

# World socialist review

journal of the world socialist movement in the united states



**no nations = no war**

**no money = no poverty**

**no classes = no exploitation**

**(a world of abundance and freedom)**

No. 17

Spring/Summer 2002

\$2.00



## In this issue

**Do we have  
free will?**

**Top 20  
Nonmarket  
Classics!**

**Democracy  
for the first time**

**Middle-class  
Utopia**

**... and more ...**

# Who is responsible for this mess? (Do we have free will?)



When we say humans have free will, we are really saying that we are responsible and answerable for every thought and every feeling. Let us be in no doubt about this term. Free will means that we are culpable for everything we think, feel or do. It means that we only have thoughts and feelings that we want to have. Can any sane human being look at him or herself and say that? Free will is, like belief in a supernatural force (be it God or whatever), a primitive and simplistic way of explaining away human actions without the need to explore the complex subject of motivation. Free will expresses the school playground way of looking at the world, where "good" and "bad" people come into conflict with one another and where morality is summed up simply in terms of "Good" vs "Evil." The criminal justice system of all countries under capitalism is rooted in this hangover from the ancient and medieval past, in which one's master (in heaven God and on Earth his representatives: princes, judges,

etc.) bestows rewards on the "good" and metes out punishments to the "bad."

Like the medieval God, who was "Absolute Truth" independent of the material universe, so our human will is supposed to be a law unto itself, free of external motivation and hence answerable for its transgressions. If the will is, on the contrary, not free and independent, but subject to motivation as is everything else in the material universe, the will, and therefore the individual, cannot possibly be answerable for what it does: i.e., how we think and feel; how we "behave." The ideologists of capitalism in its revolutionary period (when it struggled with the feudal nobility and the nobility's ideologue, the Church) went out of their way to expose the ideological and moral ingredients of the feudal system such as the notion of free will that went hand in hand with confessional and gibbet. The most extensive philosophical treatise in English on the workings of the human mind is John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, written in 1689.

**The World Socialist Party is an organization without leaders. Its resources are shared by the entire membership, and its decisions are rendered democratically. We practice the democracy we preach!!!**

**RON COOK'S MASTERFUL DAMNING PORTRAYAL OF THE DEBILITATING EFFECTS OF THE MARKET AND CLASS SYSTEM ON HUMAN LIFE AND CULTURE, AND ON THE PLANET, TOPIA! YES — UTOPIA! YES — UTOPIA!**  
IS AVAILABLE AS A DOWNLOAD (YES, ALL 191 PAGES!) FROM [WWW.NOSPINE.COM](http://WWW.NOSPINE.COM)  
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In this book the myths of innate ideas and of free will are extensively dealt with and exposed for the rubbish they are. Thought is traced to sensation. Without external pressure (motivation via the bodily senses) there can be no thought. Before Locke, Thomas Hobbes in his "Leviathan" was one of the first since the materialist philosophers of antiquity to examine Man and his senses as a natural, functioning organism free of the straitjacket that in Europe had for centuries been imposed on thought by the Christian religion: a religion which is founded upon the notion of human guilt and redemption through faith, and which, as an ideology, falls to the ground without this essential ingredient: free will (hence, culpability).

No sooner, however, was modern capitalism consolidated throughout most of Europe than such philosophical libertarianism was curtailed, or rendered neutral and harmless by being made a mere topic for academic dissertation, and the churches were again called upon (not without difficulty in France, where the capitalist revolution had been marked especially strongly by anticlericalism) to provide, throughout the 19th century and the era of industrialization, moral justification for the new class rule.

The basis of this is the thoughtlessly still accepted term, "free will." Thoughtlessly, because it takes but a mere glance at oneself, how one is and what one is (the result of one's past and constantly evolving present, with all its unstoppable sense-impressions, feelings, thoughts, mannerisms and neuroses, etc.), to know that free will is a ludicrous notion altogether. We are not responsible for our thoughts and feelings, nor for our ideas and opinions. We are what we are, and we each continue to evolve throughout the course of our lives in being motivated one way or another. We do take decisions and think we make choices, but in fact even these are subject to an antecedent and a consequence. They are part of the constant flow of uninterrupted progress (leaving aside severe illnesses or psychological paralysis or death) that is each person's life. Each decision taken in life is the result of thoughts and feelings determined by what preceded them, giving rise therefore to a course of action and other feelings and thoughts with their own consequences.

To quote Nietzsche:

**The truth is, class rule (exploitation of the many by the few) requires guilt. The entire system of "justice" is based on the deliberate (if quietly buried) fallacy of free will: of will that acts independently of causation and is therefore culpable.**

...belief in freedom of will is incompatible precisely with the idea of a continuous, homogeneous, undivided, indivisible flowing: it presupposes that every individual action is isolate and indivisible; it is an atomism in the domain of willing and knowing. (From *A Nietzsche Reader*, Penguin, 1979, p. 58, extract from *Human, All Too Human*.)

But a society such as modern capitalism (and feudalism before it), in which a minority owns and controls the means of life, a control from which the majority is excluded (so that this excluded majority can be obliged to work for the minority),

needs the ruled majority to feel culpable. So we

each feel guilty, instead of demanding the Earth for ourselves.

The fat person feels guilty. The lonely

person feels guilty. The unemployed feel guilty. They might not always think of themselves as guilty, but the message is driven home and is made to dwell often in their subconscious. How pathetic it is to hear prisoners repent of their "guilt" and seek "spiritual solace" for their crimes in the hands of priests, "educators" and "welfare" workers. How pitiful to read of soldiers weeping over their "cowardice" for not being as accomplished at murder as their superiors would like them to be. How angering to hear schoolchildren, students, and workers being regularly humiliated for falling short of the boss's or the teacher's "expectations." And, worst of all, how sickening to hear a man about to be burned alive in the electric chair repenting for having ended up there and repeating the murmurings of a theological hack who gets paid to turn his emotions unctuously on and off.

