

# F THROUGH CLASS UNITY AND RESISTANCE r e e d o m



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**Freedom without Socialism is Privilege, Injustice  
Socialism without Freedom is Slavery, Brutality - BAKUNIN**

## CAPITALISM

Capitalism is an economic system run purely for profit in the interests of a small class – the Capitalists – at the expense of the mass of us – the Working Class. The whole of our present society is geared to



the needs of capitalism. It is the system whereby we sell our labour, in exchange for money, to purchase the goods and services we need, which we also happen to have produced in the first place! However, we only get a small part

of the wealth that our labour produces, the rest goes to the capitalists in profit. This is fundamental to

capitalism – in order for it to work the many must produce wealth for the few.

Western style capitalism is often hailed as being the “free market”, however there is no such thing as the free market, all it means is that they are “free” to exploit us. The situation is exactly the same in the so-called “planned economies” of the “Communist” countries. Karl Marx suggested that capitalism is a machine governed by natural laws – it isn’t. It’s an economic system run by a group of people who compete fiercely with each other for the right to rip us off.

Capitalism has nothing to offer us except an endless cycle of war, famine, recession and unemployment. It is not inevitable that it will die of its own accord, it will linger on for centuries yet, lurching from crisis to crisis, therefore it must be destroyed.

## THE STATE

Although capitalism is the major form of social organisation in terms of production, there are things it can’t do. Broadly speaking it can not supply the “social” organisation of society, this hole is filled in by something else – the State.

The State is the means by which the tiny minority control and dominate the rest of us, in the interests of the ruling power in our society – the capitalists. To give you an idea of how small a minority we are talking about, the often-quoted figures are still true – that 5% of the population owns 85% of the wealth.

The State is a set of institutions and bodies through which government is exercised e.g. parliament, local government, police, civil service, judiciary, prison system, education, and the church. The aim of government is to keep the lid on class conflict, and to control competition between the capitalists, to make sure of the smooth running of society. It does this by enforcing the laws of private property, and the right of the capitalist to buy and sell it. It doesn’t matter whether that property is land, food, health, sex, factories, houses or anything else that takes their fancy.

But the State came before capitalism, and it has always been a form of control and oppression in the interests of whatever ruling class is in power, and

whatever economic system they choose to use. In South Africa we are given the “choice”, every five years or so, of what Party we’d like to govern us. This, like many other “choices” is a false one, a con trick to fool us into thinking we can change things through the vote. It also gives us politicians, as figureheads, to blame for our difficulties.

But the reality is that the power of the State lies with the capitalists, and the State’s own officials – they pull the strings. With power concentrated like it is, there is always the risk that a small group can mount an attempt to gain control of



the State. For example Fascists or Marx-inspired communists. This would be nothing more than swapping one set of bosses for another – *we need to sweep the lot of them away.*

# CLASS

"I'm from the  
Government..."

Because capitalism represents exploitation, and the State represents domination, it isn't surprising that the society they have produced is split into different categories, or classes, of people who hold a position directly in relation to capitalism and the State.

It is important that we stress here that we have to generalise when defining class, there are always exceptions to the rule, there are also sub-sections within classes that can confuse the picture.

Firstly, there is a **Ruling Class** that owns and controls the main parts of the means of production, as well as controls our labour power. It also exercises control over the State. This class is also called the **Capitalist Class**, or the **Bourgeoisie**.

**EXAMPLES:** big business, corporate executives, top politicians of all the Parties, civil servants, generals and majors.

**ROLE IN SOCIETY:** maintaining their domination and exploitation of society.

**SIZE OF SOUTH AFRICAN RULING CLASS:** 2,5% of the population



"I'm here to help you"

Secondly, there is the **Working Class**. We neither own nor control the means of production. As a result we are forced to work for the Ruling Class for wages, and without real control over the work process (or Society). We also include in the Working Class the poor who are marginalised by the capitalist system, such as the unemployed, the alienated youth, and many of the self-employed.

**EXAMPLES:** blue collar workers like builders, agricultural workers, white-collar workers like clerks, service workers like waitresses, the unemployed, the poor and destitute, soldiers up to NCO level.

**ROLE IN SOCIETY:** to be exploited by the bosses and rulers through the wage system and through taxes, to be ordered around by the state, the bosses and the police, to provide recruits for the army and police and most importantly, to produce the necessities of life, not for ourselves, but so that the bosses can live in luxury.

**SIZE OF SOUTH AFRICAN WORKING CLASS:** about 81% (this includes the majority of "Africans" and other "Black" people, as well as two thirds of "Whites").

Thirdly, there is a **Middle Class**. The Middle Class is made up of small employers, middle-level managers and foremen, and professionals. Small employers have control and ownership of the means of production, but only have a limited control over our labour power because they employ few people. The middle-level managers exercise a limited level of control over investment and similar decisions, over the means of production, and over our labour but they do not own the means of production. The professionals work for a wage, but unlike us, they have a significant degree of control over how they do their work.

**EXAMPLES:** small employers, supervisors, foremen, lawyers, journalists, teachers, doctors, academics.

**ROLE IN SOCIETY:** to provide the middle management of capitalism and the State, to provide technical skills and "expertise" to the bosses and rulers, to manufacture "culture" like music, TV, fashion. To keep society running smoothly on behalf of the Ruling Class.

**SIZE OF SOUTH AFRICAN MIDDLE CLASS:** 12,5% of the population

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