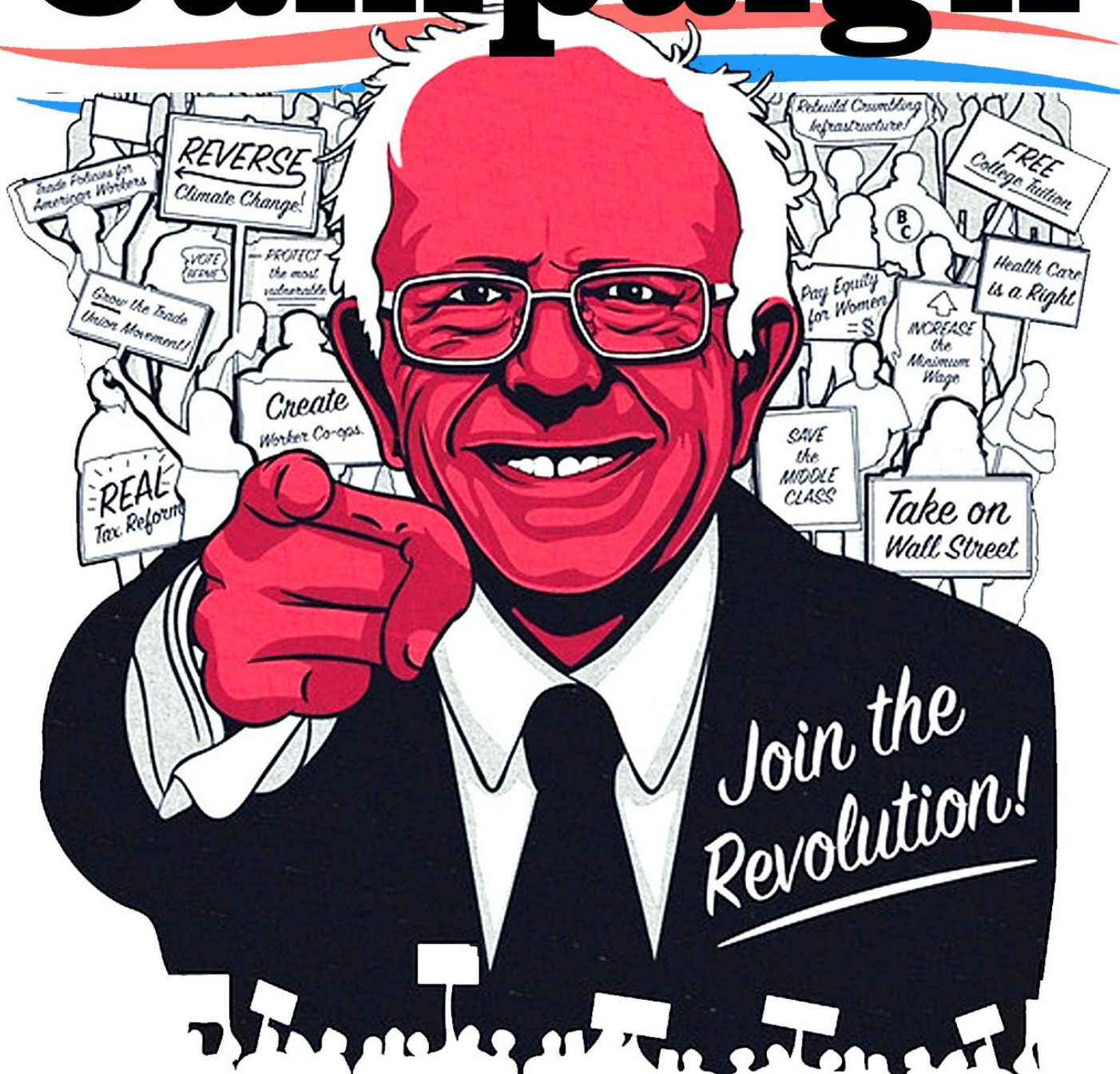


The Sanders Campaign



The Working Class Breathing Life into Democracy or Democracy Sucking the Life from the Working Class?

The article which follows was written by a young left-communist in the USA. It was written long before Sanders' predictable effusive endorsement of Hillary Clinton as Democratic candidate for President but the reasons for its inevitability are laid out clearly enough in the article below. Just like the Corbyn campaign in the UK, the Sanders' electoral bid has given "the left" something to get excited about. This article puts that excitement in its true perspective.

Democracy's Function as Part of the Apparatus of Oppression of the Working Class

Whenever confronted with signs of a potential future implosion of bourgeois society, the “progressive bourgeoisie” will rally every force they can in their campaign to “defend/restore democracy”. The campaign by Bernie Sanders epitomizes this movement, heavily targeting the young (especially students). This was not some humanitarian section of the bourgeoisie deciding to keep the “bad sides” of capital in check, it is the precise opposite: it is none other than a defence mechanism of capital precisely to ensure its hegemony, and the Sanders campaign was the pinnacle of this. This is part of the class struggle, but from the side of capital against the working class.

Emerging from a society torn apart by contradictions in order to maintain and perpetuate that arrangement of society, the state presents itself as the quasi-social “glue” seemingly outside of the social system yet connecting it together: a medium through which the antagonisms (the working class and capital) which are at the very root of such a society must express themselves (i.e. politically) in order for the particular configuration of social relations to be stabilized. Consequently, the institutions provided by such an organ of society as the state are not the actual mechanisms of power, they are simply the administrative components of capitalism's drive to stabilize itself, but the state, neutralizing threats to the status-quo as efficiently as it can, will present these institutions as the tools of power which can be captured and wielded by any force organized well enough. We, especially the young, are led to believe that, in the right hands, the political institutions of the state can become near all-powerful tools which can overcome social realities and gradually impose solutions to these social conflicts. This is not the case; in reality it is the other way around. These social conflicts in fact determine the political institutions.

Obviously this not specific to the USA, we can point to other countries to detail how the problem is not some special lack of democracy: the political system is simply the particular arrangement of the bourgeoisie's dictatorship, a determined structure atop the foundation of the particular arrangement of the relations of the productive process, which itself can only exist atop a particular development of the forces of production. It is completely irrelevant to the question of the class nature of the state whether the bourgeoisie insert candidates they have previously groomed for election into posts they want them to be in, if representatives are truly elected “by the people”, if the bourgeoisie rules through diktats, or if policies must pass a popular referendum before becoming law.

Switzerland, renowned for its “direct democratic” mechanisms, has already passed draft revisions of laws in both sections of its parliament to *directly* allow the Federal Intelligence Service to intercept and collect data from internet connections

coming out of or into Switzerland (collecting metadata, reading content of emails, users' browsing histories) and the use of "govware"[[1]]. A referendum for the revised laws will be put up sometime in September, but there is no reason to expect that even if the population rejects these laws that it will do anything; "BundesTrojaner" (state Trojan horses) have been used by the Swiss bourgeois dictatorship before, such as MiniPanzer and MegaPanzer which were Trojans for monitoring Skype and other internet (VoIP) calls used by the Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy, and Communications (UVEK) from 2006-2009[[2]]. New Zealand, consistently ranked one of the least corrupt governments on Earth[3], still passed laws directly legalizing state hacking of citizen's computers, spying on internet communication, etc. over a decade ago[4] (not to say it was considered "illegal" before then[5]). More to the point, New Zealand is part of the intelligence alliance with the Orwellian name "Five Eyes" (the other four being Australia, Canada, UK, and USA)[6] which allows them to pseudo-legally bypass national restrictions on data collection, and which the bourgeoisie has even gloated will not be affected by any amount of public outrage[7]. Denmark, hailed as being the least corrupt[8], in January passed laws which tripled the amount of time refugees must wait before applying for family reunification (it increased from one to three years) and which allowed them to search through refugees' belongings to find cash and valuables of up to 10,000 kroner[9], which they will seize and sell (the only exception being items of "special personal significance" [e.g. wedding rings]), to help "cover the cost" of their "accommodations"[10]. Not only that, the "integration allowance" paid to refugees has them living below the poverty line, is usually not enough to eat three meals a day, and 15% of these families with three or more children will not have enough money to consistently buy fruits and vegetables[11][12]. Norway, currently ranked "the most democratic country", has a large mass of working class immigrants — making up about 15% of the labor force — who are not able to navigate the union system so aren't paid the minimum wage (as wages are negotiated by unions, there is no national minimum wage)[13], are working ridiculous hours, and whose bosses give them fake contracts[14]. A large amount of the asylum seekers in Norway were fleeing from Ethiopia, and as European capitalism cannot handle them, Norway made an agreement with the Ethiopian regime in an attempt to forcibly repatriate them[15] ("them" being the asylum seekers and their children [so-called "asylbarn" {asylum children}], many of which were born and raised in Norway)[16]. This agreement was made only *one month* after increasing aid to Ethiopia too (despite much of the European bourgeoisie even decreasing aid in supposed protest of Ethiopia's human rights violations[17])! But don't worry, Norway's Minister of International Development assures us that "There is absolutely no connection [between the aid and the agreement], as I see it"[18]. These policies were spearheaded, of course, by our good friends, the Social Democrats (Norway's Labour Party)[19]. In fact, these homesick visitors were so excited at the opportunity to go home that they accidentally

