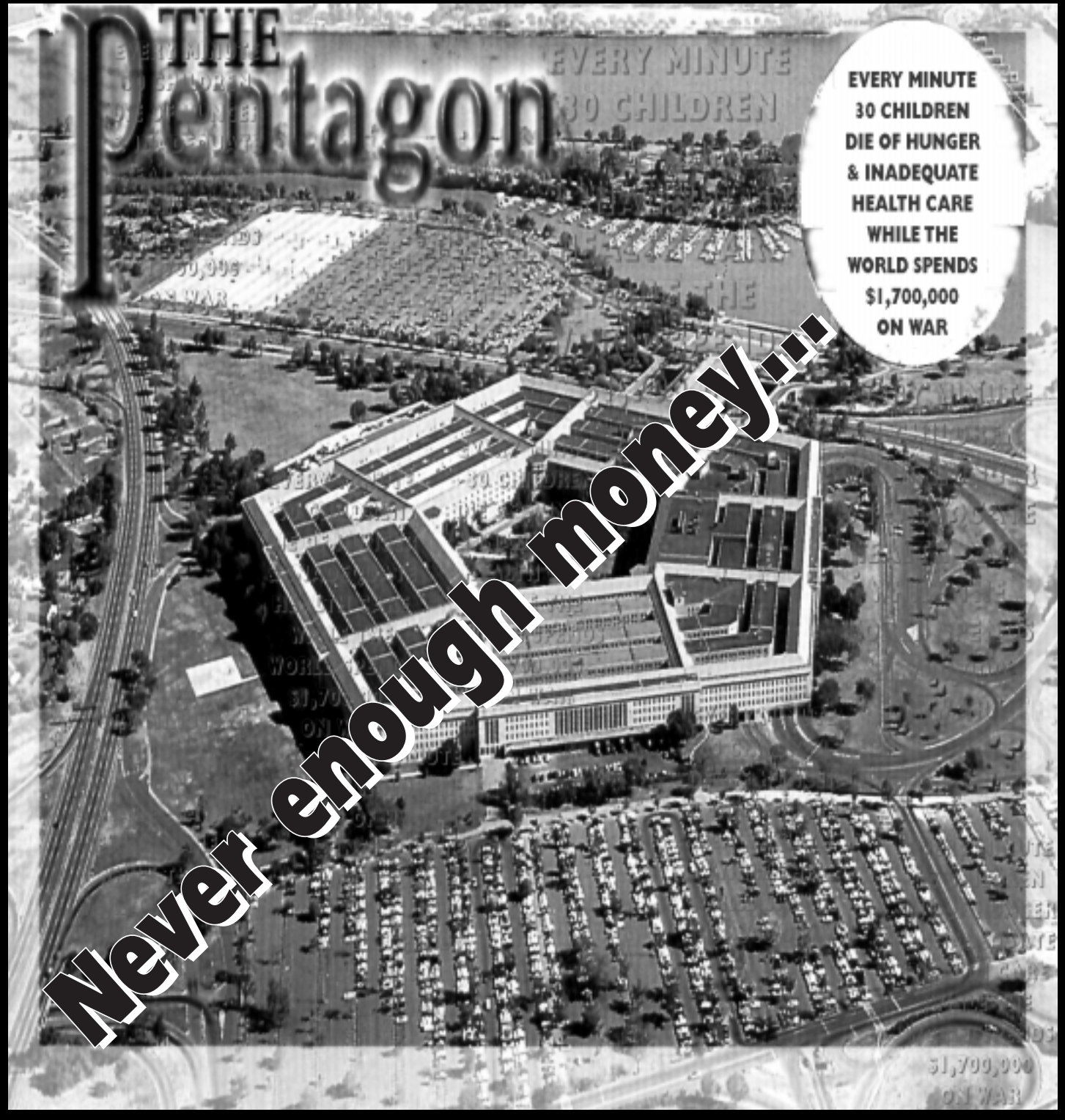


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EVERY MINUTE
30 CHILDREN
DIE OF HUNGER
& INADEQUATE
HEALTH CARE
WHILE THE
WORLD SPENDS
\$1,700,000
ON WAR

Never enough money!!!

INSIDE: socialism and religion • making things go • what is crime? • never enough money • economics of socialism • musings • family values

Socialism and religion

Scientific socialism rejects the delusive concepts that make up religion. This does not mean that socialism is committed to any fanatically narrow conceptions of rationality such as characterized some nineteenth-century materialisms. It means that socialism is opposed to superstition in any and all forms. Socialists see human beings as fully capable of shaping human life, subject only to the limitations posed by the material world.

The reason for our opposition has three principal points of focus, historical, philosophical, and social. Historically, religion has always been allied with the authority of the state, and the state has always been the instrument of power of a ruling class. The role of priestly classes in

antiquity, such as in Egypt under the pharaohs, is not particularly germane to a discussion of the alternative to capitalism, but if we consider the institutions of religion at the time of the first development of capitalism the case is plain enough. From the Middle Ages even up to the nineteenth century the Church commanded real political power, and it played a role in the control of territories. The Church could dictate what human behavior was allowable and what human ideas were allowable, and worked hand in glove with political rulers in support of such state-like political forms as then existed. In Europe the Church proclaimed an ostensible ethic that posited certain obligations of the powerful toward the powerless, of the rich toward the poor, but there was never any means by which this ethic could be enforced. As capitalism began to develop, even this ethic went by the board, and religious doctrine during and after the Reformation was more and more shaped to match the ethics and the needs of the new economic forces. Organized religion, particularly certain forms of Protestantism (for example, Calvinism and, later, Methodism), quickly developed such doctrines as the divine obligation of men to become rich — a notion that both grew out of and grew up in

support of the developing capitalism of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries — in other words, lent “religious” support to the material strivings of this new class of go-getters. A good example of this is an incident of some commercial warfare in India during the eighteenth century:

The incident [the “squalid Ruhela war” staged by the English India Company in 1774] raised one significant question: by what moral right did the Company conquer lands in India? The evidence strongly suggested that the Ruhela state was orderly and flourishing and, therefore, in the eyes of eighteenth-century Englishmen, deserved to be considered as civilized. Moreover, its inhabitants were fulfilling, unknowingly of course, the will of God, who had ordained that the fruits and treasures of the earth belonged naturally to those who used them to the best advantage. Post-Reformation theology had provided a mandate for European expansion in America and Africa where, it was alleged, native populations had ignored or neglected what God had provided. Amerindians and Negroes could be evicted from their lands by interlopers who had the will and capacity to develop them. The law of man concurred with that of God: at the time of the Ruhela war Captain James Cook was cruising in the Pacific armed with a ruling of Justice Sir William Blackstone, who had declared that Australia was ‘terra nullius, a land owned (as yet) by no one. (From *Raj: The making and unmaking of British India*, by Lawrence James [St Martin’s Press, 1997])



Stations, please!

The old ethic concerning obligations toward the poor of course dropped by the wayside, and then as now the moneyed class resisted all attempts to impose on them any social obligations beyond their own success and their families’ comfort.

