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Capitalism's Deepening Crisis and the Coming Fightback



Photograph by Nathaniel St. Clair

We are horrified to daily witness the monstrous deeds of a crisis-ridden world capitalism that knows no way out other than by inflicting new waves of catastrophe on the world's people. Today's US-backed and orchestrated Zionist genocide of the Palestinian people is but one more glaring example. But a broader assessment is essential.

President Biden repeatedly sends to Tel Aviv his top imperial agents of doom – Secretary of "Defense" Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, General CQ Brown Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and National Security Council adviser, Jake

Sullivan. They take turns in photo ops advising Israel's neo-fascist Zionist murderer, Benjamin Netanyahu, on how to prettify his army's ever-intensifying genocide in Gaza.

Before the corrupt corporate media, whose twisted accounts are routinely overseen by CIA censors or imbedded US government agents, they counsel the butcher Netanyahu to demonstrate a modicum of "restraint" while instantly replaces every 2,000 pound bunker-buster bomb and all other advanced weaponry Israel deploys to pulverize defenseless people.

Sullivan claimed last week that Israel would be "transitioning to another phase of the war focused on more precise ways of targeting the leadership of Hamas." Netanyahu instantly denied Sullivan's assertion, emphatically repeating Israel's position that all Palestinians are in the daily crosshairs of the Zionist killing machine, literally among the most powerful in the world.

That two-thirds of Gaza has already been obliterated/leveled and three quarters of its 2.3 million inhabitants made homeless does not factor into US empty calls for "restraint." Neither does the fact that 70 percent of the Palestinian dead are women and children.

The genocide continues uninterrupted. 20,000+ innocent Palestinians have been slaughtered to date. Multiple thousands more are buried beneath the rubble of a carpet-bombed obliterated Gaza. 72,000 more are wounded. The great majority is starving. Infectious disease is rampant.

Yet, the US bans all measures of relief as the world's working masses observe in horror and contempt the US-promoted genocide. A new generation of radicalizing youth is on the march across the country and worldwide. The vast majority of humanity condemns the Zionist regime. Unprecedented mass mobilizations are the norm around the world.

History of Zionist mass murder outside Palestine

Israel is no newcomer to genocidal warfare. When a mass US antiwar movement forced the Jimmy Carter administration in 1978 to bar all Defense Department sales of military equipment to Guatemala, Israel was there to fill the gap, providing the death squad regime of Rios Montt with Israel's state-of-the-art automatic rifles to secretly continue the US-backed genocide.

400,000 indigenous Mayan Guatemalans were murdered. One million more were forced to flee for their lives. (See: "[Israel and Genocide: Not Only In Gaza](#)," Mark Lewis Taylor, CounterPunch, Dec. 22, 2023.)

A few years later, under the Reagan administration, following Congress's Boland Amendment to a finance bill banning US aid to the Honduras-based Nicaraguan Contras

and to El Salvador's death squad regime, Zionist Israel was again called on to do US imperialism's dirty deeds. This time out they surreptitiously provided funds, along with the Saudi monarchy, to buy crack cocaine from the Colombian Medellín Cartel, wherein the CIA's National Security adviser Oliver North smuggled it into Los Angeles's Black community and other US cities. The profits collected by North and his CIA agents were sent to the Nicaraguan Contras in the infamous "Contragate Affair." [See "CIA, Crack in America," By Jeff Mackler, Socialist Action Books, 1986].

US vetoes UN ceasefire resolution

Biden's words of "restraint" notwithstanding, his US representative to the now, for all critical purposes, defunct United Nations, cast the sole Security Council VETO blocking a UN call for a Ceasefire.

And even if a Ceasefire resolution had passed, who would enforce it? Would the world's military superpower and Israel's near total military and financial benefactor, turn on a dime and deploy its forces against its Zionist Middle East gendarme killer ally? Would the US withdraw its fleet of aircraft carriers aimed at delivering more weapons to Israel and blocking humanitarian aid to Palestine?