locked themselves in churches and didn't eat for extended periods of time[20], one group even ended up inadvertently barricading themselves in a room at the Torshov transit center, luckily for them, the police were able to help by bringing dogs and helicopters[21]. Again, no need to fret, the police assured us that the event was “undramatic” and that they all left voluntarily (apparently the refugees recalling arrests and such don't remember it correctly)[22]. In 2013, 27% of refugees to Norway were fleeing the repressive regime in Eritrea, often referred to as “Africa's North Korea”. Democratic Norway's — and its supposedly “non-repressive” regime's — response was to attempt to send them back where they may likely be tortured for attempting to flee[23]. They tried again last year (this time by the conservative government, who were earlier supposedly pleading the Labour Party to rethink the deportation of Ethiopians [specifically the children]).

There are so many examples we can give, but you get the picture. The notion that the crisis we face is, or has its roots in, simply one of democracy or responsibility to the public is nothing but bourgeois ideology.

Capitalism is a system of exploitation. You can't reform away its most essential characteristic. Democracy is simply a (and the bourgeoisies' preferred) method of organizing the regime which protects this exploitation.

Democracy will only disappear when it no longer fools enough of the working class into believing it can be used by them to create real change, or when it has done its job and neutralized the revolutionary advances of the working class and the only task left is to stabilize capitalism from a crisis situation, which will be accomplished by openly “authoritarian” nationalism (Trump may be a step in this direction, **but the Democratic Party and the further-Left successfully limiting working class action to action within the confines of democracy is what will pave the way for something much worse**).

What Is the Real Nature of the Campaign by Sanders?

For Utopians, the answer to any problem lies in the political sphere: get the right politicians + the right policies = problem solved. Often problems are even reduced to reforming the mere mechanism of election itself. We often hear the liberal “to-do list” for making the government run more smoothly and being more accountable/transparent/responsible: get rid of electoral college, use instant-runoff/ranked choice voting, things like that. It is assumed that if “the people” (I will come back later to how as long as “the people” are thought to be the agent of change, then there will never be any change) held more control, if they could think up and enforce better regulations for the “evil megacorporations” and banking institutions, if we could control the private donations to politicians' campaigns, etc. etc., then today's crisis can be solved and tomorrow's avoided.

For those engaged in a scientific approach, however, we understand very clearly that the crisis is an economic one at root, and that the political crisis is one of the bourgeoisie's response to the economic. The only real solution to the crisis, however, is social: the abolition of bourgeois society. As always, the crisis most clearly expresses to the working class the real choice — contrary to the delusions fostered by capital in bourgeois ideology — that history gives to it: Socialism or Barbarism. Capitalism is the highest and most advanced mode of production based on exploitation of class by class, where humans interact and relate to one another but create a community of alienation because these relations are regulated not merely by the conscious decisions of people but by the invisible dictatorship of the law of value. Communism is the negation of this whole system. The communist revolution, being the first to carry the transition from a society based on some distribution of the proceeds of an exploitative, alienating, indirectly social labor process (“work”) to one which knows no alienation or exploitation and is directly social, which replaces a society based on some organization of work to one where there is no such thing to be organized, ergo is a more drastic and all-encompassing revolution than every previous one. Commodities, nations, classes; money, states, property; enterprises, democracy, alienation; value, “work”, the individual; no element of bourgeois society is to remain standing after the proletarian revolution, and as long as it does stand it does so only as an obstacle to the proletariat, as a manacle, preventing their emancipation. The destruction of these things is the only rejoinder to the crisis, and it is the historical task of the proletariat to achieve. The communist program is the checklist of human liberation, the annihilation of the aforementioned things which stand in the way of the emancipation of humanity via the emancipation of the working class; the struggle is one of de-proletarianization, the obliteration of every ball-and-chain of the workers, tying them, and thus society as a whole, to their existence as mere toilers, simple tools of capital to multiply and accumulate itself.

On the way to conquering society and overthrowing the current organization of the social organism, the proletariat will indubitably force reforms from the bourgeoisie, but turning this particular subcomponent of the process into the main goal was a century and a half ago a very understandable and more or less inevitable (for large parts of the social democratic movement) error. At the opening of the 20th century, however, the underlying process of the incorporation of the social democratic parties into an appendage of the bourgeois state apparatus could no longer be denied, the collapse of the Second International in the face of the first World War exposed the role of the Social Democratic parties in the transition of capitalism into its imperialist epoch (and, in some analyses, the transition from the formal to the real domination of capital); there was no “betrayal”, by that point, Social Democracy was not a part of the communist movement, it was entirely bourgeois, the proletariat's interests were not their interests, they were in direct contradiction,

the program of Social Democracy was the thwarting of attempts by the proletariat to carry out its program. The failure of the proletariat last century can largely be reduced to its failure to break free from and defeat Social Democracy. Today, one who proposes reforms as themselves the vehicle for the proletariat (especially if it's not the proletariat, but "the people" or "citizens of 'x' country") immediately exposes himself as none other than the chief enemy of the proletariat, as a more hideous and gruesome weapon of the bourgeoisie than the atomic bomb. And the more it recuperates and appropriates elements, themes, and symbols of the proletariat's revolutionary movement to create forms grotesquely robbed and emptied of their radical content, the obscener it gets.

We must fight for better lives in the immediate, but have no illusions that anything adequate can be provided by capital, and especially have no illusions that reforms, even those which reach to the highest points of the superstructure and the "commanding heights of the economy", are adequate. The fight for improvements in capitalist life must be subjugated to the fight to end such "life". Part of this indeed means that not every struggle will necessarily result in the strengthening of the communist movement, and this must be taken into account before we mindlessly enter every arena and support every action just because it is occupied by or done by workers.

Let's probe the wonders of democratic politics a bit:

From ever-increasing surveillance to "sting" operations by the FBI which manipulate mentally ill ("retarded fool") and impoverished ("without a pot to piss in") Muslims and guide them to jihadism, often providing them with plans for attacks, weapons, finances, incentives, etc., luring them into traps where they will promptly arrest them and announce that they foiled another terrorist plot ("a Hollywood ending")[24], the bourgeoisie will not loosen its hold over the workers unless they are forced to.

From a speech to the Congress about the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994:

"...how do we talk about the very serious crime problem in America without mentioning that we have the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world, by far, with 22 percent of our children in poverty and 5 million who are hungry today? Do the Members think maybe that might have some relationship to crime? How do we talk about crime when this Congress is prepared, this year, to spend 11 times more for the military than for education; when 21 percent of our kids drop out of high school; when a recent study told us that twice as many young workers now earn poverty wages as 10 years ago; when the gap between the rich and the poor is wider, and when the rate of poverty continues to grow? Do the members think that might have some relationship to crime?"