Perhaps even more than in the Middle Ages, religion became a vigorous defender of class society, and by the eighteenth century, attempts to “rise above your class” (except by becoming a proper capitalist) were viewed with intense moral opprobrium by the religious institutions of the day. Catholicism and Protestantism alike preached against the evil of evading, or complaining about, the “station” to which God had “appointed” you. Thus, by the nineteenth century, there was good reason for working people to see religion as one great enemy of their welfare and of their attempts to better their lot by collective action. The brutal efforts of the state to keep working people in subjection (membership in the equivalent of unions could be punished by hanging in the eighteenth century) found ready support in the organized religions of the day and still do, in places like South and Central America. In our own times we had the example of Vietnamese Catholicism aiding and abetting the dictatorial state of South Vietnam; in

Israel and various Arab countries strong forces are at work attempting to make religion an integral part of state power.

It stands to reason, therefore, that socialists learned to look upon religion with a hostile eye. A long history of abuse, oppression and betrayal lies behind that hostility.

Socialists are opposed to religion on philosophical grounds as well. Scientific socialism developed during a great upsurge of philosophical controversy in the nineteenth century, when the doctrines of materialism, both naive and sophisticated, came to challenge the irrational principles of revealed religion. Scientific socialists are materialists, that is, they hold that human history has been shaped not by supernatural forces, not by gods endowed with miraculous powers, but by material causes that can be analyzed, traced, accounted for, and to some extent controlled. They see all attempts to explain human history, human institutions, and for that matter human life by an appeal to divine, mystical, or supernatural intervention as doomed to incoherence and futility. Their position, in part, is that while no “god” ever invented a human being, human beings have invented all sorts of gods — in other words, religion puts the cart before the horse.

Rational and real understanding

The distinction between supernatural and material explanations of phenomena is crucial for socialists, because it is tantamount to a distinction between, on the one hand, seeking for rational understanding and rational control of human history, and on the other, throwing up one’s hands in the face of divine mystery and some mysteriously designed “destiny” beyond any rational explanation. In other words, socialists feel that belief in what they regard as the illusions of religion stands in the way of any real understanding of the world. All the prayers in the world will not grow a blade of grass, but human rationality can and has produced abundance. No mystical ritual will ever prevent a flood, but rational land use can and has. The incoherence and confusion that can be sown by religious belief is grimly illustrated by the fact that while the Allied Powers in the first World War were calling on “God” for aid in the mighty struggle, the belt buckles of German soldiers bore the

motto, *Gott Mit Uns* (God is with us). No god caused the slaughter of tens of thousands of men at Passchendaele, but the misguided belief in one certainly contributed its shameful share.

Humans are seen as unclean by nature and powerless to better themselves without the help of some divine being.

The imposition of a religious sanction by all sides in most wars (and not just modern ones) is connected to the third heading under which we can discuss the socialist hostility to religion, and that is the baleful social effects of religion. Unquestionably implicit in some of the facts already mentioned is the power of religious belief and religious practices as forms of social control. Such fairly recent events as the Church’s silencing of

activist priests who were siding with oppressed communities in Central and South America and the current Pope’s blathering about the “terrible plague” of abortion while maintaining a politic silence on issues like worldwide hunger and poverty simply carry on religion’s long history of siding with the status quo and keeping people’s attention diverted from their real needs.

Teach us to sit still

The rhetoric and the principles of religion are rife with proclamations of human unworthiness and helplessness, and full of exhortations of humility and acceptance of one’s lot. One of the core messages of

Christianity figures in a sanctimonious passage in T S Eliot’s famous poem “The Waste Land” — “Teach us to sit still,” in other words let us not be agitated, by oppression, by want, by injustice.

Christ’s own advice was similar — “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and render unto God the things that are God’s.” Don’t meddle with what may be being done to your actual life — leave things to the hand of God and don’t make waves. This tranquil passivity has long been a major recommendation of religion.

The rhetoric, and consequently the teachings, of religion are designed to inculcate concepts of human unworthiness and powerlessness. All have sinned and



all fall short of the glory of God, and “the sins of the father shall be visited on the sons.” Under the aegis of religion, humans are seen as unclean by nature and powerless to better themselves without the help of some divine being.

Furthermore, most devotional religions focus on the “salvation” or “purification” of individual persons. Asian Buddhism similarly focuses on the “illumination” of disparate individuals and encourages its practitioners to

turn away from the “temptations” and the problems of the world around them. All this harmonizes only too well with the divisiveness fostered by the phony “individualism” pushed by the fans of capitalism. The concept that the world can never improve until individual persons cleanse their consciences, so popular among Romantic and Victorian writers, is a clear echo of the preoccupations of western religions. (Remember when the automobile manufacturers were crying that legislation to make cars safe would be futile and unfair, and that the only “solution” would be to focus on the individual drivers? Same thing.)

In the end, then, when religion looks at the actual world at all, it promotes ideas of social cohesion only for the preservation of the status quo, and it ignores or even condemns collective efforts toward human betterment. Both western

and non-western religions, whether the Christianity of the west, the animist religions in parts of Africa, or the savage religions of ancient Mexico, have placed the “needs” and “powers” of the “gods” above the needs and powers of mankind. Religious hierarchies side with

the ideology of the ruling class of the moment, and offer explanations of human history that are mere fables.

Socialists, with their perception that society is organized around different classes, maintain that radical human betterment can come only as collective betterment, and that the “salvation” of single individuals is an illusory distraction. Socialists maintain that the illusion that this “salvation” is to be won by fealty to some mythical divine force is just that, an illusion. They also reject the western religious concept that mankind is by nature evil and doomed because of some legendary mankind-damning crime. Socialists maintain that “human nature” is shaped by the material forces of history. The socialist position is an empowering concept that frees people from nonsensical, disabling concepts of universal unworthiness on the one hand and universal helplessness on the other.

— Thomas Jackson

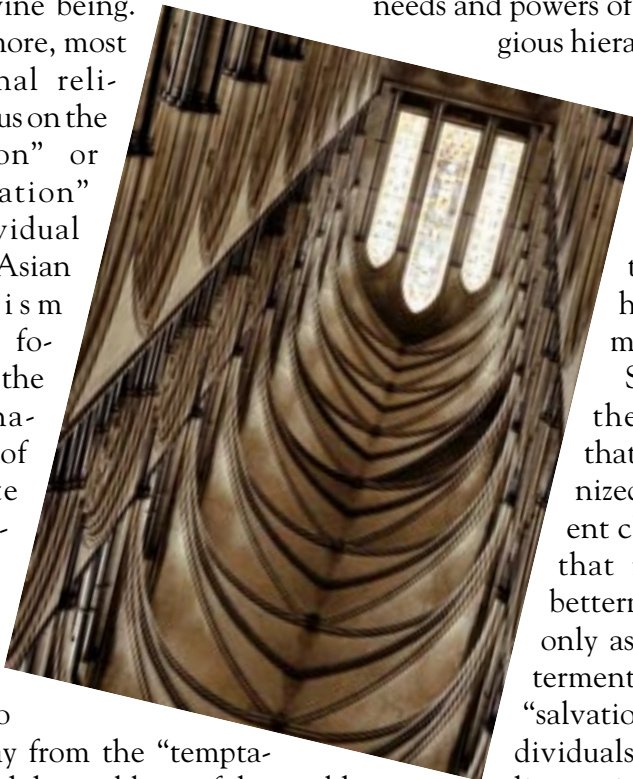
**ALL PARTY
EVENTS ARE OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC**

Making Things Go

When we learn as children that getting money allows us to do things (without necessarily understanding the obligatory character of it), that realization generates an expectation that is lifelong in its durability. One of childhood’s many lessons, in a society that runs on buying and selling, is that getting money makes things happen. People routinely rely on this institutional or systemic paradigm and pass the information on, in the process, to each subsequent generation, which incorporates it behaviorally without question as a fundamental assumption.