The truth is, class rule (exploitation of the many by the few) requires guilt. The entire system of "justice" is based on the deliberate (if quietly buried) fallacy of free will: of will that acts independently of causation and is therefore culpable. A socialist society will recognize the sheer complexity of every individual human being. In a world where we all walk the Earth as free human beings, none being deprived by another of his human birthright of life and free access to the means of living, there will be little, if any, crime. But people will also know how to restrain anyone who poses a threat to others, without any question of punishment, which will be a thing of the past. And human beings will be at last able to face their motivations, accept their complexities and make their

*Continued on next page*

decisions without the shadow of guilt hanging over their heads. This they are now just beginning to do, thanks to the psychological and scientific advances made in human self-comprehension through the last few decades.

But in the words of one 18th-century French philosopher: "One more effort!" That effort must be

socialism, a world of free access and common ownership by everyone on our planet. Even that effort must and will be the result of motivation: of the knowledge of its necessity driving us forward — into real freedom!

— Anthony Walker

## What about freedom in socialism?

We are taught that America is the Land of the Free. For instance, there is freedom to travel anywhere you want — as long as you can afford a ticket. There is freedom of speech — until you try to use it in a shopping mall. And there is freedom of the press — if you happen to own a press.

Do we have the freedom to make meaningful decisions about our own lives? No way. All our choices are constrained by the need to earn a living. Without money, we aren't free to do anything.

Real freedom will only be possible in a world of free access. In socialism, we will have freedom to do whatever we want with our lives, secure in the knowledge that access to our needs is no longer dependent on our ability to pay.

— K.E.

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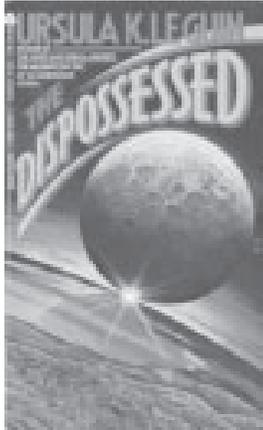
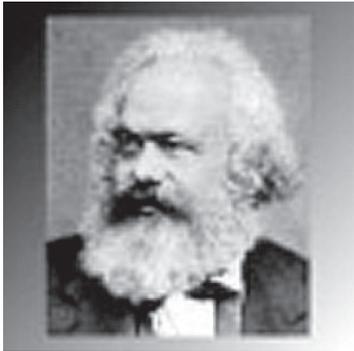


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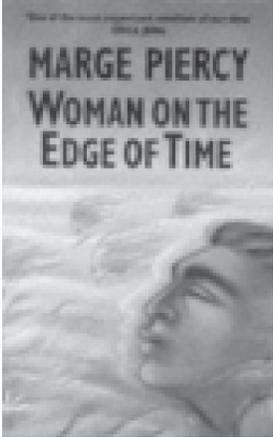
# Top 20 Nonmarket Literary Classics for Socialists

<p><b>#1</b>  <b>THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO (1848)</b>  <b>Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels</b></p>	<p>In the revolutionary year of 1848, Marx and Engels penned a manifesto that went beyond the events to articulate what had not been so clearly or radically expressed — that a class war was in progress between a rapidly developing industrially-based capitalist class (which at that time was winning major victories over the dwindling feudal system) and working class with antagonistic interests. This document boldly proclaimed that this dialectical antagonism of interests (thesis-antithesis) would only be resolved when the working class seized the means of production for itself and established a communist society (synthesis). Today at the dawn of the 21st century the struggle is still on, and the classless society is yet to be achieved. This renders this historically perceptive document of sufficient importance for those seeking an improved social order to warrant placing it at number 1 in our Top 20.</p>	<p><b>#2</b>  <b>THE DISPOSSESSED (1974)</b>  <b>Ursula LeGuin</b></p>	<p>Some might query the placement of this novel so high in the list, but it is perhaps the finest fictional account of a true libertarian socialist society. It remains a popular item in the United States on the university and high school literary curriculum, as well as a highly enjoyable and easy read to propagate nonmarket socialist ideas.</p> 
<p><b>#3 and #4</b>  <b>WAGE-LABOR AND CAPITAL (1849) VALUE, PRICE AND PROFIT (1865)</b>  <b>Karl Marx</b></p>	<p>For those who find Capital too challenging, these short booklets clearly outline Marx's theory of exploitation — how workers are economically exploited by the capitalist class — and why the only enduring solution to such iniquity is the abolition of wage labor altogether.</p> 	<p><b>#5</b>  <b>NEWS FROM NOWHERE (1890)</b>  <b>William Morris</b></p>	<p>Perhaps the second best fictional account of a libertarian socialist society. Unlike The Dispossessed, which was written by an author pursuing Taoist themes, this novel was written by one of history's most prolific socialists who was particularly adept at expressing how the free society would liberate humankind's creativity. In exploring that psychological dimension, this novel is in a sense very modern, despite some sexist carryovers from the Victorian era. Many people around the world know William Morris's wallpaper, but few are aware that as a member of the Socialist League he spent the latter decades of his life promoting the moneyless and stateless society.</p>
<p><b>#6</b>  <b>NONMARKET SOCIALISM IN THE 19th &amp; 20th CENTURIES (1987)</b>  <b>Ed. Maximilien Rubel &amp; John Crump</b></p>	<p>In my view, this book was critical in outlining many distinct political traditions which struggled for the moneyless society of common ownership, such as the World Socialist Movement, the Bordigists, the DeLeonists, the council communists, the Situationist International, or the communist anarchists. Reading the book tended to validate for me the strength of the nonmarket socialist tradition which sprouted in different forms in different lands in different times during those two centuries.</p>	<p><b>#7</b>  <b>ABC OF ANARCHISM (1929)</b>  <b>Alexander Berkman</b></p>	<p>This brilliant writer and Emma Goldman's lover articulated clearly in this book as few others have the argument for the free communist society. He answers all the frequent questions socialists encounter about the compatibility of socialism with so-called "human nature" (e.g., whether greed would undermine a nonmarket economy) and how a society without leaders or money would act as an unleasher of productive forces and of human creativity rather than as a detriment.</p>