“Mr. Speaker, it is my firm belief that clearly, there are some people in our society who are horribly violent, who are deeply sick and sociopathic, and clearly these people must be put behind bars in order to protect society from them. But it is also my view that through the neglect of our Government and through a grossly irrational set of priorities, we are dooming tens of millions of young people to a future of bitterness, misery, hopelessness, drugs, crime, and violence. And Mr. Speaker, all the jails in the world, and we already imprison more people per capita than any other country, and all of the executions in the world, will not make that situation right. We can either educate or electrocute. We can create meaningful jobs, rebuilding our society, or we can build more jails. Mr. Speaker, let us create a society of hope and compassion, not one of hate and vengeance.”[25]

Sanders would then vote for this bill[26], a centerpiece of the Clinton administration’s continuation of the “War on Crime”, which includes: a federal implementation of the “three strikes” rule (the third time an individual commits a “serious violent felony” or drug-related offense, they must be sentenced to at least life in prison without the possibility of parole); an expansion to what someone can be sentenced to death for (including times when no death actually occurred); a reduction of the age at which a minor (someone below 18) can be tried as an adult for a violent crime from 15 to 13; removal of pretty much the only way for poor inmates to get access to a college education, via Pell Grants, “No basic grant shall be awarded under this subpart to any individual who is incarcerated in any Federal or State penal institution” (in the section explicitly titled “AWARDS OF PELL GRANTS TO PRISONERS PROHIBITED”); and the big’un: grants (the “Truth in Sentencing Grant Program”) for building prisons for violent criminals distributed to eligible states, states were eligible if they had “in effect laws which require that persons convicted of violent crimes serve not less than 85 percent of the sentence imposed” or met four criteria in imprisoning and keeping more criminals and keeping them longer since the previous year (1993), including “has increased the average prison time which will be served in prison by convicted violent offenders sentenced to prison”, “has increased the percentage of sentence which will be served in prison by violent offenders sentenced to prison”, and “has in effect at the time of application laws requiring that a person who is convicted of a violent crime or serious drug offense shall serve not less than 85 percent of the sentence imposed” if that person has been convicted of a violent felony or serious drug offense on one or more prior occasions, this money is then allocated to eligible states based on the amount of violent crimes reported by each state[27]. It also, as the official summary states, “Requires the Attorney General, in making such grants, to give consideration to the special burden placed on States which incarcerate a substantial number of inmates who are in the United States illegally”.

As the “U.S. Department of Justice Fact Sheet” on the Act put it, “The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 represents the bipartisan product of six

years of hard work. It is the largest crime bill in the history of the country and will provide for 100,000 new police officers, \$9.7 billion in funding for prisons and \$6.1 billion in funding for prevention programs which were designed with significant input from experienced police officers. The Act also significantly expands the government's ability to deal with problems caused by criminal aliens. The Crime Bill provides \$2.6 billion in additional funding for the FBI, DEA, INS, United States Attorneys, and other Justice Department components, as well as the Federal courts and the Treasury Department.”[28]

Sanders’ excuse (or, rather, the excuse made by his staffers) on his website for his approval of this debauchery and democratic horror is that, while essentially all of it is horrific, there were two exceptions: the Violence Against Women Act and a ban on semi-auto assault weapons (he didn’t used to be so worried about gun legislation, but in order to prove his “progressive” credentials he has to pretend like it’s always been a main concern for him). Making sure to point out that he made a show at the time of whining and complaining about some of the most appalling bits, the press release ends with a pathetic redirection to how Hillary supported it *more*[29]. As usual, “furthest to the left”, or “most progressive”, boils down to “best at occasionally pretending to be disgusted by the terrors wrought by the bourgeoisie”.

Under “Issues” on Sanders’ website we see:

“Getting Big Money Out of Politics and Restoring Democracy”[30]

The working class, in America or abroad, has no interest in “restoring democracy”, this slogan is not one of giving power to the oppressed, to the powerless, the propertyless, it is one of stabilizing the regime of our oppressors. When Sanders calls for “Restoring Democracy”, he is making no different a statement than when Trump says “Make America Great Again”.

Unlike the bourgeoisie, the proletariat is an international class with internationalist interests, and for the Barbarism to end, it must organize itself as a class, as the dominant social force, but a revolutionary one with a revolutionary program of none other than its own abolition and with it the rest of bourgeois society.

Against the appeals to the working class in the forms of empty promises for impermanent, infinitesimal improvements in their treatment in the form of “workers’ rights”, which usually come as a package deal — the other item in the set being an assault on the class somewhere else — the class program is the eradication of capitalist work. Opposite slogans for the restoration of democracy, the task at hand requires its overthrow. Counterposing the idealist requests for the restriction of the role of “big money” in elections, we assert the historical necessity for the proletariat to build its own organs where it will deny the bourgeoisie not only the ability to vote but to have any input into the proletariat’s re-organization of society

unless they can pry it back out of our hands with its military. Contrary to the Utopian pleas for a more transparent state, the proletariat's duty is the annihilation of the bourgeoisie's state and the establishment of its own dictatorship, where it will delegate its tasks of repression of the bourgeoisie and socialization (**not nationalization**) of production to no one, "not even to the class conscious vanguard [the communist party]". Repudiating the demand for taxes to support the so-called "middle class", we maintain that any significant increase in material support for the vast majority of society relative to the development of the productive forces requires the forceful expropriation of the bourgeoisie, the smashing of their state to enable this, and the immediate abolition of money to be replaced by labor vouchers where one is remunerated for their individual labor (minus a bit to support common funds) until distribution is done directly according to need. Disregarding the insistence on an alliance of Islamic nations to crush ISIS, we respond that the communist program necessarily includes the smashing of every bourgeois state whether it takes the name of a (democratic/people's) republic, federation, Reich, or caliphate. Objurgating calls for national unity and coordination internationally to eradicate terrorists, our response is internationalist* class unity, working towards the erection of a revolutionary centralized world communist organization, and the eventual implementation by the proletariat, in and via its organ(s) of dictatorship, policies of revolutionary terror to eradicate the true "terrorist" of the social organism: capital and the class it is personified by. Exposing the shallow, liberal bourgeois, merely rhetorical talk of a "political revolution" through the vote, the true answer to the question of our times is a social revolution through workers' militias.

The Bernie Sanders campaign has a two-fold nature, it is both a typical attempt of the bourgeoisie to distract the working class from any independent action, but it is also the expression of the whimpers of the weak Holy "middle class" — a doomed class with a historical role consisting of nothing but its pathetic attempts to prevent its disintegration (often taking the form of social democracy and the occasional fascist regime after the working class has been defeated by the left). He is the exact opposite of "progressive" any way you look at it. His campaign is the natural evolution of the same processes that made up the majority of the Occupy movement: a middle-class populist reaction (albeit carried by workers) to capitalism's centralization of wealth, power, and everything else which is the inevitable result of its centralization of production. A false fear of capitalism might as well be the defining characteristic of "radical" petty bourgeois politics; it leeches off the back of the real anti-capitalist movement that is the workers' struggle, and it overtakes it in times of the proletariat's defeat.

An illustrative example of this parasitism can be seen by several members of Sanders' campaign team posing as union members to intrude into employee areas at four different hotels.[31] The unions, especially in an advanced capitalist country

like America, are in this stage of capitalism undeniably appendages of the bourgeois state apparatus with which it manipulates and hinders class struggle and can impose and implant itself as a filter to prevent the natural attempts by workers to defend their living standards from within and in support of bourgeois society from developing into proletarian radical self-activity. This is a fantastic demonstration of how the petty bourgeoisie, while pretending to be for some kind of change (e.g. “Political Revolution”), assists in the domination and distraction of the only entity capable of change (the working class) by the bourgeoisie — the actual middle-class (the various professional classes [which should not be generalized to mean “complex labor”], middle management, and the petit-bourgeoisie) will jump at the opportunity to push their agenda (i.e. maintaining its existence at any cost, even going so far as to promote the systematic extermination of sections of itself [e.g. Jews]) down the throat of the working class. The petty bourgeoisie acts as agents of the “progressive bourgeoisie” to graft reformism and class-collaborationism onto the proletariat when its primary weapon of distraction in the everyday struggle via a controlled economic channel, the unions, don’t have their usual efficacy of also imposing a controlled political outlet (voting [typically for the Democrats])). Anything to avoid a self-consciously *social* response by the proletariat. When Sanders says there needs to be a movement, “more than just getting Bernie Sanders elected”, he is very explicit what the purpose of this is: getting workers into the unions and to force even Republicans to vote for social reform, i.e. to focus all attention and energy into the bourgeois political system and the state’s union appendages (and with a goal of minimal reforms like raising taxes on the wealthy, a higher minimum wage, etc.), to prevent the working class from fighting for its interests outside of the parliamentary-democratic machine and union structures. The “workers’ party” + trade union model proved itself to be nothing but a method of limiting the working class over a century ago.

"We have got to end this outrageous voter suppression which is taking place in dozens of states — efforts that are intentionally denying low-income people, people of color and seniors the ability to participate in the political process..."

"As President, my job will be to increase voter turnout, not decrease it. My job will be to see that the United States has one of the highest voter turnouts in the world, not one of the lowest."