When a four-year-old expresses a relationship between “going to the place where the monkeys are” and “getting some money,” he or she has learned to formulate — even before understanding the somewhat abstract term, “zoo” — the assumption that getting money makes things go. Contradicting that assumption years later — stating that people can run society without buying and selling (or in general trading) anything — will produce a “gut” reaction tantamount to, “You mean *none* of my peers and my elders knew what they were talking about? Go fish!” The childhood lesson has acquired the force of a belief or conviction.

That this belief is expectation-driven thus implies, on the one hand, that it constitutes a popular, behaviorist version of a system paradigm (Capitalism Works) and, on the other hand, that the popular (i.e., working-class) acceptance of capitalism rests on an assumption dating back to childhood. People will use



this assumption relentlessly in pursuit of some kind of advantage or other, even when the facts might counsel otherwise. In this case facts become awkward (or even preposterous) counter-instances, and people ignore or trivialize them because they fail to mesh with the system paradigm (in the version they understand it) that is generic to whichever class has offspring to raise. We might even call this the “generic” version of the system paradigm (“getting money makes things go”).

Nothing said thus far is in itself socialist. A socialist implication turns on some element of reasoning that implies, explicitly or implicitly, the abolition of the wages system (and beyond that, common ownership and democratic control of the means of wealth production); which in turn rests on the assumption that we can operate society efficiently on the basis of the rule, “From each according to ability and to each according to need” (without in other words subordinating human social interactions to the precondition of making transactions in the marketplace).

From the socialist perspective, the question is, How does the “capitalist assumption’s” failure to live up to expectations translate into the perception that abolishing the wages system on which it rests will “make things go?” How does a crisis of confidence in capitalism become a new consensus that production for use is socially functional for purposes of satisfying everyone’s assumed needs (the basis for assuming them originating with the individuals them-

selves), where capitalism’s production for exchange has manifestly failed to deliver the goods? For the real problem is that understanding the system doesn’t work in random instances does not mean understanding it cannot work. To make that connection, people need to have a sense or model of what does work.

The real problem is that understanding that the system doesn’t work in random instances does not mean understanding it cannot work.

The question for socialists therefore remains standing. Its resolution will come at the same level as the childhood lesson: when people begin to realize they can make things go without depending on capital. They might specifically find themselves, for instance, having to make capitalism work in some acceptable way but learning the hard way they cannot — by investing the capital themselves. At that point the criterion of production for use finds its natural application, and it enters the system’s agenda as a strategic contender.

— Ron Elbert

Guest Editorial

What is crime?

One of the pillars of capitalism is its concept of “crime.” Civilization, the class-divided distortion of human social communities, has always needed to find ways to rationalize the advantages cultivated by the rich and to keep the poor in their place. Capitalism brings a new tone of elegance to this: redefining crime as unreasonable behavior rooted in a weak and passive “human nature,” its spokesmen set Capital on Nature’s throne, rendering it neutral and incapable of committing crimes against society. The following essay is reprinted from the May 1997 issue of the Coalition for Prisoners’ Rights Newsletter; as a critique of the endemic struggle between the capitalist and working classes, it is very well put. (For further information, contact them at Box 1911, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1911.)

Why are we writing about workers as well as prisoners?

One reason is that the same people are sometimes workers and sometimes prisoners. There is no unbroken line between the two groups. Another reason is that the same social and economic system exploits us — when we are prisoners and when we are workers. But the most important reason is that we have all been had when we were taught to think about crime.

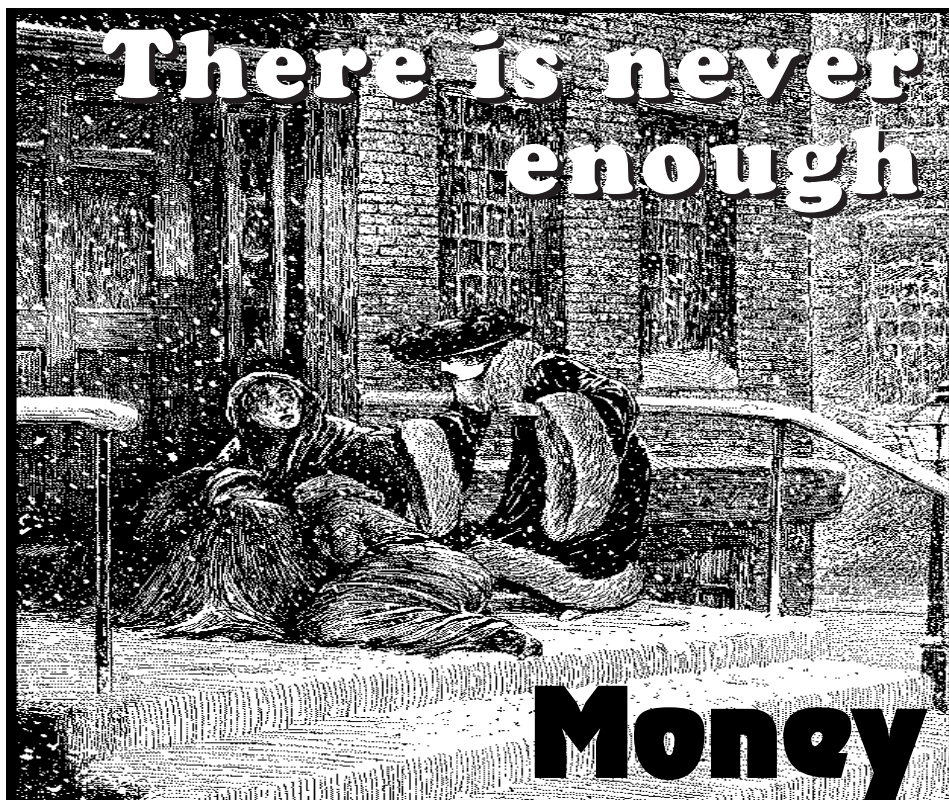
The Coalition for Prisoners’ Rights believes that crime is the bad, oppressive things people do to each other. The more people you hurt, the bigger criminal you are.

