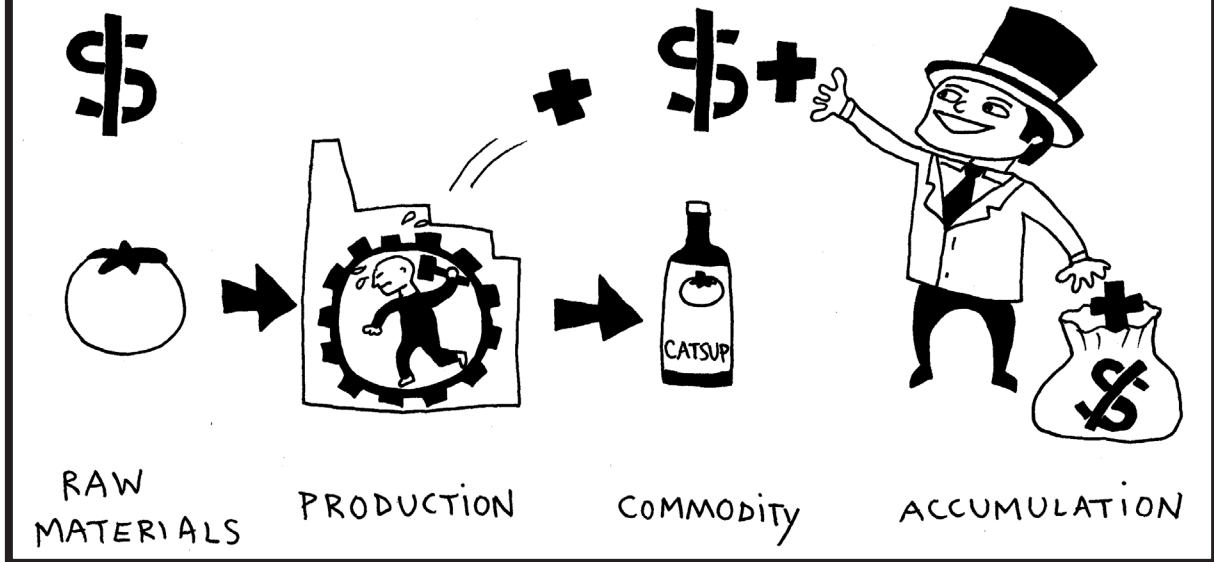


CAPITALISM

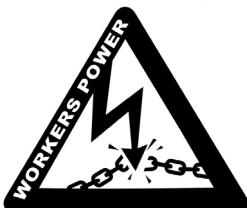
THE PRODUCTION & ACCUMULATION OF SURPLUS VALUE



Let the battle cries begin
Let the people hit the street
A million workers everywhere
Rising to their feet!



Rise up workers, rise up now
And let's not be mistaken
The moment has arrived
to claim what has been taken!



WORKERS POWER
AT WORK. IN OUR ORGS. IN SOCIETY.

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What's Wrong With Capitalism?

...and why it must be CRUSHED!!

Capitalism is a mode of production, the whole arrangement of the production of goods that meet our needs -- like food, clothing and housing. It's not only an economic system, but it also includes a political system, and a system of beliefs, that all reinforce each other. For example, how is it that one person is allowed own a factory that a hundred people work in? It's only because we have been taught to believe in the right to private property.

Capitalism is based on class divisions. Under capitalism, there are two main classes that are in opposition to each other: capitalists and workers. The capitalists own the means of production – the factories, land, and raw materials. They own it not because they worked for it, or because they're better people or because they deserve it, but usually because they or their ancestors stole it. The wealth of the capitalist class in the US was built on genocide, land theft, and slavery. Most wealth is inherited from those historical crimes. And today they increase it through wars of conquest and the exploitation of workers.

Capitalists dispossess the working class so they can force us to work for low wages. Because we don't own land or factories or raw materials, we can't produce what we need. So our only option is to work for them.

Our labor increases their wealth, while they pay us as little as they can get away with. Wages are supposedly set at what we need for our survival—to pay our rent and feed our families. But we all know that it's never enough. When we're organized, we can fight for higher wages, but individually we're caught in a bind: we can either work for what they offer, or we can starve.

The big scam of capitalism is that wages are supposedly a fair trade

of money for the amount of time that we work. But capitalists are not buying our time—they are buying our labor power, our ability to work. When we produce goods for them, they sell them at a price higher than what they paid us. Where did this extra value come from?

During the work day, workers produce goods worth more than the amount of wages we receive. Let's say that during the first hour we manufacture cars or shirts or whatever that are worth the same as our whole day's wages. That means for the rest of the day, 7 hours or more, we work for free. The new value we produce during those hours (called "surplus value") is not paid for. The owner of the business just takes it. In other words, they steal it. Why do they have the right?

Capitalists don't produce anything. But because they own, control, and manage the raw materials, factory and machinery (which they or their ancestors stole in the first place), that supposedly justifies depriving workers of any legal right to keep the product. Capitalists control the politicians who make the laws, so all the laws favor them. Capitalists control the education system and the media, so they can brainwash us from childhood to accept this arrangement. And if we don't like it, they can force us to submit anyway, because they also control the military and the police.

The essence of capitalism is exploitation of the majority for the profit of the few.

This profit is reinvested in businesses as new capital, which causes the economy to constantly grow larger. The economy has to keep growing in order to avoid stagnation and financial crisis. So more and more commodities have to be produced. They don't decide what to produce

based on what people need, but only on whatever will bring them the highest possible profit. That's why there are 11 empty houses in America for every homeless person. That's why millions of children in the world are allowed to starve each year. There are enough resources to provide everyone with food and a home and everything else we need, and a rational society would provide that. But capitalists will never do so, because it's not profitable.

This focus on profit makes them cut corners and pollute our air and water. It makes them put cheap chemicals in our food, destroying our health. It makes them extract more resources than the Earth can provide, destroying the soil and forests and oceans. They care about profit more than they do the very survival of humanity – they would rather destroy the planet before giving up a penny of profit.

They constantly fight to increase the rate of profit by increasing the rate of our exploitation, to make us more "productive" – by either lengthening our work day or pushing down our pay. They know that when we unite, we can push back. So they find ways to pit us against each other, to take the heat off them.

We can't fall for their divide-and-conquer tactics. We need to see that we have a common enemy: the capitalists who exploit us. Alone, we are powerless. But if we unite, we can fight back. If we unite in our workplace, we can fight for higher pay and better conditions. If we unite across workplaces, trades, and borders, then perhaps we can break the stranglehold that capitalists have over the entire society. If workers take over and run the economy, the political system, and everything else in society, then we can end exploitation and get rid of class divisions altogether.