A toothless "ceasefire" resolution was approved by the UN General Assembly with 153 in favor, 10 against and 23 abstaining. Widespread applause was reported to have engulfed the General Assembly Hall. Those voting against were the US, Israel, Austria, Czechia [formerly Czech Republic], Guatemala, Liberia, Micronesia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Paraguay.

The United Kingdom, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Argentina, Malawi, the Netherlands, Ukraine, South Sudan, and Uruguay abstained. But the UN General Assembly's sound and fury came to nothing. The US imperialist beast and its Middle East military enforcer prevailed. The horror continues.

US passes largest military bill in history

The US Congress soon after passed the largest military appropriations bill in history. At \$886 billion, "official" US annual military expenditure – three percent more than the previous year – the figure does NOT include hundreds of \$billions more for the CIA and related military expenditures. A total of \$1.4 trillion is spent annually on the US imperial war machine, or better, for the largely-monopolized military-industrial complex that registers corporate profit rates in the high heavens and rains death and destruction on the world's people. The maxim, "war is good for profits," has always been Congress's guiding principle.

The \$886 billion was approved by the House of Representatives by a vote 310 to 118, with 73 Republicans and 45 Democrats opposed. It passed the Senate a day earlier by a vote 87-13. Today, the US spends more on the military than the rest of the world combined! With 1100 US military bases in 110 countries US imperialism is truly “The Cop of the World,” the self-appointed gendarme/defender of the “national security interests” of the US ruling class. Senate majority leader, Chuck Schumer, left no doubt, stating that the bill would assure that, “America’s military remains state-of-the-art at all times all around the world.” A product of the usual back room deals, the bill, in the name of “fighting terrorism,” continues various programs that allow US intelligence agencies to secretly spy on the entire world’s population, civil liberties be damned!

The failure of COP28/Dubai

After nearly three decades of UN-sponsored deliberations over the oncoming and ever-accelerating climate crises, this year’s COP28 (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), Nov. 30. – Dec. 13, once again registered zero progress, indeed a regression.

The Dubai, United Arab Emirates-based COP28 was chaired by UAE politician Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber, who also heads the UAE’s National Oil Company (ADNOC). Al Jaber is also the UAE’s special envoy for climate change. Prior to the conference he made clear his orientation when he publicly debunked as “fake science” the base findings of the world scientific community that absent a massive and immediate coordinated worldwide effort to eliminate all fossil fuel use in the next few decades, only catastrophic and irreversible consequences will result.

Replete with literally thousands of top representatives of the world’s fossil fuel corporations, the conference once again failed to announce a single binding resolution limiting fossil fuel production!

Indeed, the facts demonstrate that every leading fossil fuel producer in the world, headed by the US and China, has significantly *increased* fossil fuel drilling and production!

The final COP28 text vaguely called for “winding down” and transiting away” from deadly fossil fuels.

In 2023, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, our planet recorded its warmest November ever with 2023 on track to be the hottest on record.

COP25’s Paris goal to stay below an increase of 1.5°C warming over pre-industrial levels – the worldwide temperature increase over which only deepening and irreversible climate catastrophe will inevitably result – has been essentially abandoned. With zero concrete implementation measures, the conference, as with all UN climate deliberations, left the

field once again wide open to the world's corporate elite to pursue profits above all else, the world's people, as with imperialist war, be damned.

And, again, the world's poorest nations are the hardest hit, with small island nations sinking, if not disappearing into ever-rising seas and devastated by murderous hurricanes, while imperialist-dominated continents in the "Global South" are subjected to capitalist-induced killer heat waves, deforestation, desertification, and massive pollution of vital water supplies.

Demise of COP

The COP process today has devolved into an annual stocktaking exercise, at best a review of what all nations contemplate they *might* do to mitigate climate catastrophe. In fact, "Global Stocktake" is the official name of COP's final empty declaration. With the adoption of the 2018 Paris Agreement – which abandoned the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and its so-called binding emission targets and timetables – the battle for any legally binding agreement on the international level has been tragically abandoned.

Once again, capitalism's inherent contradictions are fully operative. Ever-intensifying economic competition, over time, invariably reduces average profit rates, compelling all the leading players to resort to endless horrific measures to survive. All these measures are focused on making working people pay.