So the big criminals in our country are the people who are rich when others are poor, those who make profits from other people’s misery. The big criminals are the people who cripple us at our workplaces, control the manufacture of unsafe cars and other products, and send us to fight the people of other countries to make the world safe for their investments. The big criminals give us diseases through our food, air, medicine and water — cancer, black lung, birth defects.

Street crime is a very small part of all the crimes really committed each day. Even mobster crime is small in comparison to unemployment, homelessness, the bad food, education and medical care that hurts so many of us. Yet we have been taught to believe that street crime and organized crime are big enemies to us. And when we believe that, the real, big criminals are safe.

The Coalition believes that enormous changes are needed to rid ourselves of the system that results in the big crime in this country, and that workers and prisoners, the unemployed, the disabled, the retired — all poor, minority and working people — have to work together to stop the big crooks.

The big crooks — the owners and bureaucrats and politicians who protect their interests at our expenses — don’t have horns or fangs or shifty eyes, just like the people now in the pen don’t. Maybe they’re nice people, just trying to be comfortable like the rest of us. But the pursuit by these few of comfort and wealth and power means violence and oppression against the vast majority of us, and it’s more than a crying shame. It’s a crime. ◊



tic formulas sold to us at election times — reduce the spending from this military or space program and apply it to education, spend more or less on the environment and less or more on new highways, spend more on mental health prevention and education than on building additional state hospitals, and so on. Thus there is always the push by advocates of this or that reform for you to cough up money for it out of your wages, as though the burden for the problems generated by a fundamentally inequitable and exploitative social order should fall squarely upon the shoulders of that class that produces the wealth for the owning class, as though that were not enough of a favor for it.

...or abolish its class foundation?

The entire premise of voting for political parties which aim to operate the capitalist system as effectively as possible (Democrats, Republicans, Liberals, Tories, Laborites, Greens, Social Democrats and those parties which have called themselves socialist or communist incorrectly to mean a society of state management of the economy) is that the problems which beset us are not an inevitable product of a society of haves and have-nots, but rather are the result of its mismanagement.

According to this logic, people starve because of the nature of the political regimes in which starvation is rampant, because those governments squander money on expensive military programs, or insufficient money is being taxed and/or redistributed. This is the outcome of the limited Great Man Theory of History you were taught in school or in college. Rather than questioning the basis of a society founded upon class division, upon production for sale rather than for need, upon the pri-

vate ownership of the means of producing wealth, you were taught that the problems generated by such a society are the outcomes of poor leaders running the country, of faulty economic tinkering, of outdated policies, and the like. Such thinking ultimately benefits the owning class, which perpetuates the myth in the media of effective versus incompetent politicians, of laws that require changing, of crises that are being well or poorly managed.

Manage the economy...

The very existence of a society of haves and have-nots is never in question. The fact that billions of people die of starvation or live in shoddy housing or wear substandard clothes in a society with the technological means to produce abundance while the class that lives off profit, rent and interest does so in utmost luxury is somehow rendered invisible in the argument of how best to manage the economy. Instead, the solutions to the problems generated by the capitalist system are reduced to simplis-

There is hardly a river in the world which the local population is not campaigning to protect, barely a species which it is not the subject of a drive to save. There are tens of thousands of charities to feed the hungry, support this youth group, modify this law for women or that one for children. What else is governmental policy or people's support for several among an almost infinite number of available and important causes but an absurd juggling of issues as well as a ludicrous balancing act of this capitalist problem against that one?

At no point in this political process does the question ever arise as to whether there exists enough money to fund these causes, or if there ever can be. Of course the basic assumption is that there is not. Hence the necessity for this aforementioned nauseating prioritizing of goals — each of which is equally essential. The abolition of the need for money is never entertained, for this radical and essential solution would also mean abolishing the class foundations of society, which governments exist to maintain. For those of us

who must work in order to survive, it would mean our liberation forever as a working class and as a human species from the miseries imposed upon us by a money society (such as war, starvation, poverty, mental illness, ecological devastation, and the daily stress imposed upon us by the wages system itself — from budgeting for essentials to the hierarchical nature of the workplace).

But why precisely is there not enough money to go around? For this, one would have to examine what money is. I have used the first few chapters of Karl Marx's monumental study of money, *Capital*, Volume One, but such basic relations are also described in traditional capitalist economics textbooks.

Money evolved out of more primitive exchanges, such as barter, in which producers needed to meet face to face to exchange commodities, things produced in order to sell them, of like value. Money is that commodity which reflects the values of all others. Originally, money itself took such forms as sheep or cloth, but metal coins won the day as the most efficient commodities since they could be precisely weighed, reproduced perfectly, and easily carried around. The value of all commodities is determined roughly by the amount of labor power embodied within them. The application of labor to raw materials is the inescapable source of wealth from which the capitalist economy may never flee, even while money is increasingly represented digitally in the modern age. Still, even in a digi-

tal form, the global sum of money is always roughly the value of all commodities in the world. In theory, all commodities may be turned back into money, as presumably most are once sold. Should governments attempt to print money in amounts greater than the value of commodities it represents, they will devalue the money, creating inflation.

Cold and brutal reality

Money is the commodity that exists to reflect the value of the sum total of all other commodities. If the availability of world money always reflects the value of all commodities throughout the world marketplace, then states could only generate more money to meet needs (feed the hungry, clean the rivers) without inflating the economy by increasing

the amount of commodities. However, the amount of commodities is determined by the market itself, not by need but the ability to buy them with ready money (what capitalist economics calls "demand"). It is chilling to think that the amount of food, clothing, housing, and other consumer goods and services, is determined only by the amount of money chasing them, but this is the cold and brutal reality of the market economy.

There is also no escaping this reality. Even in state capitalist economies which falsely called themselves "socialist" or "communist" (for example, the old Iron Curtain countries, or modern day Cuba or China), government funding of farming or manufacture has not produced an

abundance of wealth for the working class in excess of the limited amount that its wages can procure. Just as in any other market economy, the vast majority of the population in those countries must work in order to survive, selling its energies to state enterprises rather than private concerns, but its wages still reflect the rough amount required to reproduce its class. Those wages are often lower than in the so-called First World, where centuries of unionized activity improved working conditions, training requirements, health benefits and the like, so considerably increasing the values deemed necessary to reproduce it. But wages in no country are so high as to swiftly elevate the non-owning class into the owning class, much as it does at times happen to the odd enterprising worker (if he or she began a successful company), or some lucky worker who won the lottery. (This is the American Dream, after all, which only a small handful will ever realize; for the rest, dreaming will be all it will achieve.)

Artificial scarcities

People starve quite simply because they do not have the money to buy food (the rich in those countries where starvation is rampant fill their bellies very well, and food is often exported while the claim of underproduction or drought is being banded about as the official explanation in the media). Housing is vastly inadequate for the majority of the population merely for lack of cash. There is absolutely no reason in this highly sophisticated technological era why any of our needs should go unfulfilled but for the limitations imposed by the market system. It is an economic system that produces artificial scarcities and waste on such a gigantic level that it holds back

The abolition of the need for money is never entertained, for this radical and essential solution would also mean abolishing the class foundations of society, which governments exist to maintain.