**Top 20 Nonmarket Booklist (cont.)**

<p><b>#8</b> <b>THE SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL ANTHOLOGY</b> (1981) Edited by Ken Knabb</p>	<p>The Situationist International was neither an alleged socialist or anarchist organization, nor even a traditional political entity seeking to organize for the revolution. Still, its critique of capitalism was profoundly nonmarket, and its wide body of writings and its very spirit inspired socialists and anarchists alike. Its greatest theoretical contribution which warrants its place in this Top 20 is the theory of the Spectacle, which develops beyond Marx's theory of Ideology. However, unlike ideology, which expresses the interests of the capitalist class, "the Spectacle" refers to the many cultural forms (often images) that distract working people from the relations of class society by providing an imaginary but alienating experience of the real world.</p> <p>Advertising for an infinite series of commodities, the endless repetition of wars, crimes, politicians or pop stars, or what passes for "news," mold an artificial world that poses as novel: new commodities, new "celebs," new events imported from around the world such as the World Trade Center bombing or the latest wave of starvation in Africa. But this projection is in reality just a rehash of itself, pure banality passing as originality. There is obviously no escaping the alienation of property and class society, but the Spectacle provides a type of stupor which keeps people tuned into the false realm of appearances, a commodified pseudo-reality.</p>	<p><b>#9</b> <b>THE ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL MANUSCRIPTS (1844)</b> Karl Marx</p>	<p>Not only one of Marx's earliest writings (unpublished at the time) but his most profound phenomenological and theoretical exploration into the realm of human alienation. It explores how society rifts humankind into such divisions as man and woman, worker and capitalist, country and town, work and leisure, humankind and nature. It postulated free communism (a society in which the means of providing life are owned in common) as the abolition of such divisions, and hence of human alienation, and the realization of human nature, as well as of humanity's philosophy and religion, which as philosophy and religion have only been able to express alienated man.</p> 
<p><b>#10</b> <b>THE DAY IS COMING (1944)</b> William Cameron</p>	<p>This extraordinarily well-written work by a member of the Socialist Party of Great Britain describes the life of a worker who is devoted to quality craft yet finds himself in an economy driven by the need to produce shoddy and ugly commodities, and to devalue and debase the human condition at the same time. This is also a heart-wrenching tale of this man's efforts to raise his family in the ruthless and exploitative economic order which values profits over people. Finally, it is one of the few fictional accounts of the English socialist movements of the late 19th Century, featuring members of the Socialist League and such luminary figures as William Morris and Oscar Wilde.</p>	<p><b>#11</b> <b>THE RAGGED-TROUSERED PHILANTHROPIST (1914)</b> Robert Tresselt</p>	<p>Another fictional account of a worker struggling to make ends meet whose conversations with workers about socialism and its theory of exploitation are among the most memorable scenes. This classic novel found popularity among the members of the early Labor Party in England, paradoxically as the latter did not advocate socialism but a theory of state-guided capitalism in which the government spends heavily on public programs and provides welfare, rather than a socialist program of abolishing wage labor and commodity production and bringing the productive machinery into the hands of the whole community, as this book so powerfully pleaded for.</p>
<p><b>#12</b> <b>MARX WITHOUT MYTH (1975)</b> Maximilien Rubel and Margaret Manale</p>	<p>This was one of the best shorter accounts of Marx's life and writings. It broke down his productive life year by year, and was penned by a French Marxologist (an academic whose specialty is the life and work of Karl Marx) who was also a libertarian. His anarchist communism meant refreshingly not only that he did not fall into the pompous and historically incorrect position of attributing to Marx himself later Leninist or Labor state-capitalist theories which became falsely labeled "socialist" or "communist" or even "Marxist" after Marx's death, but that he shared with Marx his pursuit of democracy, free communism, the movement of workers to abolish wage labor, and his humanism. Most of Rubel's writings have remained in French, and this paperback is one of the few works available to English readers. Published by Harper &amp; Row, it was also for several years one of the few expositions of Marx's thoughts on high school and college curricula in the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s.</p>	<p><b>#13</b> <b>THE SOUL OF MAN UNDER SOCIALISM (1891)</b> Oscar Wilde</p>	<p>This work is unique not only for being so well written, in classic Wildean clarity and humor, but also for being a work by one of the finest playwrights in the English language advocating the necessity of a socialist society. Much of the thrust of this pamphlet is a critique of the hypocrisy of Victorian values, including that of the Church. Wilde has not entirely abandoned his Christianity, but like the early Marx, in whom we find no traces of religiosity, views socialism as the actualization of religion, whereas religion as religion does the working class a serious disservice.</p> 

