

What Is The State?

Q.- How is it that the owners of capital (the owners of the oil, steel, land, factories etc.), who make up around 1% of all the people in the U.S. have the power to command, oppress and exploit the majority of the whole mass of labor?

A.- The owners of wealth (the bourgeoisie), who get their wealth by exploiting or robbing the workers, are able to keep on top of the majority of the toiling people because they have control of the state.

Q.- What is the state?

A.- The state is a special system or machine for the subjugation of the working class by the capitalist class today. The State machinery (the police, the judges, the laws, courts, prisons, the Army and Navy, etc.) exist to serve the rich, defend their property and most of all their exploitation of the working class.

Q.- How did the state arise?

A.- The state has not always existed. There was a time when there were no police, prisons and laws to protect the oppressor class. Only when classes appeared was it necessary that the state appear. As V.I. Lenin says in THE STATE:

"The state is a machine for maintaining the rule of one class over another. When there were no classes in society, people labored in primitive conditions of greater equality, in conditions when productivity of labor was still at its lowest, and when primitive man could barely procure the wherewithal for the crudest and most primitive existence, a special group of people especially separated off to rule and dominate over the rest of society had not yet arisen, and could not have arisen. Only when the first form of the division of society into classes appeared, only when slavery appeared, when a certain class of people, by concentration on the crudest forms of agricultural labor, could produce a certain surplus, when this surplus was not absolutely essential for the most wretched existence of the slave and passed into the hands of the slaveowner, when in this way the existence of this class of slave owners took firm root - then in order that it might take firm root it was essential a state should appear."

Q.- Why do the capitalists need to oppress the working class?

A.- Only in order that they may continue to rob the working class every minute of every day that workers spend on the production line and in the factories (just as the slaveholder lived off the sur-



The police are used to enforce the capitalists' rule.

plus made by the slave, the capitalist lives off the surplus made by the worker and moreover invests this surplus value again and again into production and grows rich). Today under capitalism we are wage slaves. Marx, born over 150 years ago is important to the working class because he was a revolutionary, whose life's work was dedicated to the overthrow of capital and the liberation of the working class. He has shown the workers of the world how they, through their labor, have created everything that there is of value (LABOUR THEORY OF VALUE) and how they are being systematically robbed by the capitalist class who keeps the major part of this value to amass great wealth and power for themselves (THEORY OF SURPLUS VALUE).

Q.- How does the working class get state power?

A.- The working class can get STATE power only by organizing themselves as a class, smashing the STATE machinery of the bourgeoisie, setting up their own state machinery, the dictatorship of the proletariat or workers, and "with this machine, or bludgeon, we shall destroy all exploitation. And when the possibility of exploitation no longer exists anywhere in the world, when there are no longer owners of land and owners of factories and when there is no longer a situation in which some gorge while others starve--only when the possibility of this no longer exists shall we consign this machine to the scrap heap. Then there will be no state and no exploitation."--Lenin, The State.

Western Electric:

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ern Electric, and whose policies direct this whole capitalist system.

What can workers do to fight against these cruel company policies? First and foremost the working class must build a strong Communist Party that will organize and coordinate the struggles of working and unemployed people all over the country; and whose eventual goal will be to take the lead in overthrowing the imperialist system and replacing it with socialism.

Secondly, in order to construct this Party, we must continue to struggle with in our trade unions, even with all of their rottenness. We must fight the union bureaucrats at every turn to put the unions back in the hands of the rank and file. We must fight for equal opportunity in apprenticeship programs, equal pay for equal work for men and women, against all discrimination directed at national minorities and defend the rights of all workers at the plant.

Only when these two forms of struggle are combined will the working class find itself strong enough to win in its fight against capital.

BUILD A CLASS PARTY!

BUILD A MASS STRUGGLE!