Continued on next page

progress for our species, relegating the vast majority of its people to second-class citizens who must spend their whole lives struggling to make a living (for themselves and more importantly for their employers who hired them).

Such an antiquated social system must be abolished and replaced by one in which the goal of production is to meet needs instead of for sale. When the means

of production are in the hands of you and me, we will produce all goods and services with the sole aim of meeting our needs. We will thus no longer require money, since the goods produced will no longer be commodities. They will belong to all of us, and who today thinks of buying back his coat each morning before heading for work? The world's resources shared and democratically controlled by all humanity, we will voluntarily (instead of as today, coerced, by the imperatives of survival) exert our energies in all areas of production or distribution which appeal to us, freely, and take freely from the common store of wealth produced. This is what liberation from capital will mean — no more money, no wages, no buying or selling, no poverty, no nation-states so no more war, no bosses.

It is likely in such a society bereft of the immense waste produced in the market economy today (think of the millions of unemployed or starving workers or those murdered in wars, or the totally unproductive occupations which squander our resources such as banking, ticketing, selling, advertising, exchanging,

policing, militarizing, insuring, and the like), that we will each only need to work a day or two a week to sustain a highly abundant economy, although human nature being what it is, it is likely we will want to exert our creativity far more often than that. It is only in a society in which we are forced to work or

else face starvation that we develop fantasies or trends of laziness, not to mention the laziness of that class of employers we sustain in utmost luxury due

to our extraordinary generosity. Paul Lafargue extolled two centuries ago the worker's "right to be lazy" in the title of his socialist classic, in opposition to the conservative motto still supported by employers and unions alike: "The right to work."

Money must go

So the next time you anticipate providing support to this campaign, charity or political cause or policy, bear in mind that the market

economy is not capable of producing sufficient money to actually fund more than a handful of those competing goals. Of course, even funding does not suggest realizing, and since the market economy is the cause of the problem, even a well-financed campaign is incapable of producing lasting solutions. The only effective solution would be to bring us into harmony with those goals, by the world's people achieving democratic ownership and control of the world's resources, and thereby transcending the scarcities imposed by the market system, realizing the abundance we are capable of today but which will only be possible in a nonmarket economy. When money goes, the problems caused by a lack of it will almost immediately go with it.

In conclusion, we urge you to stop campaigning for this or that cause within the context of the capitalist economy, since capitalism is only capable of producing a finite amount of money in relation to the finite value of goods and services that can be sold. Campaign instead for the abolition of the need for money, and for its replacement with an economic order in which meeting our needs is the only goal of production. Money once improved the means of exchange and with the advent of industrial capitalism ushered in an epoch of rapid scientific advance. Now it holds back the potential of such an advance. It is time humanity liberated itself from those economic limitations and entered into a higher phase of social and economic organization based on abundance instead of scarcity, and freedom instead of wage slavery. Join us. Be part of the solution. As another socialist classic economic analysis by Philoren a hundred years ago prophetically declared in its title, *Money Must Go*.

— Dr. Who

It is time humanity entered into a higher phase of social and economic organization based on abundance instead of scarcity.



Is there “turnover” under production for use?

The concept of turnover is related to production for exchange, in particular to the production of surplus-value by wage-laborers. If society becomes the owner of the means of production, then what happens to surplus-labor and the production of surplus-value? Surplus-value is of course a form of exchange-value, the money-form of commodities produced by living labor in excess of its daily requirements. If society as a whole replaces the capitalist as the owner of the means of production, and therefore replaces him also as the employer of labor, then the mass of laborers — the entire population capable of working — becomes the employer of itself.

No more 9 to 5!

Under capitalism the need to produce at a profit always requires that there be a greater supply of laborers than those actually employed. But who are those actually employed? They are those employed for as much as an entire day at a stretch, perhaps five, six or seven days in a row. If the employment structure is reorganized to permit access by the entire population, as its own employer, then a worker need put in no more time than that required to produce an average supply of necessities, and he/she can then step aside for his/her replacement; the actual time spent working will naturally vary from case to case. This will provide for the needs of society (not to mention any extras desired and found to be worth the effort) and at the same time leave

no one unable to contribute to the production necessary to meet them. (Industrial production is simply taken as the norm in this case.

In fact all kinds of activities, isolated as well as socialized, will be constantly flowing in and out of one another.)

Thus, each person will be putting in just as much work time as is socially required to keep the wheels of society turning, yet there will be no need to calculate the maintenance of some level of surplus-labor, since fluctuations can always be adjusted on the spot, as the case might require. The productive powers of technology, being by definition always in excess of individual needs, can eminently absorb the labor of a large number of mutually self-replacing individuals in the same location — and not only that, but one individual can also perform different kinds of labor in unrelated fields on the same day, during the same week, month or year, etc. Production for use is, above all else, enormously flexible.

The abolition of turnovers

The question of accounting for all the labor, however, has to be considered. “Turnover of capital” applies to production for exchange; does it

continue under the form of “turnover of use-values” under production for use? Marx, in *Capital*, Vol II (Ch IX), points to the fact of qualitative differences in the turnover of various parts of fixed capital: “It is therefore necessary to reduce the specific turnovers of the various parts of fixed capital to a homogeneous

form of turnover, so that

they will remain different

only quantitatively, namely, according to duration

of turnover” (p 184).

The circuit of capital which

he selects to reduce these specific turnovers is

the circuit of money-capital.

The question is, in

a moneyless society, how will this reduction be accomplished?

Or will there

be any further need for

it? In so far as it is capital

alone which is to be turned over,

the abolition of capital will be also

the abolition of turnovers. Is the

concept of the “turnover,” in other

words, socially necessary?

“We assume that value is always

advanced in money,” he says, “even

in the continuous process of production, where this money-form of value

is only that of money of account.”

The “value” is exchange-value.

Since the a discontinuation of

money is the cessation of commodity

production (money being the universal commodity), it follows that

the only remaining measure of turnover

is the circuit of productive capital. But capital is money, and money

(and wages) has now been abolished.

There is no “productive capital.”

One of the advantages of living without money, of having free access to the means of life, is that tedious calculations relating to purely formal needs (such as accounting) are reduced to a small fraction of what they were before.

Pass this copy on to a friend!

Continued on next page

There are only use-values of production and use-values of consumption. Can there be a turnover of use-values which is qualitatively homogeneous?

One of the advantages of living without money, of having free access to the means of life, is that tedious calculations relating to purely formal needs (such as accounting) are reduced to a small fraction of what they were before. Counting money is essentially an exercise of the imagination, not an act of intelligence. (This is a well-known fact to the rich, especially in regard to taxation.) Accounting for the turnover of fixed capital, consequently, is ultimately but a highly refined exercise of the imagination. The amount of really useful mental exercise is quite small; and it is this which constitutes the only part of the notion of "turnover" that is socially necessary.