**Top 20 Nonmarket Booklist (cont.)**

<p><b># 14 and # 15</b>  <b>WORLD WITHOUT WAGES (1980) • THE FUTILITY OF REFORMISM (1984)</b>  <b>Samuel Leight</b></p>	<p>These paperbacks feature the transcriptions of radio shows which were broadcast on WTUC, in Tucson, Arizona, for eight years beginning in 1976. These shows discussed topics of the day and socialist theory in simple and at times humorous ways to an American public mistrustful of anything with the words "socialist" and "communist." These talks were beacons of community, democracy, sanity, and remain in these two volumes as testimonies to how much effective propaganda could be generated by one worker dedicated to the cause of the abolition of his rule by capital.</p>	<p><b># 16</b>  <b>MONEY MUST GO (1943)</b>  <b>Philoreen</b></p>	<p>This book, written in 1914 by two members of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, was to my knowledge the first ever written by socialists to critique the institution of money as the cause of modern scarcity, and to call for the abundance and freedom its abolition, and its replacement with free access, would yield. A classic socialist exposition of the ideological and economic fallacies often used to justify money's existence.</p>
<p><b># 17</b>  <b>MUTUAL AID (1902)</b>  <b>Peter Kropotkin</b></p>	<p>Opposing the Social Darwinism of his day which distorted Darwin's theory of evolution to justify the rule of men by men on the basis of allegedly similar competitive and biological traits which render them fitter to adapt, Kropotkin demonstrated in his discussion of the social life of such creatures as ants and bees the cooperation essential to their species' organization and survival. In doing so, he placed mutual aid as a vital principle no less in human social life than in biology. While Kropotkin wrote many other works delineating his vision of a free communist society, this tome stands apart from others in linking the need for a society founded upon mutual aid to biological laws. (While Darwin's <i>On the Origin of Species</i> is not concerned with socialist ideas or themes, it, too, is a milestone that should be read by any socialist (or non-socialist) simply because it describes the wondrous complexity of biological life in terms requiring no metaphysical pronouncements, and its significance in the development of humanistic materialism is considerable.)</p>	<p><b># 18</b>  <b>FREE IS CHEAPER (1988)</b>  <b>Ken Smith</b></p>	<p>A brilliant critique of capitalism that made my Top 20 as one of its stronger recent socialist indictments. (Had I read Ron Cook's new book <i>Yes — Utopia</i> in time for completion of this publication, I would have had to add that too as a recent socialist must-read in this Top 20.) This book was special for its fascinating statistics and observations (such as the increase in work since the late feudal and early capitalist era). A well-written tome any socialist would be proud to recommend to others who want to "make socialists."</p>
<p><b># 19</b>  <b>WOMAN ON THE EDGE OF TIME (1976)</b>  <b>Marge Piercy</b></p>	<p>Like <i>The Dispossessed</i> by Ursula LeGuin, this popular book written by another major novelist also described a stateless, moneyless, and classless society of free communism. But it did so only as part of a female psychiatric inpatient's visual hallucinations. The protagonist's only emotional respite from the mad world of "treatment," and of patriarchy, was her immersion into a deliciously free vision in which women were no longer oppressed by men, nor men and women by capital. The book was unique by postulating socialism as the one enduring solution to the oppression women have experienced for centuries, and also as postulating, as did Scottish psychiatrist R. D. Laing, madness as a means of coping with a mad world (although Laing's solution was existential, phenomenological, psychotherapy, not social revolution).</p> 	<p><b># 20</b>  <b>THE SOCIALIST STANDARD (1904 - Present)</b>  <b>Socialist Party of Great Britain</b></p>	<p>Okay, this is not a book in the traditional sense, although it has been bound for library use over the years. Nonetheless, this century-long collection of articles of the monthly publication of the Socialist Party of Great Britain stands as a testimony to the scientific and revolutionary spirit of the socialist movement through a century of wars, poverty and misery. That the concept of a moneyless and classless world of true democracy, freedom and abundance has persisted in the minds of working people for so many generations is impressive enough. But it also validates the socialist theory of ideas as representing class interests — in most cases, of the ruling class — but also of ideas as stemming inevitably (if not yet extensively) from the experience of economic exploitation, poverty and subjugation. This collection of articles by socialists down through the years stands as a powerful expression of the human desire for emancipation from class society with its pointless misery and conflict. For as long as we must toil for others, the idea of the classless world will stubbornly persist, and eventually it will yield a majority seeking to abolish capitalism's humiliating, oppressively cold conditions and step finally into the warmth of democracy, community, material abundance, and human freedom.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">— Dr. Who</p>

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# Democracy for the first time

**W**e pride ourselves on the democratic nature of our present society. Did many of us, after all, not elect the present governmental leaders to office? Is this not a radical improvement over the feudal past or over the military juntas still clutching the reigns of power today in some Third World countries?

The early socialist pioneers (such as Marx and Engels in the 19th centuries) celebrated the victory of the North in the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery, since the emancipation of society from the last vestiges of feudalism, and the abolition of the ownership of humans by other humans, were profound democratic victories for the human race without which the achievement of a truly socialist society would be impossible. The early socialists understood that evolving capitalism led to the development of the ideological, political and economic forces that would eventually bring about the demise of feudalism.

Their theory of historical materialism has been greatly misunderstood by their then and present critics. Often criticized for its alleged determinism (unfairly, since it attempted to delineate observable trends rather than to predict an inevitable future), what was most significant about historical materialism was its ability to elucidate historical developments in terms of a struggle of social classes over the control of the means of life. An example of such a struggle is that which took place in the past 250 years between the class of feudal landowners and the increasingly powerful class of industrial entrepreneurs whose economic and social organization of wage labor of course eventually won the day.

Thus when the early socialists celebrated the abolition of slavery as a victory for all humankind they were also keenly aware of what a victory this also represented for the capitalist class and the development of capitalism worldwide. Failing to appreciate this vital historical lesson, one may equally miss the class-based context in which the modern practice and even meaning of democracy is firmly nestled. For

example, many of us North Americans think of our part of the world as "democratic," frequently failing to appreciate how that political form serves the class society of employers and employees.