The bourgeoisie cannot let the proletariat come to the realization that they actually have no power in the capitalist state organized as a “democracy” (or any other way, for that matter), and that there is a communist alternative, so the bourgeoisie have two options: either they must make sure the working class is completely pessimistic and apolitical and has no inkling of an idea of its own power — the Republicans’ strategy, or they must be deceived into believing they do, or can, have power inside the bourgeois parliamentary system — the strategy of the Democrats and the Left which is in orbit around them. These are the choices confronting the bourgeois

class, that is, unless there is any re-emergence of communism, if the proletarian class begins to fight on its own terrain — the streets, the workplace, the neighborhood, the pillars of social reproduction — then, of course, option number three becomes open to the bourgeoisie: unremitting force, the shedding of the democratic illusion as the democratic nation-state reveals what it truly is: the apparatus for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Sanders is simply advertising himself to be the most effective at deceiving the working class.

The choice is power being held solely by the class which owns the means of production and commands the productive process — the application of labor, which it must exploit — in pursuit of the accumulation of capital, a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship with the aim of preventing change, or power being held solely by a class — the class which has nothing to sell but its labor power — dissolving itself, a dictatorship of the proletariat, the only actor of change, a dictatorship with the aim of the negation of class society. A dictatorship of the past which becomes more ruthless the more the capitalist crisis deepens or a dictatorship of the future, destined to dissolve as wage labor disappears and the whole population is absorbed into a classless society of freely associated producers.

The Fictitious “Independence” of Sanders

Sanders has received support from “the Democratic Party apparatus” and raised funds for it in return, such as hosting events at resorts in Palm Beach for big donors,[32] but it’s okay because he says he did not explicitly “go and ask financial people for money”,[33] so I guess it’s also okay that he took \$10,000 from Hillary Clinton’s Political Action Committee when he was running for senate in 2006[34] (Senator Sanders the “socialist” 2006, supported by the representatives of Allen & Company [the head of which had and still has a place on Coca-Cola’s board of directors], Farallon Capital Management, Atalanta Sosnoff Capital, Silverstein Properties, Citigroup, and — I shit you not — a group called International Profit Associates[35] [run by a marvelously horrible capitalist who sexually harasses female workers, has attempted to buy sex from a teenage prostitute, and has attempted to commit larceny[36]]). It doesn’t leave much to the imagination about what kind of relationship he has to the Democratic Party when in 2004, he, an “independent”, stated his position on Nader’s run: “Not only am I going to vote for John Kerry, I am going to run around this country and do everything I can to dissuade people from voting for Ralph Nader. . . I am going to do everything I can, while I have differences with John Kerry, to make sure that he is elected.”[37]

Tied to the bourgeois state like all other politicians, his “independence” is, and always has been, fictitious. He was, at the beginning, spouting the rhetoric of fairly typical bourgeois leftism (giving nice gestures here and there towards various red-

painted capitalist regimes [something along the lines of: ‘the regime in Cuba is really repressive, but they have nationalized healthcare and great education, how cool is that? Those dumb proles over there should shut up and accept the wonderful opportunity to have a “socialist” government’[38]], hard not to think of the GMIL[39]), he worked with a couple Trotskyist groups (namely the Socialist Workers Party [not to be confused with the Socialist Workers Party in the UK]), and he has shifted from capital’s left-wing to its center-left. He merely will make the occasional reference to socialist rhetoric, but that’s about it.

He has stated, “I don’t believe government should take over the grocery store down the street or own the means of production”[37]. The problem here not being that he doesn’t believe in those things, but that he posits the typical bourgeois public-private property/privatized-nationalized dichotomy, the Lassallean pseudo-socialist bullshit that Marx debunked a century and a half ago, which is the hallmark of Social Democracy and its descendants (Leninism [Stalinism, Maoism, Trotskyism], Democratic Socialism, much of Anarchist practice, etc.).

He almost seems like a robot specifically designed to spout the most typical rhetoric of bourgeois leftism (amusingly, even when trying to distance himself from it), proposing magic solutions to the crisis predicated on a belief that the state can distribute the money it collects however it deems most ethical, magically without consequences, an essential part of the typical Leftist “democratic belief in miracles”:

“...in terms of income, the last statistics we have seen from 2009 to 2012 tell us that 95 percent of all new income in this country went to the top 1 percent. . . . the wealthiest family in America [the Waltons], the family that is worth \$100 billion, does that family really need government assistance in the operation of their business? I think the answer is obviously no.” The answer is actually yes, no matter if it does not make sense to liberals, what the “progressives” don’t — and will never — understand is that this actually isn’t enough (“All science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided.” Marx). The amount of “profits” that any particular firm(s) record(s) on the books is irrelevant. What matters to capital is surplus value extraction (a.k.a. exploitation of workers) and its realization in the sale of commodities. The capitalist system is in crisis, the rate of profit has fallen to the point where the ability for capital to accumulate (and this for society to reproduce itself) is endangered; in order to engage in real production, capitalists require huge subsidies, they are not extracting enough surplus value from workers relative to capital invested, hence the shift towards speculative activity and credit, creating commodities out of expected streams of capital, when those profits don’t appear, the capitalist system can only pretend for so long like everything is fine, eventually large amounts of capital are revealed for what they are, fictitious, and capitalism falls into crisis (in this case, the crisis will deepen). One of the ways capitalism “pretends” it can continue to operate is by using the bourgeois state to mobilize production, using taxes, but this can only go

on for so long until it is revealed by the growing debt to be no solution to the crisis. What comes next? Austerity (known here as “bailouts” alongside cuts to social spending). Which politicians are in the White House only affects how long it will take before the force comes in full, and how much debt is piled up when it happens (the more the debt the worse the crisis will be later on). The working class, and not just in America, will pay, sooner or later, unless it stands up and responds by abolishing the capitalist mode of production.

“I would say that while the American people feel very strongly — and this is, by the way, across the board, Democrats, Republicans and independents — in opposition to cuts in Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, inside the Beltway, the political establishments, there is support for cuts to those terribly important programs.”[40] It doesn’t matter how much those programs are needed, how many people support them, or if they say it in the poll booth. Capitalism requires them to be cut, so they will be, unless the working class really fights. Sanders just works to make sure that the working class will never realize that it is inherent to capitalism, and not to do with bad politicians, (exceptionally) greedy bankers, etc.

His most “left-wing” stance is his support for worker co-operatives, which again have nothing to do with socialism. In fact, he even sounds like a Trump with the same supposed goals, but just different methods:

“Instead of giving huge tax breaks to corporations which ship our jobs to China and other low-wage countries, we need to provide assistance to workers who want to purchase their own businesses by establishing worker-owned cooperatives”. When the bourgeoisie aren’t being effective enough at exploiting workers, capital will get workers to exploit themselves in their place. As Marx, the supposed “statist” wrote in response to the leftists who put forward the Gotha Program, “That the workers desire to establish the conditions for co-operative production on a social scale, and first of all on a national scale, in their own country, only means that they are working to revolutionize the present conditions of production, and it has nothing in common with the foundation of co-operative societies with state aid. But as far as the present co-operative societies are concerned, they are of value *only* insofar as they are the independent creations of the workers and not protégés either of the governments or of the bourgeois.” Neither shares in the company nor complete self-management is a cure for the horrors of capitalism, they just make them harder to fight:

“Study after study shows that when workers have an ownership stake in the businesses they work for, productivity goes up, absenteeism goes down and employees are much more satisfied with their jobs_.”_[20]

The last thing socialists want to do is increase productivity (and increased satisfaction can only mean that those who work in co-ops are only that much more alienated). Typical of Social Democracy (and its descendants [part of the “proof” of

the “socialist” nature of the USSR which Stalinists love to point to was its hyper-industrialization, which is in actual fact proof that it was nothing but capitalism being rebuilt from the ashes of economic and political collapse, war, a bourgeois-democratic revolution which had to be completed by the proletariat and peasantry, and a failed socialist revolution, it was the solidification of capitalist social relations in the 20th century]), socialism is equated by Sanders to an increase in productivity led by the state. The left is deployed by capital to create “opportunity”, yes, but opportunity for further exploitation of the working class, Sanders is far from an exception. Bernie is the puppet of capital and its state, like Hillary, Trump, Cruz, etc. There is no “lesser evil”. There is just “austerity now, or more later”.