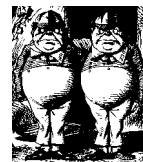
Capitalism: Just too complicated

When fixed capital "turns over," the machinery is worn completely out and can be used no more. If, however, the machinery (the building and so on) is accounted for not as

capital but as a useful instrument of social production, its life is really the combined working hours multiplied by its total product over the entire period of its use. Whatever term future generations may devise for "fixed capital," it will turn on this concept. The qualitative uniformity of this measurement thus goes well beyond the machinery's own specific use-value, which cannot by itself be translated into the language of production as a whole. One will only have to compare the product-hours with the consumption to have a scientifically determined idea of the needs of the production system, a quantitative measure good for all kinds of products.

That is how a society of working owners of the means of production will regulate affairs at the factory, or at any other place where labor is performed. It will make all the sophisticated procedures of capitalist economics seem as cumbersome and unwieldy to our descendants as the suits of armor once worn by knights now seem to us.

— ROEL



On Second Thought

From the *Western Socialist*

"You people like to talk. You are a bunch of ivory-towered theorists! We need action, not talk." Essentially, this is the argument given us by one of our "activist" correspondents from New York.

Inasmuch as we have heard this line for many years it is instructive to note how our "activist" opponents have progressed. The results of their efforts are written in the totals of the 1964 Presidential Elections.

The Socialist Party of America, after 60 odd years of activity ran no candidates while many of their better-known leaders either supported President Johnson openly or remained mute.

The Socialist Labor Party, after some 75 years of activity polled, according to a report in the New York Times of 12/13/64, a total of 42,511 votes. Granting that hampering tactics on the part of election officials cut the true vote it could not have been by any significant number.

The Socialist Workers' Party, after some thirty years of "correct," "Leninist-Trotskyist" activity polled a total of 28,510 votes.

Allowing for all reasonable doubt in tallying accuracy, the "activists" could not have polled more than 2% of the total vote.

Moral: The so-called revolutionary activists offer nothing basically different than the avowedly capitalist parties. Has their activity not all proved worthless? We say, "yes." It still holds true that there can be no substitute for socialist education. Action is essential, but only socialist action will bring socialism. That's why we insist on making socialists first.

— From our "Ivory Tower" No. 1, 1965

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WILL CAPITALISM COLLAPSE?



The computer industry has made tremendous strides in the past 30 years. Most businesses have been forced to adopt some form or other of this "labor-saving device." I would hazard a guess that every job has been touched by the effects of this technology since its inception.

The computer is a machine and like the "steam engine" has propelled us forward and created what I would term a revolution in production methods, resulting in a drastic reduction in "labor time" contained in each commodity, reducing its "value" and consequently its "price."

remain on the shelves and the economy suffers. These are laws that cannot be changed and must eventually cause Capitalism's demise. The death-pangs will be long and painful, as Marx predicted. "Capital not only lives upon labor but like a Lord drags with it to the grave the corpses of its slaves."

It may be important to note that only about 23 percent of the work-force is engaged in the production of commodities. All the other industries fail to produce wealth: they sim-

filling them up again, but you do not produce values doing useless work. You can pay someone to slam-dunk a ball all year but he will not add to the GNP. He will get his share of the "wealth" in the commodity, but he will not take part in its production.

The amount of "wealth" available is controlled, firstly, by the amount of labor time, "socially necessary labor time" in the commodities, worldwide and by the market's ability to purchase. I repeat, "wealth" can be released only by the

It seems apparent that as the number of workers required to produce saleable commodities is reduced, the number of capitalists that the system can support must also be reduced. As Marx predicted, "Capital is concentrated into fewer hands."

WILL IT EXPLODE?

I feel I must add to my foregoing observations, because I realize that there is a very important fact that must not be overlooked. Though the mass of commodities produced worldwide is the repository of wealth and is owned by the employers worldwide, I should bring to your attention that all expenses derived by the purchase of weapons of war, plus all expenses pertaining to maintenance of the Pentagons of the world and all their branches, must be classified as useless labor in a purely ethical sense. It is my belief that any weapon, whether it be a fighter plane or nuclear submarine is designed for the purpose of mass destruction of the human race and therefore must be classified as useless, in ethical terms.

I stress the word ethical because these weapons do fit the description of being a commodity, and like all commodities contain "socially necessary labor" and are a repository of



The total amount of commodities worldwide represents the total amount of wealth available for distribution. The wealth can only be released at the time of sale; till then the commodity is merely a repository of wealth. If the market cannot buy, goods

ply partake of the available wealth contained in the commodity. All professional sports, the military, advertising, most government departments, financial, sales, etc. do not produce one loaf of bread. You may work hard digging holes in the ground and

commodity's ultimate sale.

As was pointed out 150 years ago, the mode of production comes in conflict with the method of distribution. Recessions, slumps, depressions, crises, whatever you may want to call them, become more frequent and more violent.

Continued on next page

“wealth.” Furthermore, they are bought and sold like all commodities ... However, weapons of war are not commodities that the average worker is likely to buy, indeed are not part of the food, clothing and shelter that his wages represents. Only the employer would purchase weapons of war to protect his holdings world-wide and can be regarded as an expense for all those engaged in their purchase. You can guess who operates these weapons and dies in the process. “When will they ever learn...”

One could say that \$45,000.00 watches and million dollar rings are not aimed at the workers’ market either. Commodities have no morals or ethics; they are impervious to criticism and do what the economy dictates.

During times of relative peace, our lord and master closes down some of his military bases, temporarily, but only those that he feels he can do without. A penny saved is a penny earned, as they say.

We should consider the colossal waste attributed to this small minority of folks

who own all the unsold commodities of the world and the means for producing them. They use a good proportion of manpower and natural resources for the sole purpose of laying

claim to the largest share of profits.

The vast majority of folks act like a giant clone who barely has the energy or desire to move one foot ahead of the other: will this

giant awaken to his plight in time to save himself from oblivion?

At this point in time it seems unlikely from where I sit. What do you think?

— W.H.