While the European Union is said to have legally binding emission "targets," the U.S. has none and indeed is the world's number one polluter, not to mention the climate horrors it imposes on its virtual neo-colonies and poor nations the world over.

US imperialism knows no limits

Venezuela, Iran, Russia and Syria are apt examples. While all are daily demonized by the corporate media, there is a deadly logic to US policy. Fossil fuel exploitation and war are at its center. Today, US troops occupy almost one-third of Syria, the portion that includes Syria's rich fossil fuels and agricultural reserves. The same with Iraq. Following the 2003 US war and invasion/conquest, US diplomat Paul Bremmer was appointed Iraq's *de facto* head of state and leader of the US-imposed Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).

That President Biden later stated that the Iraq war was a "mistake" and that its central thesis – that Iraq President Saddam Hussein was preparing to use "weapons of mass destruction" against the US – turned out to be a blatant lie – made no difference to the outcome. Iraq's massive fossil fuel reserves were essentially turned over to US corporations. I would add only that two million Iraqis were killed in the intense saturation bombing and economic sanctions employed against that country. At that time, the terror

bombing was the most intense since WWII. One wary British politician, commenting on the fact that Bremmer took over some UK-owned Iraqi fossil fuel reserves stated, “I too am for world peace, but not for a Pax Americana.”

The US-orchestrated Ukraine coup had as a central imperialist objective replacing Russia’s relatively cheap massive fossil fuel deliveries to Europe via its Nord Stream pipeline – obliterated by CIA operatives – with US-expensive fracked liquid natural gas, a multi-trillion dollar fossil fuel war in disguise. We must add that fracking’s chief bi-product is the deadly methane gas (CH₄), whose greenhouse gas heat-trapping capacity is 120 times greater, moment to moment, than carbon dioxide (CO₂). The imperialist designation of natural gas as a “clean fuel” is an oxymoron if there ever was one.

US denunciations of Venezuela and Iran as “dictatorships,” similarly mask the indisputable fact that these nations’ fossil fuel reserves today rank first and second in the world. When revolutionary developments in these nations deposed the previous US-backed dictatorships and moved to end those nations’ subordination to US oil corporations, US imperialism instantly moved to a warlike footing.

In Iran, following the 1979 Iranian Revolution that removed the 1954 US-installed Shah Reza Pahlavi dictatorship, the US orchestrated and financed the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, 1980-1988, aimed at keeping both nations’ massive fossil fuel resources off world markets, not to mention taking the lives of one million Iranians and 800,000 Iraqis! US imperialism “supported both sides of that war!

Heading toward irreversible climate disaster

The most recent UN assessment published in November 2023 sees “no credible pathway” to keep global warming below an 1.5°C increase unless drastic measures are taken to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by 43 percent by 2030 and by 60 percent by 2035, compared with 2019 levels. Reaching the UN’s net zero CO₂ emissions target by 2050 is similarly a pipedream. Not a single COP28 proposal moved one inch toward any of these deadlines, portending catastrophe for the world’s people, if not all life on the planet!



To make matters worse, if that's possible, COP28 concluded with a photo [above] of representatives of 22 nations posing under a banner with the pledge to triple producing energy via nuclear power, a doomsday promise guaranteed to further poison the earth and its ecosystems with deadly nuclear waste ever seeping into the world's lakes, streams, rivers and oceans, not to mention repeats of the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi power plant disaster in Japan.

Twelve years after Fukushima's triple reactor meltdown, Japan this year, for the first time, released unprecedented and massive amounts of "treated" radioactive wastewater into the ocean. And dealing with Fukushima's wastewater is considered qualitatively less difficult than decommissioning the plant itself. That process has barely begun; the removal of Fukushima's melted nuclear fuel, still requiring massive amounts of cooling seawater to be pumped daily into the destroyed reactor structures, hasn't even started! And we are informed at COP28 that nuclear power production will be tripled!

If nothing else COP28 will be marked by that single concluding pledge from the world's elite ruling rich.

