

THE WORKER

75¢

August 10, 2021

Newspaper of the Workers Party, U.S.A.

Vol. 35, Number 12

The Class Struggle of the Workers and Oppressed People Is the Motive Force of Social Development

While the propagandists for American capitalism incessantly beat the air with their fairytales about "the land of opportunity and equality," the facts show that some 150 million Americans (66% of all families) have a net worth of less than zero and are in debt, while 1/2 of 1% of the population owns 35% of all the wealth or more than \$3.5 trillion in assets. And the richest 10% of the population own 72% of all the wealth.

Further, when one deducts the value of homes owned by the working people and of IRAs and other funds set aside by some workers for their retirement, one gets a truer picture of the extent to which the capitalist class monopolizes the means of production. The richest ten per cent of the population owns 94% of all business assets, 89% of all corporate stocks, 98% of all tax-exempt state and local bonds, etc., etc. Thus the ownership of nearly all the productive capacity and wealth is monopolized by only 10% of the population while effective control over the entire economic life of the country is in the hands of less than 1/2 of 1% of the population.

Of course, "free market" ideology claims that capitalism affords every individual "equal opportunity." Thus it insists that every individual must fend for herself/himself and that those who "make it" do so through their "hard work and intelligence" while those who do not "make it" have only themselves to blame.

But under the capitalist system, individuals are not born or guaranteed equal economic, political or social rights. On the contrary. By force of arms the capitalist class has monopolized the very tools needed by human beings to transform nature and secure their existence. And by monopolizing the tools of society (as well as the land and natural resources) the capitalists have economically disenfranchised 90% of

the population.

The character of the political system, too, is determined by the nature of the class in power. In bourgeois-capitalist society "parliamentary cretinism" is that form of "democracy" which the bourgeoisie uses to conceal the oppressive nature of its state power, which it wields through the majority of seats it secures in elections.

In addition to the state power, the bourgeoisie also dominates that mighty extra-state power, that is, the monopolies, trusts, joint companies and their investments inside and outside the country. This power of big private property constitutes the economic force which appropriates the toil of the working people inside or outside the country and is in a position to buttress the superstructure to adapt it better to the savage capitalist rule.

In reality bourgeois-capitalist democracy is a form of the domination by the bourgeoisie, while the rights and freedoms proclaimed "for everybody" have an utterly formal and deceptive character, because in the conditions of the existence of private property, the socio-economic means which would ensure the actual implementation of these rights and freedoms do not exist.

In the U.S. the Congress opens its doors to the "elected," but the dictatorship of the bourgeois-capitalist class does its own work. There they hold endless discussions and voting after voting, and things still go on according to the desires of those who make the law – the rich, the owners of trusts, monopolies and the banks.

The capitalists can never willingly allow the democratic will and decisions of the majority to govern society because the net result can only be to undermine the wealth, power and privilege of the capitalist exploiters.

Examples abound which demonstrate the reality that the laws passed by legislative branch and the guidelines and decisions of government do not

reflect needs or will belonging to the people. Over the years hundreds and hundreds of laws have been passed and used to deny the masses even the most elementary democratic rights, such as the right to strike, the right to picket and protest, etc., etc. At various times of crisis, the capitalist state has passed special laws to outlaw the political parties of the working class, to make it a crime to organize in favor of the socialist system or to propagate the theories of Marxism-Leninism.

Today the capitalists are building up a huge apparatus of repression. The legislative branch has passed laws granting draconian surveillance powers for police, intelligence officers and other government department managers, including greater authority to conduct wiretaps, to monitor use of cellphones, to obtain e-mail messages from internet providers, to conduct secret searches of property, to punish and imprison people without due process and on the basis of the political prejudices of the parties in power.

In several states the legislative branch has passed "English Only" laws, suppressing the rights of Mexican-Americans, Native Indians and others to use their native language.

Rather than heeding the voice of the people who are demanding "health care as a right," the politicians are drafting and passing legislation based on the interests of the insurance companies, the huge pharmaceutical firms and other big business interests.

The people demand an end to U.S. domination and war abroad, but nevertheless, the government carries out its "international war on terrorism" and imposes "might makes right" on the world through nuclear blackmail.

