of a system of imperial domination, which ensures that the banks and corporations maintain their profits.

Ecological Destruction

There have been five mass extinction events on earth in which most of the larger plant and animal species were wiped out. The last mass extinction event killed the dinosaurs. It was most probably caused by an asteroid crashing into earth, leading to a drastic climate change. And today we are living through the sixth mass extinction. This time, however, scientists tell us that our own species is the cause of the disaster and will also be its victim.

Ongoing carbon emissions into the atmosphere are causing drastic worldwide changes in climate patterns. We see all the symptoms with record-setting temperatures each year, melting glaciers, rising oceans, drought, famine and massive storms. This decimation of the earth's ecosystems is resulting in the extinction of many species.

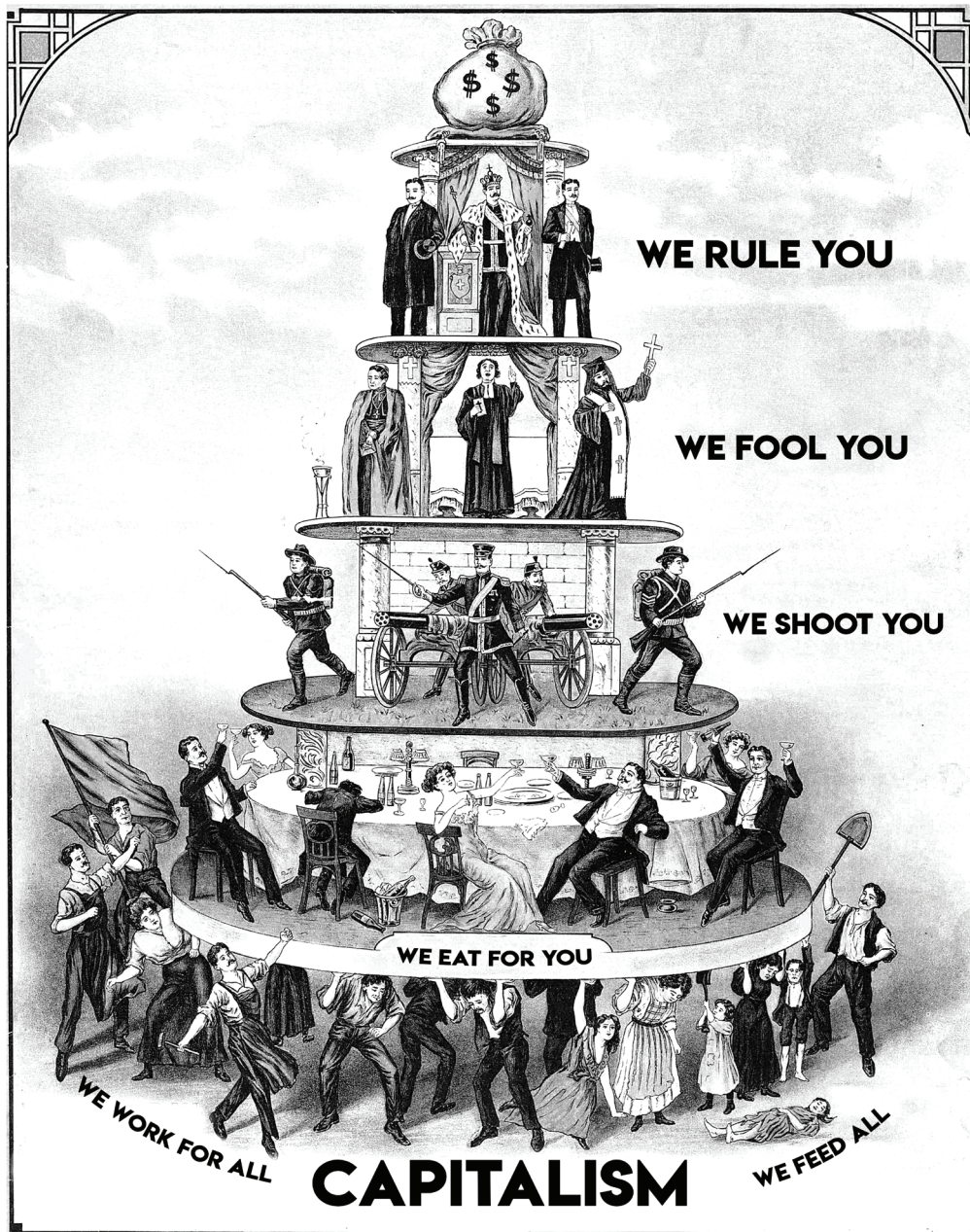
The ultimate cause of severe climate change is not simply carbon emissions, but the capitalist system that demands a constant expansion to maximize its profits. The fossil fuel industry, along with all of the industries tied to it, is not a small piece of the global economy, but rather at the center of it. It includes the energy industry, agriculture, transportation, pharmaceuticals, shipping, plastics, armaments, and the banks. The people who own these industries are the global ruling class. The mounting evidence of their actions over the past quarter century has not led them to curtail their destructive activity. They would like us to believe that climate change does not exist or that capitalism will develop the technology to stabilize the earth's climate. This is a fantasy that disregards the conclusions of climate scientists around the world.