Immigration crisis deepens

Capitalism's endless wars, its wanton environmental destruction, its economic rape of poor nations, its privatization of the lands of the poor, its punishing economic sanctions imposed on 55 nations, and its endless substitution of high technology manufacturing for human labor, have combined to create a worldwide immigration crisis, wherein the world's poor are increasingly driven from their homelands in search of a better life elsewhere.

And when they arrive, if they are not instantly deported to the growing refugee camps around the world, they are systematically shunted into their new nation's lowest wage level jobs and living conditions. They are subjected to corporate media sponsored racist

tirades aimed at characterizing them as stealing jobs and otherwise being responsible for all the ills of failing capitalist societies.

Indeed, the ruling elite everywhere consciously use the plight of immigrants to fuel support for overtly racist and increasingly neo-fascist policies and parties, blaming capitalism's most oppressed victims for the ever-deepening assaults that a crisis-ridden capitalist system imposes on the broad working class.

Rising unemployment and social cutbacks

The "official" US government unemployment rate is 3.9 percent, a figure that has zero correspondence to reality.

The figure includes insufficient part-time work and poorly paid jobs. Adding those who are working less than 35 hours a week, but want more, or who make less than \$20,000 annually, boosts the government's "functional unemployment rate" to almost 23 percent, according to the Ludwig Institute for Shared Prosperity (LISEP).

Working people understand full well that the "low" unemployment rates touted by the twin parties of US capitalism bear no relationship to the truth. Many work two or three low wage, zero benefit part time jobs in the "gig" economy as so-called independent contractors, that is, for corporations that have fewer and often no obligation to provide benefits. Workers are increasingly hard pressed to pay daily-inflated food prices and ever-escalating rents and fuel costs.

Stock market reaches all-time high

Needless to say the US ruling class measure of success is not the well-being of its "subjects" but rather its bottom line, that is, its profits. When profits are threatened in the face of ever-rising national and international competition, as is the case today, all matters of hell are let loose. From endless wage, healthcare, pension, and other social benefit cuts to speed up, layoffs, part-time/zero benefit work, substitution of machines/computers/robots and now AI (Artificial Intelligence) for workers, offshoring jobs to low wage countries, use of near slave wage prison and low wage immigrant labor, increasing taxes on working people, to endless wars and environmental destruction, nothing is excluded.

More recently, the ruling elite have found some new ways to bolster flagging balance sheets, including rigging the stock market via insider-trading schemes, turning it into a casino-like venture, where the house always wins, or reducing government interest rates charged to large corporations, which in turn "invest" this "free" money into instant stock market and other speculative ventures, for record profits.

Such is today's prime explanation for the US market's dramatic rise to all-time highs. When the Federal Reserve chair a few weeks ago announced the likelihood of three corporate interest rate loan *reductions* in the months ahead, the stock market profit spigot was turned wide open. Nothing can be excluded when the multi-billionaire few set out to game the system.

The system's base corruption

Whether it be momentary flights to "cryptocurrency" speculation to everyday rigging the tax codes to escape taxation outright [*Among President Biden's 2020 campaign pledges was one to guarantee that the rich, "who don't pay taxes," according to Biden, "pay up."*] or simply offshoring profits, as with Apple Computer's English Channel Island of Jersey [*See NYT, Nov. 7, 2017, "Apple has accumulated more than \$128 billion in profits offshore, and probably much more, that is untaxed by the United States and hardly touched by any other country. Nearly all of that was made over the past decade."*] or establishing corporate headquarters in foreign countries, a la Sam Bankman-Fried's Nassau, Bahamas FTX, nothing is overlooked by the very people who the super rich assign to write the "laws" that guarantee corporate profits.

All of the above are daily orchestrated by the elite, who fund and control the basic levers of power via their twin capitalist parties and their rigged electoral system. Their corporate-dominated mass media operate to create a "Truman Show" or "Potemkin Village" fake world based on the manufactured illusion of common acceptance of the status quo, ever embedded with racist, sexist, homophobic and anti-immigrant scapegoating.