The people overwhelmingly opposed the Troubled Asset Relief

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Program, the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act and other measures to bail out the bankers yet the government passed them. The people overwhelmingly oppose initiatives like Plan Mexico and Plan Colombia to achieve the goal of dominating outright all the countries south of the Rio Grande, but nevertheless, the government funds them to the tune of tens of millions of dollars annually, etc., etc.

In short, the program of the capitalist class is to step up its exploitation and violence against the working class. To impose this agenda on the people, the government rules by the most arbitrary methods and the people are completely excluded from the political power.

Precisely because the political power remains in the hands of a few and in order to prevent the usurpation of more and more arbitrary power by the ruling class, the struggle of the workers and people to defend their democratic rights is a vital necessity.

The right of the people to get together and organize themselves as they see fit, the right to speak out and take action to advance their interests, the right to live free of government surveillance and ideological dictate are as necessary for the workers as the air we breath.

The broadest sections of the people must come out together and join in the struggle of the working class to bring a new agenda – a genuinely pro-social agenda – to center-stage in the life of our country. The workers and people must take matters into their own hands by creating a new politics. Such a new politics must aim not only to reverse the government's economic program and to insure it makes the investments needed to guarantee all the economic rights of the people, but also at fundamental changes in the political process and political system so that the people themselves are empowered to determine the direction and future of our country.

History shows that the working class not only places itself in the forefront of the general democratic movement but it also struggles to turn the promise of democracy – which is the promise of real social and eco-

nomical equality – into reality by advancing its own proletarian democratic demands. These demands challenge the rights and prerogatives of capital. The movement for the 8-hour day was such a movement as were the mass struggles which aimed at winning social insurance, pensions and other vital needs. Today, the demand to Make the Rich Pay embodies the minimum democratic program of the workers which aims at winning their elementary economic rights, including such rights as the right to free medical care and education, the right to secure jobs and pensions, to a decent standard of living, etc.

History also shows that the working class alone is the true defender and representative of democracy and democratic liberties. It is imperative that the working class carries forward the democratic struggles to win full equality for the downtrodden and oppressed national minorities, the struggle for full equality for women, the popular movement against imperialist war and militarism and the struggle against growing fascism and in defense of democratic liberties.

The whole historical development of the capitalist state in the U.S. as well as the centuries-long struggle of the people for democratic liberties and genuine equality shows that the capitalist class in the U.S. today is completely reactionary, hell-bent on denying the masses even elementary democratic rights and liberties.

The working people can expect no cure from the Gods of Plague. The on-going capitalist attacks against the social, economic and political rights of the people confront us with a fundamental reality. As long as at its very foundation our society is divided between capitalists and workers – into rich and poor – the financial sharks and capitalist exploiters

will organize in a million and one ways to imposing their thoroughly reactionary agenda on our country – to plunder the federal treasury and enrich themselves, to impose arbitrary rule on the people, to slash social investments and impoverish broad sections of the working class, and to prepare and wage imperialist wars.

To break the existing system of political privilege the people must create a genuinely democratic political process whereby political parties are denied the privilege to nominate and select the candidates for office and this right must be returned to the people. Once nominated, every candidate must be assured access to the media and the electorate, who choose their representatives through universal, secret ballot. Everything must be done to insure that the masses of people supervise and control the state apparatus and the masses must be drawn into deciding the affairs of state and administering the society. Elected officials must organize regular mass meetings to render account to their electors about the activity and directions of the state organs and the electors are guaranteed the right to recall their representatives at any time. In order to elicit the demands and to ensure the participation of the entire people in determining all the basic economic and social orientations of the society, mass meetings to discuss the content and direction of the all the major laws and state decisions must be preceded by the broad, active and organized participation of the entire population.

The only basis upon which to build up a genuinely democratic political system – free of corruption and subordinate not to the manipulations of the wealthy but to the real interests of the working masses – is by eliminating the economic power of the rich and by creating a society without class distinctions.

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Newspaper of the Workers Party, USA

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Subscriptions: \$9/6 months; \$18/1 year