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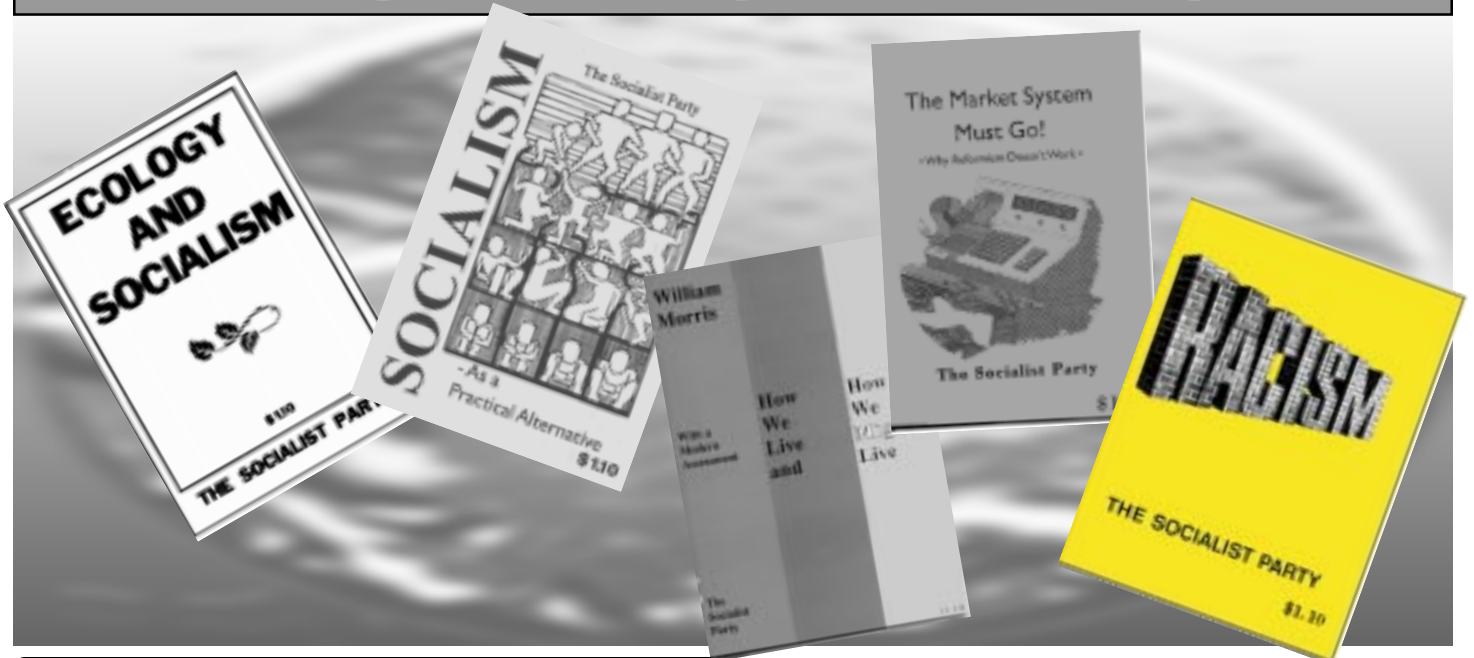
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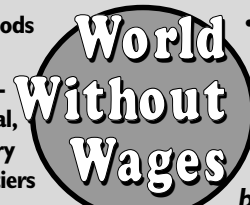
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THE WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

object

The establishment of a system of society based on the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of society as a whole.

declaration of principles

The Companion Parties of Socialism hold that:

- Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labor alone wealth is produced.
- In society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- This antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- As in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.
- This emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- As the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and overthrow of plutocratic privilege.
- As political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interest of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE COMPANION PARTIES OF SOCIALISM, THEREFORE, enter the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labor or avowedly capitalist, and call upon all members of the working class of these countries to support these principles to the end that a termination may be brought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labor, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.



journal of the world socialist movement in the united states

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international contacts

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regional u.s. contacts

CALIFORNIA Harriett Machado, 233 Mar Vista Ave., Pasadena, CA 91106 [626-584-5390; comradeh@yahoo.com]; Matthew Emmons, 10190 Baroness Ave., San Diego, CA 92126 [worldsocialismsandiego@hotmail.com]; Bill Hewitson, 4679 Cameo Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93455 [yotsy2@aol.com] • **ILLINOIS** worldsocialismchicago@hotmail.com [Daniel]; dgnslayer@gallatinriver.net • **MICHIGAN** Mardon Cooper, 377 Cherry Rd., Troy, MI 48083 [Whittawon@aol.com] • **NEW ENGLAND** Karla Ellenbogen & Ron Elbert, 23 Pleasant Ave., Somerville, MA 02143 [wspboston@mindspring.com]; Frank Gunning, Box 1373, North Conway, NH 03860 [603-356-3007]; wbrucher@bates.edu • **NEW YORK** wspnewyork@aol.com • **OHIO** Tony Pink, 1619 Robbins Ave., Apt 88, Niles, OH 44446 [argentum@onecom.com] • **PENNSYLVANIA** Thomas Jackson, 521 Greystone Rd., Merion Station, PA 19066 [tjackson@igc.org].

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We are committed to one overriding goal: the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a truly democratic, socialist form of society. Accordingly, membership in the World Socialist Party requires a general understanding of the basic principles of scientific socialism and agreement with the Declaration of Principles. It is our view that a worldwide system of production for the satisfaction of human needs, individual and social, rather than for private profit requires a majority that is socialist in attitude and commitment. Events since the beginning of the World Socialist Movement have demonstrated the validity of this judgment.



Since our fundamental goal is quite firmly defined as the attainment of socialism it is important that members understand and accept our principles. To dilute the principles with reformist tendencies or advocacy of the undemocratic idea of "leadership," for example, would be to subvert the Party's reason for being.

That said, we recognize there is room for differences of opinion in a socialist party. In contrast to principles, relatively few in number, there are a multiplicity of matters upon which socialists may have all kinds of conflicting views. If you agree with the following statements, you are a socialist and you belong with us.

To establish socialism, the working class throughout the must gain control of the powers of government through their political organizations. It is by virtue of its control of state power that the capitalist class is able to perpetuate its system. State power means control of the main avenues of "education" and propaganda, either directly or indirectly. It also means control of the armed forces that frequently and efficiently crush working-class attempts at violent opposition to the effects of capitalism. Moreover, the police and the armed forces are often used to combat workers during strikes and industrial disputes with employers. In a modern, highly developed capitalist society the only way to oust the capitalist class from ownership and control of the means of production is to first strip it of its control over the state. Once this has been accomplished, the state will be converted from a coercive government over people to an administration over things and community affairs. The World Socialist Party, therefore, advocates the ballot as the means of abolishing capitalism and establishing socialism. Socialism can only be established democratically; means cannot be separated from ends.

The present, capitalist, society, even with "repair" and reform, cannot function in the interests of the working class, who make up the majority of the population in most of the world today. Indeed, by its very nature, capitalism requires continual reform. But reforms cannot alter the basic exploitative relationship of wage-labor and capital, or production for profit. Whatever the reformers' intentions, reforms function only to make capitalism run more smoothly and to make present-day society more palatable

to the working class by holding out false hopes of a fundamental change or radical improvement. In the long run, reforms benefit the owning, capitalist, class rather than the class that produces the wealth. The World Socialist Party does not advocate reforms of capitalism — only socialism.

The World Socialist Party does not support, directly or indirectly, any political party other than our companion parties in the World Socialist Movement. We can only oppose those parties that one way or another support the present system. Our main purpose is to make socialists, not to advocate the use of the ballot for anything short of socialism.

The form of society once in effect in the Soviet Union, and still more or less in effect in China and Cuba now, was not and is not socialism or communism. It was a dictatorial, bureaucratic form of state capitalism. In those countries, as in the United States, goods and services were and are produced primarily for profit and not primarily for use. Nationalization and government "ownership" of industry in no way alters the basic relationship of wage labor and capital. The bureaucratic class that controls this form of the state remains a parasitical, surplus-value-eating class.