A System That Must be Replaced

As long as the capitalist system exists, the crises we see around the world will continue. The capitalists' political system is there to maintain the functioning of this system. It gives us the choice of electing candidates presented to us by their two parties, which both represent the same interests of the 1% with slightly different policies.

Efforts to reform capitalism will run into the same dead ends as they have in the past. If the power is left in the hands of the owners of capital, successful reforms will be temporary, taken back when the struggle to maintain them subsides.

As a species, we have arrived at a crossroads. The fate of humanity cannot be left in the hands of the tiny elite who own and control the world's resources. Either we put an end to capitalism or we will likely face our own extinction. Our future depends on what each of us chooses to do. It depends on the millions of workers around the world who make this society run. Collectively we have the power to put an end to capitalism and replace it with a new society run by those who do the work and for the benefit of all of humanity.



amounts to the equivalent of the next seven biggest military spenders combined. The U.S. government maintains about 900 military bases in 130 countries around the world. The horrible impact of these wars cannot be overstated. The U.S. wars and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan have ripped these countries apart, killing millions.

In the last decade, under the banner of the so-called "war on terror," in addition to the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, both Democratic and Republican administrations have carried out military strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, Mali, Sudan, Somalia, Libya, and Syria. The U.S. military continues a reign of terror using drone-strikes and assassinations, killing innocent civilians. The horror of countless attacks have given rise to even more sectarianism and terror in the crumbling societies left in their wake. The U.S. government defends the slaughter of civilians as accidental

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 destruction to economic crises, poverty and racism. 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 Real Participatory 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 work in a workplace, live in a neighborhood, city or town and who are directly affected by the consequences of those decisions. On a larger scale, decisions would be made in an open way, guided by what is best for the majority – not a minority of profiteers. If elected representatives ignore the interests of the majority, they would be immediately recallable. To prevent careerism from arising among those administering various aspects of society, they would receive the wages of the average worker. The resources and means of production would be under the control of the 99%. And the majority, directly or through their representatives, would decide how much to produce based on careful planning.

A Complete Transformation of Society

A socialist society means an end to capitalism, on an international scale, not pressuring an owning class to “do the right thing.” There could be no such thing as “socialism in one country,” with that country cut off from and defending itself from the capitalist powers of the rest of the world. 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 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 abundance – an abundance of waste. If the purpose of production was to meet social needs, then production could be planned, and waste could be eliminated. In a socialist society, life would be transformed. Innovation could finally be freed from the traps of profit and the need to constantly expand to generate more capital.