Nothing is sacred for this elite, including their touted "democracy" replete with billionaire-orchestrated periodic "elections" where their ever-malleable petty-millionaire candidates are "elected" to pretend to run the government. Even capitalism's touted heads of state Presidents, whether a Biden or Trump or Obama, Clinton or Bush, etc., fully understand their limits, albeit the "moron" egomaniac Trump, as he was described by former Secretary of State and Exxon Mobile chief, Rex Tillerson, momentarily believed that he actually ran the country and could game it at will.

Today's Joseph Biden is nothing more than the ruling class choice of a hack politician with a half-century service to the ruling rich, including his role in "keeping peace" a half century ago between the Democratic Party's then overtly racist segregationist Southern wing and its "Northern capitalist liberals."

Indeed, the ruling rich pulled out all the stops soon after the 2020 primary election season began, near instantly withdrawing support to all the multiple contending candidates and uniting big capital behind Biden's lagging candidacy.

This included quashing any notion of a "reform" wing in the Democratic Party via the Bernie Sanders candidacy and limiting Republican Trump's neo-fascist demagogic appeals. They judged that there was no need or room for any serious concessions in economic or social policy with regard to the deepening degradation of the quality of working class life. This was to be continued and intensified, as with Biden's tax breaks for the rich, his renegeing on promises to unions to ease collective bargaining union recognition restrictions, his dramatic expansion in granting offshore drilling permits, imposition of new and brutal anti-immigration measures and his promoting increased funding for killer police departments.

Biden's response to the Bernie Sanders \$16 trillion Green New Deal global warming abatement legislation was a paltry \$1.3 trillion omnibus bill, most of which went to "infrastructure" improvement projects largely benefitting the corporate elite. But, the ruling rich also saw no need to echo Trump's too overtly reactionary language and touted anti-social measures, including his racist and sexist rants against "woke" politics. Biden and his slick team saw no need for book-burning or firing educators for teaching about the Civil War and slavery, or banning abortion as murder, at least for now! But neither Biden nor his Democrats ever legislated the right to abortion into federal law, or abolished the reactionary anti-abortion Hyde Amendment, when the Democrats controlled both house of Congress and the presidency.

The ruling class backs Biden's candidacy

With the aid of their tightly-controlled and ever-monopolized corporate media, the real US ruling class, perhaps the one-hundredth, if not one-thousandth of one percent of the population, turned their attention to corralling capitalism's compliant allies among the "Black mis-leadership class" – a term so aptly coined by Black Agenda Report's former and deceased editor, Glen Ford – into the Democratic Party. They did the same with the largely corrupt AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy and with a compliant Bernie Sanders, and with the largely fractured and demoralized reformist "left" and its largely Democratic Party-associated Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and with the largely corporate-funded NGOs of the environmental movement. Their prime objective was to place the reliable ruling class stalwart, Joe Biden in the presidency. Once again, the ruling rich employed their "lesser evil" charade to the hilt and Trump was their perfect foil.

Three years later, as we have amply demonstrated, capitalism's inherent crises show no sign of abatement. Biden has maintained Trump's tariffs on competitive foreign imports. He imposed new sanctions aimed at nations that don't comply with US demands. US military interventions have reached new heights. Biden's congressionally-required annual report listing every country with ongoing US military operations revealed that the US military was operating in 139 nations!

Inter-imperialist rivalry, especially between US and China for new markets and control of the old, has intensified. Zionist Israel's genocide in Gaza has undermined US imperialism as never before. [See: China's Imperialism Abroad: "The Belt and Road Initiative" September, 2023 at socialistaction.org,]

Today's youth radicalization

A broad youth radicalization is unfolding today, influenced by deep anti-racist sentiments of solidarity with the oppressed in the US and worldwide, and especially with the beleaguered masses in Palestine. Originally expressed in the unprecedented Black Lives Matter (BLM) mobilizations of a few years ago, today it has taken giant leaps forward with the almost daily youth-led and often massive and increasingly coordinated protests against US complicity with the ongoing genocide in Gaza. But unlike the BLM protests, that at one point saw five million in the streets protesting racist police murders of unarmed Blacks and exposing US capitalism's systemic racism, today's mobilizations, with a new and independent and ever broadening leadership, are unlikely to be coopted into capitalist politics and the Democratic Party, as was the case with the almost instant demise of the BLM movement.