He can spout all the rhetoric he wants — and I don’t wish to imply he necessarily doesn’t believe it himself — but the actual facts of the matter show that like the rest of the functionaries of the state, he doesn’t work for the proletariat. Take, for example, his good work for the people of Sierra Blanc:

He was a co-sponsor of and pushed through a bill in congress for a project to dump the waste from Maine, Texas, and Vermont’s nuclear power companies into a working class town[41], with a population that was 60% Hispanic (and it is 16 miles from the border), a third of households below the poverty line, where the per capita income was \$10,500 (and the county’s \$8,000)[42]. The town, Sierra Blanc, was not better for nuclear waste than anywhere in Vermont, and when citizens from the town went to Vermont to explain and protest, multiple Vermonters in the crowd who heard stood up and apologized, explaining that they were unaware. When the citizens from the town went to an anti-nuclear weapons march where the Sanders campaign had a platform, they were kept away from the platform by Vermonter marchers, as they had been warned by the Sanders campaign that if the Texans were protesting there, Sanders wouldn’t come. Before a later rally, Sanders had a meeting with a few of the protestors. He refused to budge, “My position is unchanged, and you’re not gonna’ like it.” When asked if he would at least visit Sierra Blanc, before he dumps all the waste there, he responded, “Absolutely not. I’m gonna’ be running for re-election in the state of Vermont.” During a speech by Bernie later for his campaign, one of the protestors yelled “What about my home, Bernie? What about Sierra Blanca?” A few others joined in, “What about Sierra Blanca, Bernie?” Sanders simply left the event.[43]

Another example: in his run for Senator, he went to the Waterfront Park in Burlington and he boasted, “This beautiful place was once an unsightly rail yard that served no public purpose and was an eyesore. As mayor, I worked with the people of Burlington to help turn this waterfront into the beautiful, people-oriented public space it is today. . . We took the fight to the courts, to the legislature and to the people. And we won.”[44] Reality tells a different story. What actually happened was that the working class districts said “no” to what he campaigned vigorously for, and they demanded affordable housing.

While he initially pushed for the waterfront to be made public — his housing aide remembers him pounding his fist on the table and saying to the owners “Over my dead body are you going to displace 336 working families. You are not going to convert Northgate into luxury housing”[45] and part of his campaign was the slogan “The Waterfront Is Not For Sale” or that it won’t be “an enclave for the rich” — when the city didn’t receive the funds it needed for public development and federal subsidized housing, he easily moved on to what they termed the “Alden Plan”. The Alden Plan was a proposal for \$80 million of heavy commercial and luxury development on 24.5 acres, including a luxury hotel, offices, a retail center half the length of the city’s pedestrian mall, a 1,200 car parking garage, a narrow public walkway and a shaky (“to the extent feasible”) promise for 300 units of mixed housing. By the second Alden Plan, the mixed housing units turned into 150-300 luxury condos costing 2.5-4 times the average Burlington home each. Sanders campaigned vigorously for this plan, full of the very things Sanders ran on preventing. Only when activists worked tirelessly and, most importantly, the working class districts (Bernie’s supposed “base”) voted “no”, was the Alden Plan rejected. The “jobs” it would have created — creating “jobs” and maintaining “growth” is the foundation of Sanders’ “socialism” — would be low-paying service sector jobs, not paying enough to buy homes in the city, and the environmental impact would have been gigantic; the plan would just contribute to the gentrification of working class areas near the project, causing property values to soar and poverty to climb with it as workers would be kicked out of their homes. Multiple commentators have compared Sanders’ “socialist” economic framework to the “trickle-down” economics of the Reagan administration [44][46].

“Restore Democracy” Is the War-Cry of the Imperialist

When we go to Sanders’ website, we are redirected to a splash page that says:

“Nobody who works 40 hours a week should be living in poverty.”[47]

Funny he should say that, as he doesn’t even support a \$15 minimum wage anywhere in the near future, “over a period of years, not tomorrow”, he says[48]. Meanwhile, he supposedly recognizes \$7.25/hour as a “starvation wage”[49].

Sanders’ campaign is not an attempt to improve the conditions for those who make all of the wealth in society, this is an attempt to blindfold the historical protagonist and prevent it from dwelling on and developing via practice its instinctual understanding of the true fork in the road of history:

A society where there is no such thing as alienation and exploitation and other evils of the rule of dead labor over living, without poverty where each will “work” less than half (possibly a fourth) of the hours per week (steadily diminishing as well) that are mandated by commodity society, and the word “work” becoming almost

immediately an immensely less accurate term for the production process, as labor becomes directly social and the walls, erected by the earliest class society — but cemented and swollen to previously unimaginable heights in capitalism — between production and play, labor and sociality, mental and physical labor, are knocked down by the empowered proletariat (as it ceases to exist as the proletariat), where gender, race, and sexual orientation have zero significance in social status and indeed no longer are applicable categories/abstracted social relationships in the sense they are today, and the disabled are taken care of: communism

Or,

A society which bases itself on alienation, exploitation, and centralization of power, the law of value at work, and can only survive via increasing assaults on the working class, and more and larger orgies of carnage and destruction: capitalism in its highest stage, imperialism, the phase of parasitism and decay.

In this stage of capitalism, every nation-state must take aggressive measures, both economic and militaristic, to plunder resources and restrain its enemies, with large imperialist blocs centered around superpowers (new ones are in formation right now, the “Brexit” is an important event in this process). The bourgeois nation-state must, in order to survive on the individual level and to destroy and devalue capital on the collective level, use surplus value extracted from workers in the “private sector” and any of the enterprises operated by the state, redirect it to waste production to maintain and advance its military, to creating a more invasive and repressive police state, and keep the crypto-Keynesian war economy running with endless attacks on the world working class.

Each bourgeois dictatorship must invent some way to mobilize the masses to support the bourgeoisie against each other, the particular circumstances within each country and its relation to others determine what this is: in the name of Allah, a right to the Holy Land, protecting the “socialist” motherland, defeating fascism, defending democracy, spreading democracy, upholding “human rights”, combating terrorism, protecting “our way of life”, etc.

From his website, under “Protecting America and American Values”:

“Senator Sanders believes our country must remain vigilant to protect us from terrorist attacks at home, whether from organized international terrorist networks, or from ‘lone wolf’ extremists. The threat is real, and he will aggressively pursue those who would do us harm.”

Sanders earnestly supports the bourgeoisie and their politico-ideological hold over the working class. Sanders’ campaign cannot be further from any step towards communist revolution, proletarian self-liberation, the ending of alienation and exploitation as the mechanics of social reproduction, it is largely simply a call for the bourgeoisie to more adequately fund their apparatus of dictatorship and more

efficiently run the current main agent of the complex world system of imperialism. The bourgeoisie must do everything it can to uphold the illusion that the bourgeoisie have the same interests as the working class, or at least that these interests are reconcilable in order to defeat a common enemy. The bourgeoisie must turn the working class against itself, using racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. (and later use identity politics to further divide using those conflicts which they had fostered).

Sanders' Imperialist Dimension

Above all else, we must look to the imperialist activities Sanders maintains are necessary to reveal the true underlying mechanisms at work: The campaign is an attempt by capital to lock down and prevent disruption by the working class as it continues and prepares further assaults on it; it is the machinations of the bourgeois dictatorship as it makes its preparations to accelerate the descent into barbarism.

“Together, leading the world, this country will rid our planet of this barbarous organization called ISIS”[50]

Pot, meet kettle.

While Sanders accepts that the US created ISIS by intervention in the Middle East, half of his rhetoric asks the listener to imagine that the US can magically “stop” intervening, the other half, however, makes exceptions for just about everything, overall meaning “business as usual”.

We often hear of his “diplomatic” bent, of his imaginary aversion to the imperialist bloodbath, but any even cursory glance at his voting record will reveal that he, like all good little Keynesians, wouldn't have created any real dent in the military, there would be no significant redirection of funds away from the war machine, it would kill too many “jobs”; the entire nation-state in the imperialist stage of capitalism is a war machine, and this reality will present itself to the Left and liberals as a choice between a “permanent war economy” or “no economy”.

From maintaining a massive military and continual imperialist “foreign intervention” (whether by sanctions [Russia[51], Iraq {calling it “non-violent”, then saying it is destroying the economy}[52], Iran, Libya[53] {in fact, he supported it being 3 years longer than Bush proposed on one occasion}[54], North Korea[55], etc.] other “pressures”, or actual invasion [Somalia[56], Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.]), to state-led increases in productivity, **nothing** Sanders represents are in the interests of the working class.