After all, while we enjoy our many "rights" of free expression or organization (allowing us to print this very journal without the censorship or outright persecution we would certainly face in other lands characterized by bureaucratic and highly militarist state capitalist economies), as workers we do not enjoy any of the privileges of the owning class. Our essentially propertyless status denies us the freedom conferred by capital to survive by rent, profit or interest alone, and forces us to sell our energies to the employing class most days of the year.

The daily humiliation working people often suffer in the hierarchical organization of our workplaces is a daily reminder of what little democracy actually extends into our lives. Which reader of this journal has actually enjoyed access to the city newspaper, television station, radio or corporate Internet news provider? And when we watch the television evening news, that banal and endless repetition of local murders and rapes, how powerless do we actually feel to impact at all upon our community? We passively bear witness to the devastation of our ecosystem, to bloody international conflicts, to our children's increasing acquisition of depressive, substance-abuse, and conduct disorders, as though our "democracy" were but a sham, for all the many rights accorded us in the Bill of Rights, and for all the democratic foundations painted in the Constitution.

The society that workers in the world socialist movement struggle for is above all a democratic one. Since the means of producing all things and services will be in the hands of the world's people (not private individuals or the state), "rights" will no longer need to be accorded the population by a centralized authority. Rather, we will all be owners deciding as many (or as few) aspects of our society as we individually desire. In a sense, the collective decision-making

*Continued on next page*

***TOMORROW ON THE JOHN TAYLOR "TALK TALK" SHOW  
2 P.M.***

***"Unfortunate uneducated working-class people  
with family and mental problems"***

currently practiced mainly in numerous (but not all) families, or to varying degrees in the spaces of power not fully dominated by the management of our workplace, will be fully extended into all spheres of the world's activities.

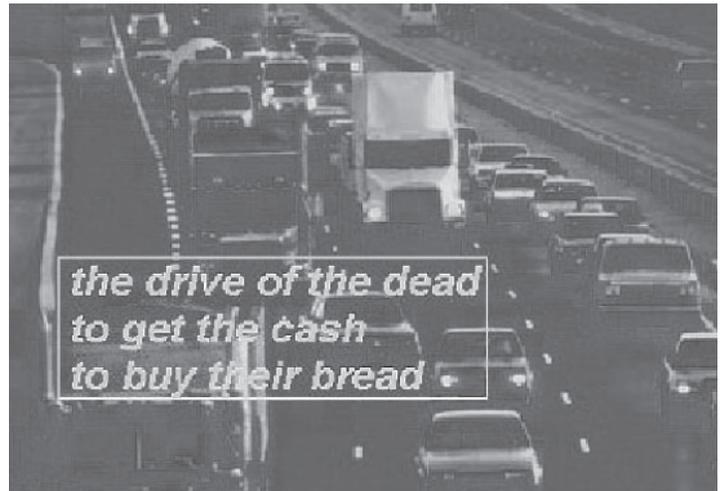
Such a revolution — both from state, individual or corporate to common ownership of the productive machinery and in the democratic nature of the society — is no pipe dream, but it will require a committed choice on behalf of working people everywhere to finally take control of both their own lives, and of the affairs of their social world. This revolution in democracy will spring from an overwhelming desire on behalf of most people not to relegate major decision-making to elected officials anymore to operate the capitalist system (the greatest benefits of which are only reaped by the class of capital and land owners), but rather to substitute such passivity with impassioned democratic fervor.

You may ask how such a democracy will operate. The World Socialist Movement's unique contribution to organizational decision-making is its practice of delegation. (By proudly underlining this contribution, I am not implying that this is the only model available or possible — the burgeoning social movement for an extended democracy and common ownership will itself develop the forms that serve it best. We remain open to all models of participatory democracy.)

The delegate model advocated and practiced by the world socialist movement requires that those elected to perform certain functions agree to carry out the wishes of the majority. Any deviation or negation of the function for which the delegate was elected will yield an immediate corrective demand from the electorate or potentially a recall of the position altogether. Thus the delegate's role is in contradistinction to that of the modern official, representative or leader, who is elected to make all the decisions on behalf of the majority. The socialist delegate, in contrast, merely carries out the wishes or instructions of the electorate.

This does not mean that the delegates never think for themselves. In the National Administrative Committee (NAC) of the World Socialist Party of the U.S., less than a dozen individuals meet monthly to conduct the party's business.

Non-NAC party members contribute agenda items and try to be present at the monthly NAC meeting during which they will be discussed and voted upon. Agenda items contributed or debated by the NAC are subject to entire party membership approval. NAC members are themselves elected by the whole party membership each year. Attempts are made for all party members, at least of those interested in the



position, to take turns on the NAC. The reduced membership of our party in recent decades has frustrated this ideal at times. But a working democracy is of such importance to true socialists that lively discussions, if not the occasional antagonistic exchange, often rage over perceived affronts to the democratic ideal to which the party is committed, not just that of the political organization, but that of the society it works to achieve.

This international movement's delegation model has provided a theoretical as well as a practical model for how the wishes of the many may be represented by the elected few, and for how voting may be utilized in a fashion which puts to shame that which passes as a presidential election in this country every four years. This working model of democracy also acts as an illustration on a less ambitious level of how even the machinery of government, at least in those countries practicing free elections, may be utilized by a socialist majority of the electorate, to establish a society which will no longer require the state, with its bureaucratic, coercive and violent features (courts, jails, armies).

