

THE WORKER 75¢

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Where Do We Go From Here?

Humanity stands at a pivotal moment, faced with a crucial decision. We can either embrace humankind's life on this earth as the most valuable thing worth preserving, or we can flush it all down the drain.

In contemporary times, the process of acquiring capital is essential for the formation and development of a capitalist society. These days, this process increasingly includes engaging in violent external conflicts and relying on state power to plunder public assets.

The all-sided crisis of the monopolies and financial oligarchy of our ruling class in the U.S. brings all the contradictions inherent within this process to the boiling point. The drive of monopoly capital to maximize its profit by increasing the exploitation of the workers at home and going to war abroad sacrifices the pensions of the elderly, the jobs and livelihoods of the workers, and the very future of the youths. The American people are being cheated of their very lives by the political tyranny established to serve the monopolies and banks. To get our country back on the high road of progress and civilization, a serious opposition to the war program of the government and the ever-increasing impoverishment of the masses must strike at the power of monopoly capital and its twin political parties, the Republicans and Democrats.

During the origins of capitalism, the industrial capitalists are faced with the task of overthrowing both feudal lords and guild masters in order to acquire social power. Simul-

taneously, laborers needed to break free from serfdom and guild regulations to become wage workers. However, this emancipation of the laborers comes at a price – they are stripped of their own means of production. This dissolution of the old order creates the necessary conditions for the emergence of capitalist class relations. Soon, a handful of monopolies, linked with the big capitalist bankers, come to dominate the economies of entire countries.

Monopolies have been a fundamental aspect of the U.S. economy for a significant time. A small number of large corporations, such as three automobile companies, six oil companies, seven to eight steel companies, and four aerospace companies, dominate every sector of the industry. These few monopolies effectively govern the majority, if not all, of the market amongst themselves.

Similar to the era of early capitalist development in Europe, when capitalism first began to replace feudalism, the United States also witnessed an early process of primitive capitalist accumulation to wrest control over the land from its former owners. This process involved the separation of Native Americans from their means of sustenance, leading to the genocide of the indigenous peoples. This led to the rise of some of the largest family fortunes in America and ushered in the current period of progressively increasing concentration and centralization of capital in both the political and economic realms.

Class relations, capitalist or otherwise, impact all other types of relationships within society. This is be-

cause class relations are diverse and are reflected throughout all the material and spiritual connections. The structure of class relations encompasses various types of relationships, including political relationships between classes (those concerning state power and government), and economic relationships between capital and labor (those involving ownership of the tools of socialized production as well as dependent relationships in the processes of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption).

One of the things that defines laborers collectively as a type of class across history is our capacity to transform our environment, not simply adapt to it. Laborers – as humans – are able not only to grasp the laws of motion of the natural world but also to create the solutions that enable the securing of society's material abundance as well as its responsible transformation of both the natural and social environment. Today, this ability of laborers still exists objectively, arising spontaneously out of the objective social conditions of capitalism. The choice to develop and strengthen this ability is the highest expression of our humanity.

The replacement of one socioeconomic formation with another is the result of the conflict being resolved between the old production relations and the new productive forces. If society is divided into antagonistic classes this conflict finds its expression in the sharpening class struggle. In each socioeconomic formation, the class struggle has peculiarities of its own. The positive side of class rela-

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tions is seen when the working people assert themselves.

Under capitalism the class struggle varies between passive resistance to a hostile class, active attacks on its positions, and violent class conflicts. The laborers' struggles are at times open or concealed, spontaneous or conscious. Every variety of their struggle is determined by qualitative changes in the situation, by the acuteness of contradictions between the interests of capital and labor, and by the level of development of other parts of the society.

Economic struggle is the first manifestation of the proletarian class struggle in history. Under capitalism, collectives of workers everywhere invariably begin their struggle to protect their immediate daily economic interests. They fight for higher wages, shorter working days, better working conditions, and a reduction in the exploiters' share of the surplus value created by the labor of the wage workers. At the forefront of this struggle emerges the first organization of the proletariat – the trade unions. The other primary means of economic struggle is a strike.

Although the workers' economic fight for their everyday necessities holds great significance and can make inroads against capitalist exploitation, it cannot maintain those inroads in the long run or eliminate capitalist exploitation. Solely relying

on economic struggle cannot unearth the root of the problem. It allows the preservation of capitalist private property as well as the economic and territorial partition and repartition of the entire globe by the modern state machines of the big capitalist metropolises. When success is clearly defined, economic struggles contribute enormously to organizing workers for solving broad revolutionary problems. However, even when the laborers' economic struggles bloom, they can merely secure sporadic concessions from the bourgeoisie to the workers.

Political struggle is the paradigm-shifting form of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie.

In contrast to economic struggle, the final objectives of which never go beyond satisfying working people's immediate socioeconomic needs, political struggle is waged to promote the laborers' fundamental interests. Cardinal class interest can only be fulfilled by way of radical political transformations. Political struggle alone can resolve such vital economic and political problems facing the working class as the liquidation of the capitalist mode of production, as well as the creation of the conditions indispensable for the ultimate elimination of classes and the class struggle.

The workers' consistent political struggle against capitalist private property and the domination of capital in

all spheres of life culminates in socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The latter refers to a government formed by the people during a socialist revolution. Its purpose is to quell the opposition from the classes that exploit others and to establish new productive relationships that acknowledge the means of production, which have already been socialized through generations of collective labor, as the rightful inheritance of the entire population.

Under socialism, the new type of political authority, organized through the leadership of the working class, must authentically grant sovereignty to the people and empower every individual to actively shape their own societal surroundings. This social environment must no longer marginalize or oppress the working class, and the concept of labor as a commodity, bought and sold to exploit unpaid work or surplus value, must cease to exist. Instead, labor power will be acknowledged as not only the essential foundation of human existence and social life but also as a fundamental expression of humanity. Through the emancipation of the proletariat, the workers of all countries can transform both the natural and social environment, facilitating the transition from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom for all of humankind.

Editor: Anne Beck

In August we published a Special Edition of The Worker to coincide with the launch of our new campaign slogan. Members, friends and supporters of the Workers Party are encouraged to participate in the campaign by reciting the slogan with others in any language of their choice while shaking hands and looking into each other's eyes. Here it is: "If you are illegal, then I am Illegal!" Do it with love in your heart. We are looking forward to even more write-ins and reports. Tell us anything you'd like to about your experience with it.

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