“The Cold War is over. And our focus has got to be on intelligence, increased manpower, fighting international targets.”[57]

Sanders voted for and supported the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia[58] — he said he supported the bombing because he wanted to minimize American casualties (he didn't want to see “thousands and thousands of our men and women coming home in body bags”)[59], the next day, one of his advisors, Jeremy Brecher (who had earlier worked with, among others, Paul Mattick Jr. on a magazine in the early 70's, and is now a respected historian of the labor movement) drew the line and resigned, his resignation letter calling Sanders' out on any bullshit about the bombing being for “humanitarian” reasons[60]. Human Rights Watch found 90 different instances where civilians were killed, with a total of 489-528 civilian casualties, many times from using cluster bombs on densely populated urban areas, while several times US forces declared that there were only 20 instances of civilian deaths / “unintended consequences”, only one time saying that there were even 30 instances[61].

He voted for the Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998, which was to provide support (training, arms, funding, etc.) for “democratic opposition” to the Hussein regime in Iraq in 1998, and stated that “It should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime.”[62] The Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998 was cited by the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (a.k.a. the Iraq War Resolution) as part of the justification for using military force[63].

He also voted for the Authorization for Use of Military Force in 2001 (to give Bush the ability to use 9/11 as an excuse for military intervention [“against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001”])[64]. The White House has over and over maintained the AUMF as a significant legal basis for the drone program and detaining and killing of “suspected” terrorists[65], and so has the Department of Justice referenced the AUMF as a legal basis for NSA spying[66].

Bernie voted for bills to allocate (for simplicity's sake, I won't go into the difference between authorization and appropriation bills here, and the numbers here are low anyway, as did not include funding for military family housing and medical programs for the military when they could): \$3.63 billion to military construction for 1994[67]; \$2.52 billion to military construction and \$119 million to NATO construction programs for 1995[68]; \$2.82 billion to “general military construction” and \$169 million to the NATO “Security Investment Program” (from here on abbreviated as “SIP”) for 1999[69]; \$4 billion to military construction and \$81 million to the NATO SIP for 2000[70]; \$10.5 billion to military construction, \$125 billion to Pentagon “operations and maintenance”, \$47.8 billion to “research and development”, \$8.3 billion to “ballistic missile defense programs” (\$1.3 billion of which can go to “DOD activities for combating terrorism” instead, if the President thinks it necessary for “national security interests”) for 2002[71], this bill

also authorized the use of Vieques, an inhabited Puerto Rican island with a population (at the time) of a little over 9,000 and 64.6% of said population below the poverty line[72], **for Navy and Marine bombing exercises (including the use of depleted uranium)** despite protests two years prior, and the scientific evidence of mass contamination and extraordinarily high cancer rates, the direct killing of at least one civilian and injury of four others, and a documented instance of live bombs being dropped within a mile of the main town[73]; another bill in 2002, this time allocating \$14.5 billion for Department of Defense and \$6.7 billion to Homeland Security[74]; \$5.278 billion to military construction and \$168 million to the NATO SIP in 2003[75]; \$7.4 billion to “ballistic missile defense programs”, \$58.6 billion to “Research, Development, Test and Evaluation”, \$71.6 billion for weaponry, vehicles (including aircraft), and shipbuilding, \$93.6 billion to military persons, and \$114.8 billion for military operations and maintenance[76]; \$5.2584 billion to military construction and \$169.3 million to NATO SIP for 2004[77];. He also voted \$25 billion for “emergencies and extraordinary expenses” **in Iraq and Afghanistan**, \$77.4 billion to obtaining new weaponry, \$104.2 billion to military persons, and \$120.6 billion for military operations and maintenance for 2005[78]; **\$50 billion to fund the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan**, \$72.13 billion to “Research, Development, Test and Evaluation”, \$76.54 billion to obtaining weaponry and vehicles (including aircraft), \$97 billion to military persons, and \$123.62 billion to fund the operations and maintenance of the Department of Defense itself in 2006[79] (although he voted against the bill later); an additional \$37.9 billion for operations and maintenance of the DOD, \$15.03 billion for the obtaining of weaponry and ammunition and vehicles (including aircraft), and \$10.28 to military persons and \$1.9 billion to border control and security in 2006[80] ; \$35.21 billion to the Department of Homeland Security in 2007[81] (again the excuse is the 1/13th of the funds that go to disaster relief rather than horrendous strides into Barbarism); \$12.194818 billion to military construction, \$230.867 million to NATO SIP, \$480.25 billion to the DOD and \$43.48 to Homeland Security (1/23rd of what went to DOD and DHS went to disaster relief and recovery, 1/28th if you count military construction and veterans affairs \$22.88 billion went to disaster relief, meanwhile \$25 billion in loans are being offered to automobile manufacturers who don’t want to pay the full cost of meeting standards for fuel efficiency and emissions), also these funds were not prohibited from being used for preleasing or leasing offshore oil or natural gas[82]; etc. He voted to override Clinton’s line item veto of 38 projects in a 1998 Military Construction bill (meaning that Sanders voted to keep \$286.7 million of funding for the military in addition to the rest of what was in the bill)[83],

He even voted to prevent the closure of Guantanamo Bay (his press release ends, hilariously enough with: “I think that it is prudent to review that plan they develop before we spend \$80 million in taxpayer money”)[84]. He, of course, said it was

because there wasn't any kind of comprehensive plan. Hmmm, for an independent, it sounds awfully like he was following the commands of the Senate Majority Leader, "Democrats, under no circumstances, will move forward without a comprehensive, responsible plan from the president. And we will never allow terrorists to be released into the United States. I think the President will come up with a plan. Once that plan is given to us, then we'll have the opportunity to debate his plan. Now is not the time to do it." [85]

As far as austerity goes, he voted for the 2008 Budget Resolution which states that, in the House:

"Not later than September 10, 2007, the House Committee on Education and Labor shall report to the House of Representatives changes in laws to reduce the deficit by \$750,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2012."

And in the Senate:

"Not later than September 10, 2007, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by \$750,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2012" [86] [the author was unable to dedicate enough time to go through all his voting records on the subject, but, rest assured, this instance is anything but the solitary example]. These cuts are, of course, in the context of the gargantuan military budget which Sanders opposes in little more than rhetoric.

Sanders presents no alternative to the imperialist necessities of capitalism, he simply likes to dress it up in democratic garb.

"I believe that the United States should have the strongest military in the world."

With America having 5% of the world population, and being a distant third in ranking of country by population, this surely seems to be contrary to his rhetoric around how the US shouldn't and can't be the world police.

"As President and Commander-in-Chief, I will defend this nation, its people, and America's vital strategic interests" [87]

So says the supposed "internationalist".

Despite his supposed criticism of the proportion of the budget being spent on military instead of education and the like, he votes for many a bill maintaining an elephantine military, such as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 [88], which is full of goodies: it allows the Secretary of Defense to "establish the active-duty end strength for the Army at a number greater than the number otherwise authorized by law up to the number equal to the fiscal-year 2010 baseline plus 30,000"; it states that "the President should consider the imposition of additional, more restrictive sanctions on Iran if the Government of Iran fails to enter into good faith talks which result in progress toward compliance with

applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions and the United Nations Security Council has failed to adopt significant and meaningful additional sanctions on the Government of Iran”; it requires the Secretary of Defense to “submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the procurement of 4.5 generation fighter aircraft” in order to “to fulfill the requirement of the Air Force to maintain not less than 2,200 tactical fighter aircraft”, and this report must include “A discussion regarding the availability and feasibility of procuring F-35 aircraft to proportionally and concurrently recapitalize the Air National Guard during fiscal years 2015 through fiscal year 2025”; and “\$309,000,000 shall be available for research, development, test, and evaluation, procurement, or deployment of alternative missile defense systems or their subsystems designed to protect Europe, and the United States in the case of long-range missile threats” from Iran if the Secretary of Defense submits a report certifying that it meets certain conditions[89].

There is not an ounce of “defense” of a single US worker in any of that, all that is in that bill is oppression of workers everywhere, including an attack specifically on the workers of countries like Iran as “pressure” to make the bourgeoisie of that country heel to the ruling imperialist bloc, and a few corrections to the state’s mechanism of “caring” for those who took up their “duty” to fight to maintain the the bourgeoisie’s order.

