

The Global System Nearing Financial and Climate Collapse: Capitalism

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‘Why are there forty million poor people in America?.. when you begin to ask that question, you are raising questions about the economic system, ...you begin to question the capitalistic economy.’ – Martin Luther King

*“I’m a human being, first and foremost, and as such I’m for whoever and whatever benefits humanity as a whole.” – **Malcolm X***

Having just recently celebrated the annual reductive canonization of Martin Luther King by deservedly extolling his work for human solidarity but with hardly anyone quoting his criticisms of capitalism, his fellow revolutionary Malcolm’s words are still timely as well in going far beyond current identity group divisions and addressing humanity as a whole. At their time Malcolm was played as the divisive force by racists and protectors of the system he was most critical of, and in unity with MLK about. That system they were working against – and why they were murdered – has not changed in essence since Marx analyzed it in the 19th century, but the 21st has brought it, and us, closer to disaster than at any previous point. While billions of the colonized, enslaved and class diminished have suffered over the ages, now all are threatened as never before.

In the USA alone, 300 million Americans carry a national debt of more than 23 trillion dollars, which were minted in the name of our nation and then turned over to private financial sources. Then we borrowed it from them without asking how they hell they got our money and now were loaning it to us to spend on the military industrial complex a republican president warned against many years ago. We also financed the creation of billionaires who collect interest on that debt by claiming that it’s our responsibility to pay, and lose, and theirs to collect, and profit.

Our personal consumer debt is more than 13 trillion dollars, which we need to buy all the stuff that keeps us alive and lots more that we need the way a forest needs a fire. More than a trillion of that is for the plastic we use to survive and occasionally eat steak or salmon on a budget that might be able to afford us taco-pizza-burgers if we had to pay cash. More than 9 trillion covers our mortgage debt so we can make believe we are “home owners”, until such time as the bank decides we aren’t paying fast enough and we’re reduced to being renters, if we can find apartments, or being homeless. Another trillion plus each for student and auto loans so we can be taught that this system makes sense as long as we keep driving to the mall, the school, the ministry and the poorhouse by simultaneously polluting our personal lives and social environment.

What was once called a sea of debt on which we floated has become an ocean of debt into which we are sinking, and still our ruling minority programs us to ask “where can we get the money to fund health care and education” as though we all had doctoral degrees from the London School of Economics and were well trained in scratching our butts and picking our noses with the same finger while rationalizing economic insanity. Stop spending it on weapons, drugs, waste and garbage and redirect it to what humans need most: shelter, food, clothing, health care, and other stuff like that. Duh?

The incredible amount of debt – imaginary, make believe wealth – which global capitalism treats as a systemic foundation now threatens to structurally collapse. That is not just a problem for the 1% or smaller percentile that still exercises power over space, time and life itself. The last collapse a few years ago reduced millions of former homeowners and jobholders to a struggle for survival that has not ended for most of them, and they’ve been joined in a supposed recovery – for capital! – that finds more people working for less pay and less people enjoying the fruits of their labor. No different than what began with industrial capitalism back in the 19th century when people who previously lived off the land, or tried to, were herded into cities and factories and mills to create wealth, some of which trickled down to them but mostly defied nature and gravity by flowing up to the ruling powers whose wealth was beyond that of previous feudal lords.

Now, global capital has created a tiny minority of wealthy people who make the feudal lords seem almost a New York rush hour crowd by comparison. As few as three multi-billionaire Americans have as much combined wealth as 150 million Americans, all of those expected to dutifully troop off to the polls and vote for continuing the system that is moving much closer to a financial breakdown, with more pain and suffering for more Americans and the rest of the world than the last collapse caused. Using public funds to bail out private wealth temporarily saved that one and the public good be damned. That cannot be allowed to happen again, and uprisings all over the world are taking place because more people can’t take it any more. They feel the pain and see the handwriting on the wall, which may still be beyond those of us who can only use our smart phones to get dumb news which tells us nothing but what consciousness control pays its media to cram into our heads.

The nearing potential collapse of the massive debtors prison which capitalism has become is a short term situation that we may still be able to avoid, even though many system supporters feel it is unavoidable and society – the common working masses – will just have to learn to live with more austerity and less, much less, comfort. Almost unknown due to media blackouts here, mobs of frustrated people in places from France to Lebanon to Chile to Nigeria are aroused as never before in rising against the authority and rule that has reduced them to lower and lower status. This short-range problem is reduced by mind management in the USA to replacing one CEO of a failing corporation with another, while preserving the destructive and near collapsing system.

And that same system is at the root of a longer range problem reduced to a brand name – climate change – by the profiteers who would use a flame thrower to put out a fire, or rely on a private profit system to end the potential for destruction of the planet and its inhabitants by; the private profit system. While devising plans to clean up the mess we’ve made of nature by using the same system that created that mess, many have begun to notice that you can’t clean up the water supply by continuing to throw garbage into the water but just burning it first, so that the air is fouled while the water is filtered in order to return a profit to the air fouling firm instead of the water polluting business.

It is the system that has reduced the humanity spoken of by MLK, Malcolm X and experienced by all of us who breathe, or try to, that has placed private profits for a dwindling minority over all else. That minority has amassed the forces to dominate and market air, water, earth and humanity itself, transforming us all into commodities which can be bought and sold at the market only if we amass the market forces to do so, and if we can't, we can drop dead.

It once was easier to get away with when there were enough people getting by to feel comfortable enough to think maybe it would eventually all work out for the best. That former working middle class is sinking lower, the lower class is in more misery than ever in modern times, and the tiny minority at the top is richer than ever before based on its purchase of armies and a professional class also dwindling in numbers but still numerous enough to transform minds and politics into acceptance of the economic slavery that passes for democracy.

It can't and won't last much longer and if we wait for nature to take action it will obviously be disaster. But if we organize and act as a human race, facing our problems as a race threatened with annihilation if we don't work together, the result could be the salvation offered by real democracy in which the words of past revolutionaries like Malcolm and Martin become the actions of the present generation. That means ending capitalism and beginning humanity.

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