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Voting by “the people” is *not* the basic way things are decided under this capitalist system

It is a fact that the politics of this system—the much-proclaimed capitalist “democracy”—normally allows the people to vote. But here is the crucial thing: Whom people get to vote for, is *not* decided by the people— it is decided *by the ruling capitalist class*, through its political representatives (in this country, the Democratic and Republican parties). Yes, these parties have “primary elections,” through which their candidates are chosen to run in the “general elections”—but those primaries, too, are *dominated and controlled by the ruling class and the heads of its political parties*. **When the people vote, they are voting for candidates who will represent the interests of the ruling capitalist class—candidates who have been selected through a process dominated and ultimately controlled by that ruling class.**

(For example, *who decided* that Joe Biden would be the only serious candidate in the Democratic Party primaries this year—and *who then decided* that Biden should *get out* of the race, and *be replaced by Kamala Harris*?)

There are times—and what we are living through now is one of those times—when the capitalist ruling class is deeply divided and the contest between different sections of the ruling class, for control of the government, is extremely bitter and “outside the bounds” of their “normal” competition. *But that is a bitter contest over which vision and program*, of which section of the ruling class, *will best serve the continuing rule of the capitalist system, with its basis in vicious exploitation, and murderous oppression*.

It is clearly the case that, under this system, anyone who attempts to be a “serious candidate” for office—and especially “high office,” like President—will have to get the backing of capitalists with a lot of money and influence. Along with that, any such candidate will have to be judged “legitimate” by the dominant media—which are themselves capitalist institutions with billions of dollars of capital, and are essentially propaganda instruments of the ruling class (or sections of the ruling class). Anyone who is not judged “legitimate” will be locked out of these media—given no coverage, except perhaps in the form of attacks on them. And once again there is the basic fact that “legitimate” means: in the interests of the ruling system of capitalism.

This gets to the most fundamental point: Under this system, any politician, and any program of politicians, has to be in line with the basic interests and essential functioning of the capitalist system—or else chaos would result and society could not function. Here is an example I have used before, which gets to the heart of the matter: Think of what would happen if, under this capitalist system, politicians passed a law which said that people could take whatever they require for their basic necessities, without having to pay for them! The whole system would obviously break down. (This is an expression of the fundamental reality that with any structure or any system, the foundation sets the terms, and the limits, for what the superstructure will be—which I spoke to in my previous message, [number Eighty-Two](#).)

Only in the *communist* system could things be made available to people—basic material necessities, as well as educational and cultural needs, etc.—without people having to pay for them. (How and why that is so is something I have spoken to, in basic terms, elsewhere—including in the articles, at revcom.us, on exploitation, and putting an end to exploitation and oppression, which I referred to in my previous message.)

Providing a decent life for the masses of people as a whole—free from concern about whether they will have even the basic necessities of life—that is neither a goal, nor a possibility, under the capitalist system. Once again, this is because of the basic nature and functioning of the capitalist economic system, with the politics and ideology that go along with and reinforce that system.

In summation, the system in this country is *capitalism*. *It is a system based on exploitation and oppression, and the “democracy” under this system is an expression of, and serves to reinforce, the rule of the capitalist class of exploiters.* It is a democracy that serves as a “cover” for, and at the same time a means of enforcing, the actual *dictatorship* of the capitalist class: its monopoly of political power, and especially the monopoly of “legitimate” violence exercised by this capitalist class through its political representatives and institutions of organized violence (the armed forces, police, etc.).

As history has shown (for example, with *fascist* rule in Germany and some other countries before and during World War 2), especially in situations of extreme and acute crisis, this system can even *do away* with this capitalist “democracy,” and replace it with *undisguised* dictatorial rule by the capitalist class. (This is essentially what is represented by Trump and the Republican Party today.) But, as extreme as this fascism is, it is *an extreme and undisguised form of the dictatorship that is actually exercised by the capitalist class at all times under this system.*

In my next message, I will get further into the nature of the capitalist system, and why it cannot be “reformed,” but must be overthrown, and replaced by a far better system.

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