“ISIS must be defeated primarily by the Muslim nations in that region. America can't do it all. And we need an international coalition. Russia should be part of it-- U.K., France, the entire world--supporting Muslim troops on the ground, fighting for the soul of Islam and defeating this terrible ISIS organization.”[90]

Why should America have the “strongest military in the world” if America is not supposed to be fighting against “existential threats to democracy” like ISIS supposedly is? The holes and flat contradictions in the rhetoric of capital’s professors of ideology, let alone of the rhetoric to reality, are innumerable.

When asked why he refused to condemn Israel’s actions in Gaza, he sidestepped the issue by stating more or less ‘killing civilians is bad, but it’s okay because Hamas started it’ (he a few months earlier voted for a resolution that gave “full support” to Israel’s right to “defend itself”[91]), he goes on about how Hamas uses a tunnel system for military purposes, not mentioning of course that the tunnels are also used for things like food[92], the audience picked up on this and pounced on him for it. He told them to “shut up”, that they didn’t “have the microphone”[93]. Unfortunately, the audience’s protests came nowhere near overcoming bourgeois leftism, just screaming about the occupied populations’ “right to resist”, etc., etc. (the “occupied population”, not the Palestinian workers exploited and oppressed by both Israel sanctions and military invasions and the Palestinian bourgeoisie, but just “Palestinians” in general, and the “resisting” being the bourgeoisie in these very underground tunnels hiring young militants to launch a missile every now and then

to maintain the conflict, as, if the conflicts end, the bourgeoisies' profits would diminish as the tunnels would be used less and therefore so would their smuggling operations[94]). At the meeting where he told the protestors to "shut up", Sanders was going on about how "terrible" what the "right-wing regime" was doing by targeting civilians, exactly a month earlier, of course, Bernie voted for a resolution where the Senate reaffirmed "its support for Israel's right to defend its citizens", condemned "the unprovoked rocket fire at Israel", stated that "innocent Israeli civilians are indiscriminately targeted by Hamas rocket attacks", and that "5,000,000 Israelis are currently living under the threat of rocket attacks from Gaza", and, obviously, didn't mention that Israel has ever killed civilians or imposed and is still imposing suffocating restrictions on trade (and limiting food to the minimum needed to prevent humanitarian intervention, minus 7.8% to adjust for Gazan "culture and experience"[95])[96]. In a debate with Hillary recently [at the time the article was written] the furthesthe went is to agree that Israel's retaliation has been "disproportionate", and some empty rhetoric about Palestinians needing to be treated with "respect and dignity" if the Israeli state is going to survive, but, of course, that isn't without recognizing "Israel was subjected to terrorist attacks [and] has every right in the world to destroy terrorism"[97]. [Since the initial writing of this article Sanders has made more "serious" comments condemning Israel after pressure from the left of capital, and moved to more consistent "two-state solution" rhetoric, this however, has precisely zero substance behind it {not that it could, as there is no solution that has anything to do with nation-states, regardless of quantity, on any side besides their violent destruction by the empowered international proletariat with its world dictatorship})

We all know his pretend aversion to military action, but let's look at the reality of the kind of strategy Sanders proposes, we have already above detailed some of the effects of sanctions, and his support for them, but let's look at a gruesome program he has vowed to continue (one which, of course, is also hailed as an alternative to ground war):

After a Doctors Without Borders / Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) hospital in Afghanistan was deliberately hit by the US with AC130 cannon fire, which caused horrors such as people trapped in their beds being burnt to death[98], medical staff having limbs blown off (one was decapitated), where gunfire followed and shot people that were trying to run away, as the staff frantically contacted NATO and D.C. to no avail (getting no response at all, something like that ground troops would be contacted, or simply "I'm sorry to hear that...")[99], and three MSF hospitals in Yemen being bombed by a Saudi-led coalition backed by the US, again knowing that they are hitting MSF hospitals[100], Sanders thinks that American role in the inter-imperialist bloodbath in the middle east should increase, just through the "diplomatic" method of supporting and often funding other countries' imperialist campaigns.

With official UN reports saying that more civilians have been killed in Yemen by US drone strikes than by Al Qaeda, Sanders states firmly that he will continue the drone program (in fact his exact response to a question about whether he will continue the drone program and use special forces was “*All of that and more*”, only when pressed to further clarify did he add that it was “terrible” when drones, “a weapon”, “work badly” [101] [translation: ‘oh yeah, and it sucks when people who have nothing to do with the terrorism are blown into tiny pieces of flesh and bone, lit on fire, and/or impaled, and if not killed by these terrors, live with massive injuries and permanent damage for the rest of their — likely shortened — lives, but that has nothing to do with us or how we are using drones, these sort of things just happen sometimes, shit happens, ya’ know?’]). Things get even better when you take into account the fact that the Obama administration redefined “militant” to mean “military aged male in the area”, regardless of if they are working with/for any terrorist organization, so they can massively lower the official civilian kill count[102] (not that they would tell the truth about the kill count anyway[103]). This is all, of course, because the US does not care about preventing the deaths of, for example, the Yemeni, if it will get in the way of American (and its current allies’) capital, the class personifying it, and their apparatus of dictatorship maintaining its imperialist interests around the globe, it does not matter if they want to do this directly or through “pressure” and sanctions to get other countries to do it for them.

These instances are nothing but examples of the US “supporting other countries” without sending in ground troops themselves, precisely what Sanders is supporting (albeit, he wants the Saudi’s to focus on ISIS rather than the Houthis in Yemen).

“I think the people of America are getting sick and tired of the world and the region, Saudi Arabia and the other countries saying ‘hey, we don't have to do anything about it. The American taxpayer, the American soldiers will do all the work for us.’”[90]

To this sickening display of “social” chauvinism, there is no response but fighting for proletarian self-activity, culminating in the construction of the world communist organization and organs of class dictatorship, not to fight on behalf of and instead of the proletariat, but as the concentrated expression of the proletariat itself. Ceaselessly fighting for independent working class action, the formation of independent organs of class power, and (dialectically) consequently the development of class consciousness, and building the world party to maintain the lessons from past struggles and clarify the communist program, this is the duty of every class conscious individual.

No Politician Is On the Side of Socialism

For those liberals who think that the problem comes down to checking the power of the multinationals, “Big Money”, and that Sanders presents any opportunity to do so, let’s put it this way:

Bernie Sanders voted the exact same as an ex-member of the Walmart board of directors 93% of the time. No other two senators running for president in 2016 voted together more often than Sanders and Clinton. On average Democrats vote with other Democrats 89.3% of the time[104], Sanders, the “democratic socialist”, voted with the majority of the now-leading party of the ruling class in the most advanced capitalist and most powerful imperialist nation between 95% and 99% of the time between 2001 and 2010[105]. In 2005, the then-Chair of the National Committee of this party put the number at 98%[106].

The congressperson he voted the most with[105] is a multimillionaire[107] ex-Senior Vice President of Consumer and E-Commerce (earlier the Vice President of Marketing) of RealNetworks[108] (when it was worth on average \$190 million and grew to \$462.9 million[109]) described as a “business-oriented Democrat”[110] (and who presents the same image on her website[111]) who spent \$11.6 million to win her 2000 election, outspending her opponent by over \$4 million[112], which at that point broke the record for the most a woman in the country’s history had spent of money she had “earned” “herself” on a race for major elective office. This included a campaign claiming her goddamn dog was diabetic[113].

“Socialist” my ass. There is no parliamentary way out. The factors deciding the course of history are not ones of how many “socialists” we can stuff into the bourgeois government. There can be no legislation or “executive action” to emancipate the class which makes all of society’s wealth and in doing so finally solve the contradictions wrought on the social organism by modes of production based on the exploitation of labor and perfected in the society dominated by capital accumulation. There is only a social solution, in which the state apparatus and the façade that is bourgeois democracy will be smashed, in the unlikely case that the bourgeoisie does not drop the democratic act first in order to fully mobilize its state machinery to crush the revolution, and the proletariat must not hesitate to strike first.

Every noise from Sanders’ mouth that even refers to the working class or its movement, every utterance of the word “socialism”, every bare mention of the word “worker”, is nothing but a slap in the face of every worker around the world, the same to women, minorities, and every other victim of bourgeois society whenever he attempts to rally them to his side. In fact, if it only was a slap in the face it would be much less horrible than it actually is, it is no less than an attempt to shackle, hogtie, and silence the working class in the most advanced capitalist country (i.e.

the most imperative economy [the most centralized and advanced concentration of the productive forces] and bastion of imperialism for the proletariat to conquer/begin socializing and put in the service of the world revolution as quickly as possible).