What would a truly democratic society look like? While socialists have always been hesitant to paint a detailed picture of the future, mainly because they cannot as democrats presume to outline features it would fall to the generations following the revolution to decide, certain generalized features may be discussed. That outline will require a paradigm shift

*Tomorrow on Gloria Gossip  
3 P.M.*

**"People addicted to TV shows about  
unfortunate uneducated working-class people  
with family and mental problems"**

away from the idea that politicians are essential to forcefully articulate how they will attack social and economic problems (ironically, since capitalism behaves in a manner which is not subject to such desired manipulation or control).

Socialists advocate the abolition of the lawless marketplace altogether, and the institution of a nonmarket economy of production geared to meeting needs that will finally actualize a democracy that private property and the marketplace have incessantly frustrated. The artificial scarcity of the market system (often termed "poverty" as though it were caused by a human failing or a lack of resources), classes of owners and non-owners, competing and warring nation-states, the hierarchical and bureaucratic social structures of states and workplaces, the power differentials in class society between sexes and ethnic groups, have seriously undermined our culture's democratic ideals.

Once class society has been abolished, we will all, as owners of the means of supporting life, have an equal voice in decision-making with regard to them. Hence, the present distinction between the private and public sphere will also have been eradicated once property is commonly owned.

Let us dare to imagine a typical day of decision-making in free communism. Taking a walk down your street, you notice a building in disrepair. You consider

your options: you could form a local committee to rectify the problem, or take part in an existing one.

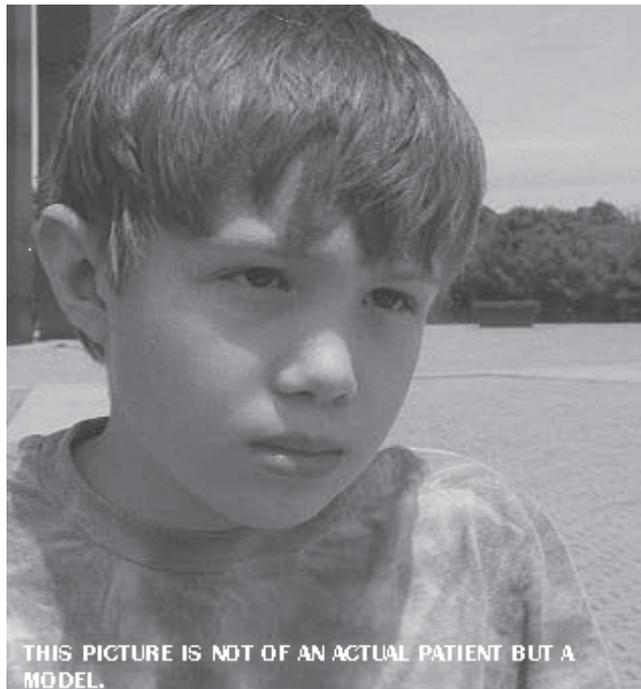
Realizing you are hungry, you enter the food market, and partake of the diverse foods your neighbors have prepared, placing in your shopping bag certain packaged items for use at home. In a moneyless world, human beings have been freed of the boredom of having to operate cash registers. Instead, perhaps citizens swipe their prepackaged foodstuffs the way cashiers do today, and the data allow computers to automatically replenish orders which are getting low.

Reflecting a little on the experience, you decide that children should acquire a better understanding of this ordering process, so you resolve to organize a class of local children to study its entire chain from production to distribution.

More generally, the division between consumer and producer of a service has been largely abolished, with citizens partaking in an extensive variety of productive activities. Some they have become particularly adept at or knowledgeable about, and to these they commit more frequently so they may better ensure the service's optimal success and train novices. Other activities they volunteer for in shifts of hours or days several times a year, while for yet others they are still obtaining requisite technical training and education.

*Continued on next page*

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\*Journal of Child Psychiatric Practice (2002, Vol 1.)

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The Internet has become a prime source of information for all local and international labor requirements. Democratic committees have been formed to decide such matters as road maintenance, electrical repair, or plumbing for local communities. These are open bodies any citizen may take part in. Citizens tend to make decisions pertinent to the communities in which they reside, but many take part in Internet-based decision-making regarding global issues, such as the ongoing planet-wide efforts to clean up the oceans and rivers seriously polluted during the precivilized era of economic classes, or to distribute certain resources and goods around the world. Organizations such as the United Nations could play a vital role, operating on the global level, but in a radically altered form, considering nation-states will have become obsolete, and power vastly decentralized.

We may make a few further projections. As all citizens will be equally eligible to take part in social decision-making and property will be owned in common in the nonmarket economy, citizens may want to travel around the world, staying in comfortable hotels, and taking part in local projects everywhere which excite them. Life will be lived the way artists attempt to today within the confines of class society, and as they advise us all to, pursuing the unbridled call of our interests, passions, and creative energies. In a sense, the distinction between art and work, or work and free time, will have been abolished.

It would be impossible today to describe faithfully the feeling that the world is truly ours, subject to our wisdom, our rationality, but also our emotional and creative desires. Democracy will at last have been realized, since for all the democratic promise of our liberal tradition, we are still barely living in its shadow, what with minority ownership of the means of life and the severe curtailment of our dreams imposed by the

financial crumbs we working people must make do with. Place the entire productive machinery into the hands of the community, and democracy will flourish as never before. The economic foundations of rule by the people, for the people, will at last have been realized not just in theory but in actuality.