Trade unionism is the institution by which wage and salary workers attempt by various means to sell their working abilities, their mental and physical energies, at the best possible price and to improve their working conditions. Workers without such organizations have no reliable economic weapons with which to resist the attempts of employers to beat down their

standards. But unions necessarily work within the framework of capitalism and are useful, therefore, only to a limited extent. They cannot alter the fundamental relationship between wage-labor and capital. They can only react to capital's fiat, particularly in the case of long-term issues like automation or unemployment. Every wage or salary increase, in fact, only spurs employers and investors to accelerate the replacement of humans by machines in the workplace. If anything, instead of foolishly selling themselves short by demanding "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work," workers would do far better to follow Marx's advice and simply abolish employment altogether.

The World Socialist Party rejects the theory of leadership. Neither "great" individuals nor self-appointed "vanguards" can bring the world one day closer to socialism. The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. Educators to explain socialism, yes! Administration to carry out the will of the majority of the membership, yes! But leaders or "vanguards," never!

The socialist point of view rests solidly on the materialist conception of history. While some concepts of spirituality, loosely defined, are not necessarily incompatible with that conception, socialists see the problems that wrack human society as material and political, and their solutions as likewise material and political, not supernatural. Particular religious leaders may rebel against what they deem injustice, even suffering imprisonment or worse for their efforts. But where this means that they seek solutions within the framework of the system socialists aim to abolish, they demonstrate a lack of understanding of the development of social evolution, and socialists cannot endorse their views.

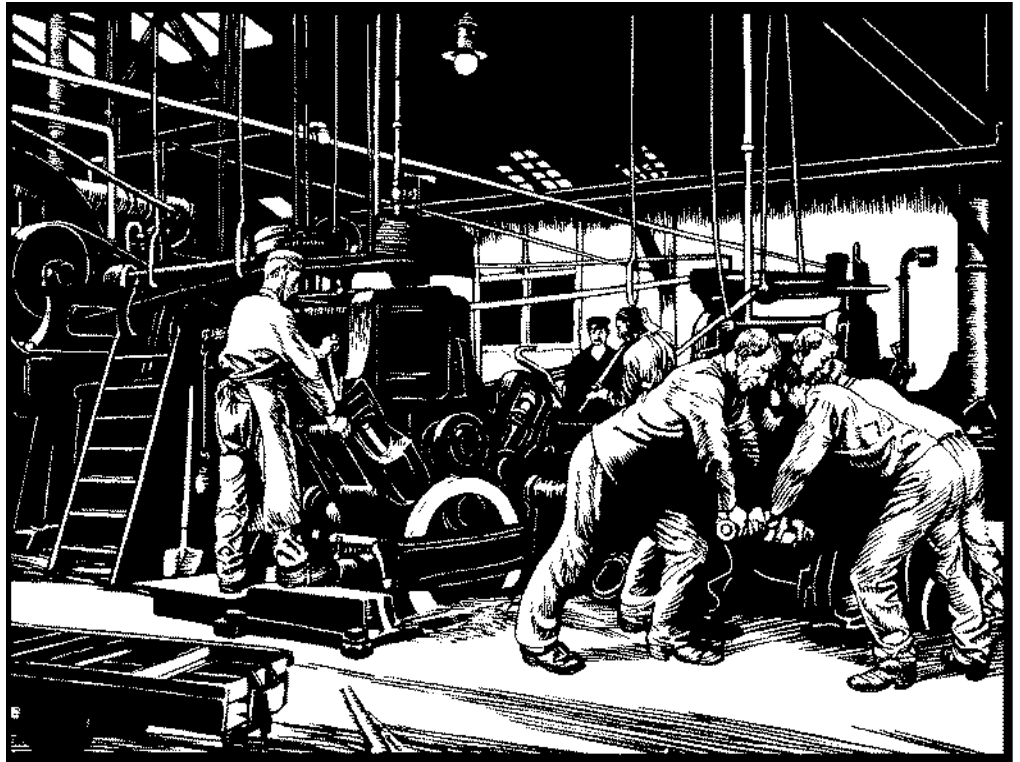
By the same token, membership in formally defined religious denominations or adherence to their beliefs can defeat people's best intentions unawares. The doctrines of organized religions traditionally locate the solution to society's problems in the individual's salvation and remain fundamentally indifferent to the fate of the human social community. At their most progressive they seek only to modify the existing institutions of a class-divided society, and at their most reactionary they openly obstruct even that desire. Such confusion over goals in an organization claiming to practice scientific socialism would sooner or later undermine its revolutionary character, for the tendency of such thinking is to confine discussion of capitalism's problems to the horizon of existing society, a blindness fatal to the socialist viewpoint. ∅

Family Values

Even from a purely individual vantage point, an increasing sense of vulnerability ought to lead people to a heightened sense of solidarity. A more acute awareness of susceptibility, for example, to disease or injury, and of their repercussions, should draw people closer together in spite of social and economic pressures to move apart. A very human sense of family always survives intact within us, however the marketplace may lead us to drift away from each other economically.

In a larger and more basic social sense, all of us belong to the same family of human beings, and we all have an unquitting, underlying mutual acknowledgment of our common interests as a human community. In the pre-capitalist past, it is true, this acknowledgment generally limited itself, in a practical, economic sense, to culturally defined factors (e.g., the ancient — though not the modern — concept of nationhood). Because human (community) consciousness is limited by the technology of communication, individual “societies” usually stopped at the boundary of culture in their recognition of “natural” common interests, leaving any further extension of this acknowledgment to the unimplementable (pre-materialistic) spirituality of the philosophers.

While capitalism has finally brought this down to earth, making primary an insistence on the practical and economic side of human activity, it has also retained and even intensified the marketplace’s tendency to push people into antagonistic, sometimes warring, sub-territories. From these bases, they seek first their ego-centrally defined advantage and only afterwards *consider the advisability* of some limited “larger” liberality. It is precisely this selfish impulse, however, that exaggerates the deep human sense of vulnerability we all inevi-



tably feel when beset by adverse conditions.

Thanks to its emphasis on unifying economies globally, capitalism has brought the human tangle of separate cultures and “societies” into a single world focus, reinforced by late developments in communications technology. But it has also sharply increased our mutual antagonism toward each other’s interests as individuals in the marketplace. Never before has the spirit of community, anywhere in the world, been so beleaguered.

But a rising tide raises all boats. The much-ballyhooed “acceleration” of change that humanly speaking looks so insane also brings vast new developments quickly into human view. Trends once too big for ordinary people to grasp are now easily communicated to a much more highly integrated — and interactive — audience engendered by capital itself. Capitalism’s human majority is thus bigger, potentially better informed and more active than any subject class in world history.

The time has therefore come to render accounts for civilization’s long, dark history: a global family reunion is brewing after all these millennia. Just when the prospects for socialism have never looked worse, they have never looked better. ◊