While the capitalist crisis we are currently in may not break into world war any time in the next president's term(s), and of course for now the main strategy will be using the proletarians of other countries ("*...Russia should be part of it--U.K., France, the entire world...*", "*but I do not support American ground troops in Syria*"[90]) to do their dirty work, part of maintaining the illusion that they care for members of the "Greatest Nation" (and that the US should still get credit even if it made the workers of other countries do it [*...leading the world, this country will rid our planet of this barbarous organization*"]), we can be sure of what Bernie's attitude will be if it does:

*"Winston Churchill's politics were not my politics. . . . But nobody can deny **that as a wartime leader, he rallied the British people** when they stood virtually alone against the Nazi juggernaut and rallied them and eventually won an extraordinary victory."*[114]

His campaign might yet have unintended consequences for the bourgeoisie. But, while it might be true that the consequences of Sanders' campaign might in the end help push the proletariat into action, this does not mean that Sanders himself or any of his politics should be supported — he is an attempt by the bourgeoisie to prevent *independent* proletarian action — nor does it rescind the duty of communists to fight every illusion in the bourgeois system and denounce every element of his campaign. Communism will only re-emerge as a proletariat engaging in independent practical activity and subsequently developing communist consciousness through it, clarified by the party. Sanders' campaign might end up propelling the proletariat towards independent activity, but the test for this is if it leads the proletariat towards shattering their illusions in Sanders and fighting for their interests against bourgeois democracy.

All those who believe that "Bernie" should be supported because, even though he isn't any closer to being a socialist than Rush Limbaugh, he might push the working class to the "left" politically, are making a very large mistake. No amount of pushing the working class to the "left" will make them socialist. Communism has nothing to do with bourgeois leftism. Pushing the proletariat to the left just pushes them towards taking *capitalism* into their own hands and solving the capitalist crisis on behalf of the bourgeoisie. Neo-liberalism is how the bourgeoisie is *managing* the crisis, they are at the moment fairly clueless how to solve it. Driving the proletariat to "radical" leftism is to encourage the proletariat not to revolutionize society, to become conscious of itself and its interests, to truly become the historical subject, but to accomplish the task of the restructuring of capital necessary to begin a new

cycle of accumulation, which at this stage requires mass-scale inter-imperialist warfare. To drive the proletariat to the left is to do nothing but to encourage the proletariat into leading the descent into barbarism.

**GSE,
Friday, July 29, 2016**

Notes

[1] parlament.ch

[2] en.wikipedia.org

[3] transparency.org.nz

[4] nzherald.co.nz

legislation.govt.nz

legislation.govt.nz

[5] old.internetnz.net.nz

“While certain State agencies will be exempt from criminal liability in some circumstances, these exemptions relate either to existing powers or to activities that these agencies could presently undertake without specific authorization”

[6] en.wikipedia.org

[7] yahoo.com

“American information is so valuable, experts say, that no amount of global outrage over secret U.S. surveillance powers would cause Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand to ditch the Five Eyes relationship.

The broader message is that the revelations from NSA leaker Edward Snowden are unlikely to stop or even slow the global growth of secret-hunting — an increasingly critical factor in the security and prosperity of nations”

[8] transparency.org

[9] ≈ \$1,498 USD; £1,060 GBP; €1,342 EUR; \$1,988 CAD; \$26,278 MXN; ₱102,762 RUB; 5,716zł PLN; 12,442kr SEK as of writing

[10] cnn.com

[11] casa-analyse.dk

[12] Confirming the Marxist analysis of the capitalist crisis starting in the 70’s, the response by the bourgeoisie being neo-liberalism, the report states that “The penalties have gradually become a little bit stronger since the 1970’s”

[13] newsinenglish.no

[14] newsinenglish.no

[15] ecadforum.com

[16] norwaypost.no
norwaypost.no

[17] cmi.no

[18] theforeigner.no

[19] norwaypost.no
norwaypost.no

[20] aftenposten.no

[21] aftenposten.no

[22] aftenposten.no

[23] theguardian.com

“Torture is widespread in Eritrea and any dissenters are dealt with in the harshest of manners. Eritrea does not grant access to embassies or human rights organisations to the various prisons and detention facilities located throughout the country to monitor conditions. Given these concerns it is unlikely that Norway will be able to adequately monitor the conditions of returnees to ensure that they are not being mistreated by a government more intent on silencing dissenters than living up to its international obligations.”

The government of Eritrea looks unfavourably on those that flee the country, and family members of those that leave are often targeted. It is difficult to ascertain what fate awaits those who return, but given the extent of abuses against those are perceived to be against the regime there would be concern about how they would be treated upon their return,

[24] ted.com

theintercept.com

theintercept.com

hrw.org

[25] gpo.gov

[26] votesmart.org

[27] gpo.gov

[28] ncjrs.gov

[29] berniesanders.com

[30] berniesanders.com

[31] culinaryunion226.org

[32] cnn.com

[33] cbsnews.com

[34] opensecrets.org

[35] opensecrets.org

[36] nytimes.com

[37] salon.com

[38] thehill.com

In an old video he said, "Everybody was totally convinced that Castro was the worst guy in the world," "All the Cuban people were going to rise up in rebellion against Fidel Castro. They forgot that he educated their kids, gave them healthcare, totally transformed the society."

He, in the Democratic debates defended his comment, saying that the US shouldn't topple the governments of other countries. He then added, "Cuba is, of course, an authoritarian, undemocratic country and I hope very much, as soon as possible, it becomes a democratic country"

[39] greatmomentsinleftism.blogspot.ca

[40] salon.com

[41] congress.gov

[42] ejatlas.org

[43] archives.texasobserver.org

[44] sevendaysvt.com

[45] thenation.com

[46] academia.edu

murrayhatesbernie.tumblr.com

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- [50] nbcnews.com
- [51] nytimes.com
- [52] c-span.org
- [53] govtrack.us
- [54] votesmart.org
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- [56] votesmart.org
- [57] washingtonpost.com
- [58] clerk.house.gov
- [59] youtube.com
- [60] antiwar.com
- [61] hrw.org
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- [89] gpo.gov
- [90] ontheissues.org
- [91] haaretz.com

[92] news.nationalgeographic.com

[93] youtube.com

[94] crisisgroup.org

[95] haaretz.com

haaretz.com

theguardian.com

aljazeera.com

[96] congress.gov

[97] aol.com

[98] doctorswithoutborders.org

[99] doctorswithoutborders.org

[100] –For the bombing of the hospital in the Haydan District of the Sa’ada Province:

doctorswithoutborders.org

“The hospital’s GPS coordinates were regularly shared with the Saudi-led coalition, and the roof of the facility was clearly identified with the MSF logo.” It was also “the only hospital still functional in Haydan area”

–The clinic bombed in the Al Houban district of Taiz:

doctorswithoutborders.org

“The MSF team immediately evacuated the Al Houban clinic and informed the Saudi-led coalition that their jet planes were mounting an attack nearby. The clinic itself then came under attack.”

“The health structure's GPS coordinates were regularly shared with the Saudi-led coalition, most recently on November 29, when we informed them about this specific activity in Al Houban”, ”There is no way that the Saudi-led coalition could have been unaware of the presence of MSF activities in this location”

–For the bombing of the hospital in Sana'a:

doctorswithoutborders.org

“All warring parties, including the Saudi-led coalition, are regularly informed of the GPS coordinates of the medical sites where MSF works”,

“There is no way that anyone with the capacity to carry out an airstrike or launch a rocket would not have known that the Shiara Hospital was a functioning health facility providing critical services and supported by MSF.”

[101] theguardian.com

[102] nytimes.com

salon.com

[103] salon.com

telegraph.co.uk

articles.latimes.com

thebureauinvestigates.com

[104] washingtonpost.com

[105] politico.com

[106] youtube.com

He also says Bernie “is basically a liberal democrat”.

[107] opensecrets.org

[108] sec.gov

[109] wolframalpha.com

[110] seattletimes.com

[111] cantwell.com

[112] opensecrets.org

[113] nytimes.com

[114] vox.com

Each bourgeois dictatorship must invent some way to mobilize the masses to support the bourgeoisie against each other, the particular circumstances within each country and its relation to others determine what this is: in the name of Allah, a right to the Holy Land, protecting the “socialist” motherland, defeating fascism, defending democracy, spreading democracy, upholding “human rights”, combating terrorism, protecting “our way of life”, etc.

Subversion press
subversionpress.wordpress.com