The roots of this new radicalization were evident a few years before BLM, when repeated Pew Polls showed that the majority of youth today preferred socialism to capitalism, a reflection of the fact that today's youth see their future prospects as significantly dimmer than their parents in capitalist America. In contrast, they see socialism, however it's defined, as a fundamentally more democratic, humane, anti-authoritarian society aimed at social equality and at advancing human rights in all their manifestations.

Capitalism's past cooptation response to any youth radicalization has been via its Democratic Party political appendages like the DSA or through the myriad of corporate-financed NGOs, including the Ford Foundation that largely financed the key organizations of the loosely-organized and near leaderless Black Lives Matter movement.



A new youth radicalization unlikely to be stifled [Photo above: mass largely youth mobilization in Washington,D.C.]

A similar cooptation of today's inspiring youth militancy is unlikely, especially when capitalism's first cards played aimed at stifling the current and growing passionate youth rebellion against US imperialism's chief Middle East ally with not only *threats* of repression but with outright persecution and punishment. This now includes suspensions and expulsions from colleges and universities, threats to ban protesting students from future industry employment, mass arrests of protestors and more.

The government-legislated witchhunt begins

Today's new witchhunt also includes efforts to force the resignation or pressure administrations to fire prestigious college presidents. Such efforts have already been undertaken at Harvard, MIT, Rutgers and the University of Pennsylvania, to name few. The recent congressional hearings on this issue saw well-known university presidents, including Harvard's Dr. Claudine Gay – prepared with a statement drafted in collaboration with prestigious attorneys – defending the basic free speech rights of students and the university itself. But Gay, bending to the government's spurious accusation that anti-Zionism was anti-Semitism, not to mention that advocacy of anti-Zionism was akin to advocacy of genocide, later publicly apologized for some of the language in her statement even though her defense of free speech was fully in accord with all current free speech interpretations of the US Constitution.

On December 13, the House of Representatives approved a bipartisan resolution calling for Gay's resignation. Her forced semi-apology notwithstanding, 700 Harvard faculty members defended her remaining president and her defense of free speech. Harvard's

board unanimously affirmed her presidency, despite massive threats from major donors to withdraw their financial support. The reactionary House resolution was effectively deemed dead on arrival, but not before once again revealing the Democratic Party witchhunt complicity.

But University of Pennsylvania President Elizabeth Magill, who also testified before congress along with Gay – under pressure from her own governing board – did resign. Both Gay and Magill refused to directly answer NY Republican congresswomen Elise Stefanik hypothetical question as to whether a student’s advocacy of genocide of Jews violated their university’s policies on bullying and harassment. Neither Stefanik nor any other congressional inquisitor charged that any student had advocated genocide of Jews. But for today’s witchhunters opposition to racist, colonial, settler Israeli Zionism is considered advocacy of genocide and must be a punishable offense!

Legislation equates anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism

The congressional attacks on a handful of university presidents have not ended the matter. They have been accompanied by reactionary state and national legislation equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. A December 5, bi-partisan House bill (H.R. 894) explicitly designated anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism. The vote was 311-14 with 92 members voting “Present.” All but one Republican voted in favor. Nearly half of the Democrats followed suit. Most of the rest’s “Present” vote, indicating their “declining to take a position,” were Democrats, yet another deadly affirmation that the Democratic Party has never been and never will be a bulwark against reaction.

Another bill (H.R. 6578) introduced last week aimed at establishing the “Commission to Study Acts of Anti-Semitism in the United States,” perhaps a modern-day version of the McCarthy-era, House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). The proposed bill authorizes the Commission to hold HUAC witchhunt- type hearings with the power to subpoena, and therefore, intimidate witnesses, including perhaps threats of imprisonment levied against those subpoenaed who refuse, “to name names” of their political collaborators. Yesteryear’s “Are you now or have you ever been member of the Communist Party?” may well be converted today to, “Are you now or have you ever been an anti-Zionist?”