Limitless Human Potential

Imagine if all children were encouraged to explore and develop their talents. Imagine if every child could try any sport, play any instrument, could carry out science experiments and art projects without limitation. Imagine if learning was collective and not competitive. We could learn with experts in their fields: music with musicians, sports with the athletes, biology with biologists, physics with physicists, and so on. We would have a society of fully engaged people. There would no longer be any workers and bosses – only people deciding together how they want to live. Work would be creative and meaningful as people could work together on the projects needed by society or those that they wanted to explore.

We could collaborate with people locally as well as internationally. 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. Humanity could make the conscious decision to live in a more harmonious relationship with nature and the planet. This would mean stopping all fossil fuel industries as quickly as possible and introducing and developing 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 experimenting with and organizing the way food is produced and distributed so that it is sustainable.



A Society Without Prejudice

A revolutionary movement must challenge all of the divisions and prejudices used today to maintain the social hierarchy. Racism, and the legacy of colonial domination and slavery would have to be rooted out of every institution and custom. Women, often the backbone of every society and any real social movement, would claim their place as equals, challenging 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 other customs, would no longer define who we are or what we can do. All forms of prejudice and discrimination would be eliminated. A culture of revolutionary solidarity opposed to all divisions and prejudices among human beings is necessary if a revolution is to succeed.

Socialism – Not Reformed Capitalism

The rapid development of capitalism showed the potential to provide a good life for all and as a result socialist ideas began to develop offering the possibility of a different future. Those who developed the theories

of socialism and a critique of capitalism have been under attack by the capitalist class ever since. Those who played a role in organizing the working class in its struggles, into unions and political parties, have been slandered and attacked physically.

Many have attempted to co-opt or modify the real goals of socialism by representing reforms of capitalism as being steps toward socialism. This has been carried out under the banner of “social democracy” which proposes to reform the more barbaric aspects of capitalism. Socialism has nothing in common with the Socialist parties of Europe and the Labor Party in Britain and politicians like Bernie Sanders. Social democracy is basically capitalism with social welfare programs. Most often, these reforms are put in place when massive social movements threaten to take a revolutionary direction. The capitalists will promise anything to save their system. And when the movement ends and people think they have won, the politicians and bosses begin the process of taking away the gains these movements have made. We see this happening in the U.S. and across Europe.

Socialism Under Attack

Fear has been used to get people to disregard the viability of socialism. The capitalists point to the Soviet Union under the brutal dictatorship imposed by Joseph Stalin in the 1920s. The workers and peasants of Russia were exhausted after World War I, two revolutions and a Civil War and fighting against the invading armies of the world’s capitalist powers. Most importantly revolutionary attempts by workers in other countries were crushed and the Russian Revolution remained isolated. This allowed a bureaucracy to take power and hold power for decades to come.

Many of the revolutions of the 20th century, like China and Vietnam, claimed the banner of communism and fought heroically against imperialism. But their model was the Soviet state headed by Stalin, not the 1917 revolution led by the working class. The interests of the working class and peasants were subjugated to a program of national development under one party rule. Instead of aiming at an overthrow of the world capitalist order, they had to find an accommodation with imperialist forces or lose power. Even with these false examples of socialism and communism, the ideas of socialism and communism could not be stamped out by the hollow promises and degraded realities of capitalism.

The Future is Ours

In the past we’ve seen anger and outrage against this system create massive social movements. But even the deepest social movement will not create a new society without consciously fighting for total systemic change. This requires being active during quiet times and also during mass upheaval. Revolutionary organizations will have to provide a way for people to participate in deciding the goals and direction of a movement. Organizations in the workplaces and the community can begin to give people the experiences that show that the majority has the possibility to organize and run society.

If humanity is to have any future at all – our future is socialism. But it will not happen automatically. It will require individuals today to take up the task of building revolutionary organizations. History is filled with many examples of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. It’s up to each of us to decide what role we want to play.

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 overdue. 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 – one that is both necessary and possible.

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