

## **Socialism Means One World**

Just as capitalism is a world system of society, so too must socialism be. There never has been, and never can be, socialism in just one country because its material basis is the world-wide and interdependent means of production that capitalism has built up. The bulk of the wealth produced in the world today is produced by the co-operative labour of the millions employed to operate these means of production. What is needed now, to establish socialism, is a conscious political decision on the part of these millions across the world to run society in their own interests.

This will be done by taking the means of production throughout the world into common ownership, with their democratic control by the whole community, and with production solely for use.

Common ownership will be a social relationship of equality between all people with regard to the use of the means of production. No longer will there be classes, governments and their state machinery, or national frontiers.

Democratic control will involve the whole community in making decisions about the use of the means of production. Instead of government over people there would be various levels of democratic administration, from the local up to regional and world levels, with responsibility being delegated if necessary to groups and individuals.

Production for use will bring production into direct line with human needs. Without money, wages, buying and selling there will be a world of free access. Everyone will be able to contribute to society by working voluntarily, according to ability. Everyone will be able to take freely from whatever is readily available, according to self-defined needs.

### **Global Problems**

The motivation for this new world comes from the common class interest of those who produce but do not possess. An important part of this motivation comes from the global problems thrown up by capitalism. Ecological problems make a nonsense of the efforts of governments. War and the continuing threat of nuclear war affect us all. The problem of uneven development means that many producers in the underdeveloped countries suffer starvation, disease and absolute poverty. All of these problems of capitalism can only be solved within the framework of a socialist world. Ecological problems require the sort of long-term planning and development of which competitive, international capitalism is incapable. Converting the armaments industry (capitalism's biggest industry) from producing weapons of destruction to producing useful things to satisfy human needs will take time. Ending world hunger and poverty, above all, makes the world-wide co-operation of socialism an urgent necessity.

But this does not rule out local democracy. In fact a democratic system of decision-making would require that the basic unit of social organisation would be the local community. However, the nature of some of the problems we

face and the many goods and services presently produced, such as raw materials, energy sources, agricultural products, world transport and communications, need production and distribution to be organised at a world level. Corresponding to this, of course, there would be a need for a democratic world administration, controlled by delegates from the regional and local levels of organisation throughout the world.

### Development of Ideas

The world socialist movement, of which the Socialist Party is a constituent part, expresses the common class interest of the producers. Because political power in capitalism is organised on a territorial basis each socialist party has the task of seeking democratically to gain political power in the country where it operates. If it is suggested that socialist ideas might develop unevenly across the world, and that socialists of only a part of the world were in a position to get political control, then the decision about the action to be taken would be one for the whole of the socialist movement in the light of all the circumstances at the time. It would certainly be a folly, however, to base a programme of political action on the assumption that socialist ideas will develop unevenly and that we must therefore be prepared to establish "socialism" in one country or even a group of countries like the European Community.

For a start, it is an unreasonable assumption that socialist ideas will develop unevenly. Given the world-wide nature of capitalism and its social relationships, the vast majority of people live under basically similar conditions, and because of the world-wide system of communications and media, there is no reason for socialist ideas to be restricted to one part of the world. Any attempt to establish "socialism" in one country would be bound to fail owing to the pressures exerted by the world market on that country's means of production. Recent experience in Russia, China and elsewhere shows conclusively that even capitalist states cannot detach themselves from the requirements of an integrated system of production operated through the world market.

Faced with this explanation of how the world could be organised, many would reject it in favour of something more "realistic", including some who call themselves socialist. They seek to solve social problems within the framework of government policies, the state machine, national frontiers, money, wages, buying and selling. But if our analysis of capitalism as a world system is correct - and we've yet to be shown how it's wrong - then state politics are irrelevant as a way of solving social problems. Viewed globally, state politics only make sense when seen as a means for capturing political power in order to introduce a world of free access. LEW