America’s mini-experiment with fascism

US capitalism’s 1950s and 60s resort to McCarthy-era repression and imprisonment of political dissidents was considered by experienced activists at that time, the US ruling class’s mini-experiment with fascism. It came at a time when the post-WWII mass

revulsion against the just-defeated Nazis occupation of Europe, especially in France and Italy, focused on mass Communist Party-led mobilizations that extracted major concessions from the largely discredited post-war governments. These near working class rebellions extracted a broad range of unprecedented social democratic, wage, labor and employment security victories from these weakened capitalist states, whose wartime governments were Nazis collaborators. At that time the French and Italian Communist Parties were the largest in the country.

A fearful US ruling class, especially in the context of the 1946 US strike wave that saw the largest number of workers on strike in US history, calculated that fascist-like repression in the US itself might be a pre-requisite to continued ruling class stability.

But, the post-WWII period essentially left US capitalism intact, with its wartime industrial infrastructure massively expanded, while its former European competitors' economies lay in ruins. The US dominated the world economy as never before, with both its wartime allies and enemies largely destroyed. This led the US elite to at least in part back off from implementing the more virulent forms of brutal fascist rule, but not before a frightened ruling class enacted over the course of a decade and longer a body of reactionary legislation aimed at essentially terrorizing, if not effectively outlawing Communist Party members and their associated organizations. The Constitutional protections of civil liberties were shredded in the name of subordinating free speech and the right to association to so-called US national security interests. This was codified in the US Supreme Court majority decisions authored by Chief Justice Felix Frankfurter wherein the First Amendment's guaranteed free speech and free association rights had to be "balanced" against the "national Security interests" of the US government. Frankfurter's court "balancing" scale always came down on the side of the government's "national security." Subpoenaed HUAC witnesses who, citing the First Amendment, refused to "name names" or admit membership in the CP, were cited for "contempt of congress" and often jailed. The witchhunt was on.

Immediately prior to the witchhunt, the Stalinist-led US Communist Party led some one-third of the US labor movement organized in the powerful Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). "Peaceful co-existence" with capitalism was the CP credo. In 1945 the USSR's head of state, Joseph Stalin, the US wartime ally, appeared on the front page of the popular *Life* magazine and was endearingly referred to as "Uncle Joe." Moreover, the CP itself proposed continuing its wartime patriotic, pro-employer "no strike pledge" into the postwar period, again, at the time of the largest strike wave in US history! This, is

itself, helped to discredit the CP in the eyes of many workers. Further, on Stalin's orders, in 1946, under Earl Browder's leadership, the CP itself was formally dissolved!

Origins of the Cold War

None of this, however, convinced US imperialism to back off from its witchhunt. Rebuilding and re-arming European capitalism and restoring its badly tarnished Nazi collaborationist image became US imperialism's major focus. A "Cold War" was decreed; at its center was bringing down the "Iron Curtain," that is, the pro-Russian governments that were established across Eastern Europe following the USSR's Red Army victories that were centrally responsible for Hitler's defeats. With 90 percent of Hitler's armies on the Russian front, the USSR's losses, at 27 million dead, came close to exceeding the total losses of the entire world. Smashing Russia's credibility became US imperialism's central priority. The witchhunt was critical to this US objective. The US establishment of NATO in Europe aimed at challenging the Soviet-backed and established deformed workers' states in Eastern Europe that a few years after the end of WWII, abolished capitalism via the election of various indigenous Communist Parties that replaced the largely discredited parties that had collaborated with the Nazis occupation.

But with CPUSA's acquiescence and its consciously posing zero threat to US imperialism at home, the ruling class saw no need for a US fascist repression of the Hitlerian type to defend its interests.