— Dr. Who

## **Links for the Internet savvy**

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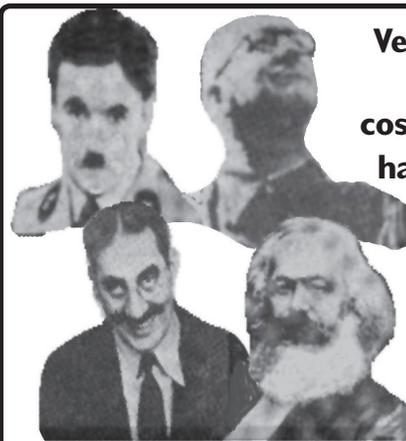
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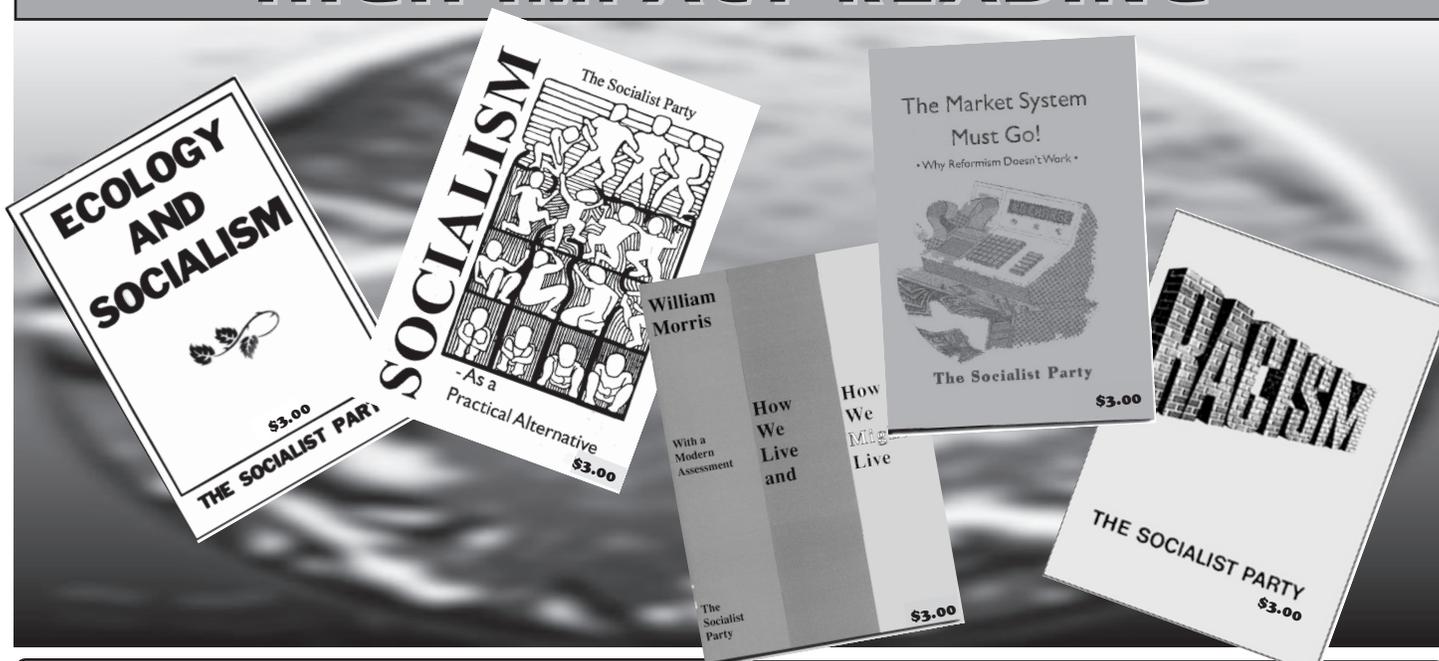
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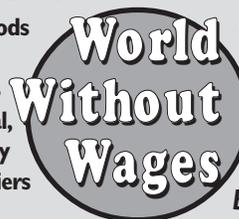
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## object

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## declaration of principles

**The Companion Parties of Socialism hold that:**

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

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



journal of the world socialist movement in the united states

## the world socialist movement

**THE FOLLOWING COMPANION PARTIES ADHERE TO THE SAME OBJECT AND DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES:**

**WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA**, Box 1266, N Richmond, 3121 Victoria

**BUND DEMOKRATISCHER SOZIALISTEN [AUSTRIA]**, Gussriegelstr. 50, A-1100 Vienna. JOURNAL: *Internationales Freies Wort* (\$1)

**SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA/PARTI SOCIALISTE DU CANADA**, Box 4280, Station A, Victoria, BC V8X 3X8 • SPC@iname.com; <http://www.worldsocialism.org/spc>. JOURNAL: *Imagine* (\$1)

**SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN**, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN. JOURNAL: *Socialist Standard* (\$1.50). [TEL. 0171 622 3811; FAX 0171 720 3665] • spgb@worldsocialism.org; <http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb>

**WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY (INDIA)**, 257 Baghajatin "E" Block (East), Calcutta 700 086 • wsp.india@worldsocialism.org

**WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY (IRELAND)**, 151 Cavehill Rd., Belfast BT15 1BL  
**WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY (NEW ZEALAND)**, Box 1929, Auckland, NI • wspnz@worldsocialism.org; <http://www.worldsocialism.org/nz>

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**GAMBIA** World of Free Access, c/o 21 Dobson St., Banjul •  
**GHANA** Marxist Study Group, c/o Adonga Avugma, Box 305, Cape Coast •  
**KENYA** Patrick Ndege, Box 56428, Nairobi •  
**NAMIBIA** Anthony Amugongo, Box 1502, Oshakati •  
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**UGANDA** Socialist Club, Box 217, Kabale •  
**ZAMBIA** Kephaz Mulenga, Box 280 168, Chimwemwe, Kitwe •  
**ZIMBABWE** Velaphi Dube, 58082-1 Mputweni, PO Mpopoma, Bulawayo; Siyasha Nkomo, Box AC 1290, Ascot, Bulawayo; Kurauone Ngwenya, House No 128ME, Gwetu St., Mbizo Suburb, Kwekwe; Bigboy Musemwa, 9 Monmouth Road, Avondale, Harare.