McCarthy himself, a rightwing Wisconsin US Senator, was quickly discredited. He was publically pilloried during the widely televised Army-McCarthy congressional hearings, isolated and removed from office. But the McCarthy-era's witchhunt, anti-democratic, anti-labor and anti-civil liberties laws that his generation introduced were allowed to linger for decades. The capitalists of that era, and today, had no reason to change or remove any repressive legislation that aided their "right to profit." "Anti-communism" and fear of dissent was drilled into the consciousness of millions and remained there for decades until a new youth rebellion combined with the dramatic Black-led Civil Rights and Vietnam antiwar movements to fundamentally break with the witchhunt's "better dead than red" mentality. It was only during this period, some two decades later, when the new mass movements once again dominated public life, that the US Supreme Court, via Chief Justice Earl Warren's 5-4 majority, repeatedly ruled that most of the McCarthy-era legislation was "unconstitutional."

Today's ruling class faces qualitatively less of a threat from the organized labor movement than during late 1930s and 40s. That labor upsurge raised trade union membership from an

all time low to some 36 percent of all US workers, and especially the workers in basic industry.

Today, organized labor, with a largely corrupt mis-leadership, subordinate to the Democratic Party, stands once again at an historic low, at best representing six percent of the private sector workforce. The fight today is not only to restore basic democratic functioning and rank-and-file union control to the existing unions but to massively “organize the unorganized” working class and unite this consequently reinvigorated fighting labor movement in struggle with the growing movements of all the oppressed and exploited.

Today’s intra-capitalist debates

The capitalist elite are no newcomers to their history. The debates today among and between its different components – openly racist and covertly racist, pro-war and “antiwar/Trump,” “pro” or anti-abortion, for or against free speech, for or against Trump’s January 6, 2022 coup attempt, for or against seriously addressing the climate crisis, endemic unemployment, poverty, etc. all reflect the base uncertainty among capitalism’s US rulers as their rotten system confronts or fails to confront one crisis after another.

We can only speculate today what forms of capitalist repression and violence will be deployed by the ruling class, whether from the Trump minority wing that increasingly spouts fascist-type rhetoric, or from the Democrats, who are skilled at orchestrating every form of horrific violence against working people the world over, and in the US too, if they deem it necessary.!

Both wings of capitalism’s twin parties of war, racism, repression and poverty are closely watching today’s unfolding youth radicalization, more fearful than in decades that it cannot be reined into the safe channels of capitalist electoral politics.

In the face of their own inexorably deepening crises, resort to violent repression can never be excluded. Indeed, it is the iron rule deeply-imbedded in all capitalist minority ruled societies.

The ruling elite understand full well that a consciously-organized working class led by experienced revolutionary fighters deeply embedded in every struggle of the day poses the only serious threat to its future capacity to exploit and oppress to keep their system of minority rule intact and in power.

Socialist politics

The alternative society that revolutionary socialists aim to help construct begins with organizing and empowering the vast majority of capitalism’s victims in all their varied

races, creeds, sexes, sexual orientations, and national origins. Revolutionary socialists aim at organizing this vast majority into a disciplined deeply-rooted mass revolutionary socialist party aimed at ending capitalist minority rule. We also aim at helping to construct a mass independent, democratically-organized union-based Labor Party to carry workers' battles at the point of production into the electoral arena. Such a Labor Party, armed with a socialist program, can help lead the fight for a workers' government aimed at the abolition of capitalist corporate rule.

We aim at ushering into being a new and egalitarian society free from every form of discrimination and inequality.

Today, much of the "old left" has tragically been decimated, demoralized, and/or demobilized under the pressures of relative capitalist stability, and especially via the constant pressures to be drawn into capitalist "lesser evil" electoral politics, whether it be of the DSA, or Bernie Sanders, or corporate-funded NGO-financed projects aimed at channeling promising movements back into "the system." As the 2024 elections approach we are once again presented with the "choice" between electing the corporate Democrat's reactionary, racist, Biden over the corporate Republican's reactionary, racist Trump! We reject this "choice" and instead stand proudly among today's champions of independent mass mobilizations against capitalist injustice and genocide in Gaza and in solidarity with the world's people fighting for freedom and liberation.

The connection between Palestine and Ferguson

Today's courageous US youth are highlighting the connections between fighting racism at home and abroad, between solidarity with Palestine and solidarity Ferguson, between opposition to the US-backed Zionist genocide in Gaza and opposition to the US war machine everywhere and against US systemic racism at home.

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