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**NEW ENGLAND** Rena Orner, 18 McGee Rd., Great Barrington, MA 01230; Karla Ellenbogen & Ron Elbert, 23 Pleasant Ave., Somerville, MA 02143 [wspboston@mindspring.com]; Frank Gunning, Box 1373, North Conway, NH 03860 [603-356-3007]; wbrucher@bates.edu •  
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This issue of the *World Socialist Review* was printed at Boston, MA by the World Socialist Party of the United States. Send correspondence to WSP(US), Box 440247, Boston, MA 02144 (email: [wspus@mindspring.com](mailto:wspus@mindspring.com)) or to one of the regional addresses listed above. Address submissions to the Editorial Committee. You can also visit us on the Web at <http://www.worldsocialism.org/usa>.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# The Middle Class is alive and well — and living in Utopia

One of those only half-thought-out and therefore very useful myths of modern capitalism that has lent itself well to a policy of divide and rule is that shape-shifting entity known as the middle class. By “middle class,” people often mean wage/salary-earners who are well paid by comparison with others of their class and can afford better living standards. According to some thought-magicians, we are even (almost) all middle-class over here.

Socialists define people’s class by how they come by their income, not by whether they drive a big car or not, or wear certain clothes. There are only two classes remaining in this last stage of class society. They are the working class and the capitalist class. There is no middle class.

Over 90 percent of us belong to the working class, whether employed or unemployed. That means that, because we do not possess the means of producing wealth and have no control over the Earth’s resources, we are therefore obliged to sell our energies, mentally and physically, to those who do own the means of life, the capitalists. They employ us (from the French word *employer*, to use) and pay us the price of our labor power, called wages (or salaries, which is nothing but a fancier word). When not employed for wages, we are obliged to beg from the state (the executive arm of the capitalist class) so as not to starve. This is cheaper for the capitalists of a modern state than would be the maintenance of workhouses. A highly-paid consulting surgeon is just as much a member of the working class as an unemployed street cleaner, although their lifestyles have little in common. They both have to sell their energies to live, in exchange for the ration-ticket called a wage or salary which permits them limited access (depending on their paycheck) to the goods produced by other workers like themselves, but owned by the capitalist class. They are obliged to sell themselves, for as high a price as they can get, to the owning, employing class.

Those who own the means of production and distribution and who control resources are the capitalist class. They are a tiny minority of the population in each country and in the world as a whole. They maintain their ownership of the means of production and distribution (railroads, factories, mines, land, etc.) through their control of the state, which is the organ of class rule. In modern states this is done through the hiring of politicians — extremely well-paid workers or members of the capitalist class themselves — to win the continued support and votes (even if only passive) of the working class. This gives the workers an illusion of “democracy” in which different parties run for office, but all ensure the continuation of capitalist class rule, regardless of name or political color. For example, the

old Republican Party of Iron Curtain Russia was called the “Communist” Party. The language it used to refer to itself was different, but in Russia as in the United States, a vast majority of people were workers and a small, privileged minority lived off the wealth produced by the majority. A capitalist lives on interest, rent and/or profit and so doesn’t need to work for a wage/salary to live, as most of us do.

These days, most capitalists don’t even have to administer their properties/workplaces. They hire workers called managers to supervise the workers they employ and to run their businesses. Of course, there is the tiny capitalist (owner of a small local supermarket, etc.) or “self-employed” worker whose lives are worlds apart from that of Bill Gates. Such small capitalists are constantly in danger of being swallowed up and booted out of the capitalist class into the ranks of the working class.

It is now the task of the immense majority, the working class, to dispossess the last remaining ruling class, the capitalists, and establish ownership of the Earth by humankind. This will be the end of class society, which has had its role to play in social history and development but is now defunct. If we do not carry out this political act, we can expect capitalism to continue to degrade and destroy our planet and human life. It would be fatal for history to stand still. If we cannot realize our potential, we are doomed as a species. Capitalism not only threatens us with nuclear/biological annihilation, it is currently destroying the very planet we walk on and the air we breathe.

Only two classes remain, in short, and both of them must go. The middle class, in pre-capitalist society, was the capitalist class. The ruling class then was the feudal nobility, which was being absorbed into the ranks of the capitalist class or — dispossessed — booted out altogether. Capitalism grew inside feudal society (just as socialist ideas and organization are growing inside capitalist society). The industrial revolution made fortunes and found expression in political Revolutions (the American of 1776, the French of 1789, the Russian of 1917), which replaced feudal with modern economic relations based on capital and wage-labor. The entire world now belongs to the capitalist class, in constant rivalry amongst its members for profits and control of mineral resources, trade routes, etc. In its wars, workers are expected to kill each other and die for the master class. Hence patriotism, taught through school and media — the most lethal means of divide and rule. Witness the continuing mass exhibition of flags, propping up our masters against those of Middle Eastern workers rather than expressing solidarity with workers of all lands to end private property and class rule forever!

— Anthony Walker

**Thanks to Dr. Who, Anthony Walker and Karla Ellenbogen for doing this issue’s articles. Dr. Who and Tony Pink canvassed door-to-door to get the corporate sponsors. Dr. Who also designed the layout (with some help from Roel, who contributed to the general editing frenzy). WSR 18 will be out later this year, probably in the Fall. Pass this copy on to a friend, tell everyone about the World Socialist Movement, and help replace this mad world with a sane one sooner rather than later. Fraternal regards, the Editorial Committee.**