Speak Out Now

Why Should We Get Less So They Get More?

We're paying more for everything. We are living through the biggest general increase in prices in about 40 years. In the past year, the average price for everyday items has increased by 8.5%. Food costs have increased about 13%. While temperatures soar, electricity costs have risen by 15%. And gasoline prices have increased by 44%.

Since inflation has risen much higher than our wages, the vast majority of workers have faced a pay cut. If your wage didn't increase over the past year by more than 8.5%, then you've had a cut in pay.

While workers struggle to get by with skyrocketing prices, many corporations are making record profits. Oil companies reported their biggest profits in history. Exxon Mobil made $18 billion in the last three months while Chevron and Shell each made nearly $12 billion.

It isn't just the oil companies that have record profits. The biggest corporations in the food and meatpacking industries, in retail, in package delivery, clothing, and railroads, have all made record earnings in the past year. Sysco Foods, Kelloggs, Starbucks, Amazon, Walmart, Target and many more have all seen record profits.

Corporations blame the rise in prices on the supply chain, the war in Ukraine, increased costs, anything they can come up with. But they all hide the fact that they are also just jacking up prices and making more money. They are relying on people to spend the money they saved during the pandemic and stealing it from us by raising prices. Some corporations have used their record profits to buy up smaller companies. But many are making so much money that they can't even reinvest it. So they have been paying out billions of dollars to shareholders and pocketing whatever they can.

The Biden administration, which is worried about its extremely low approval ratings, has tried to paint a rosy picture. Biden recently bragged that in the last month average prices did not go up any higher. But who really cares if prices remained the same when they are already so high? If gas is now $4 per gallon nationally, are we really supposed to be relieved that it didn't go back up to $5, or go above $6 in California?

The politicians have nothing to offer to address this problem. The Republicans sit back and try to blame Biden for inflation, of course refusing to discuss the record profits of the corporations. Just like the Democrats, they are in office to maintain the functioning of this economic system which supports maximizing corporate profiteering.

Inflation can't continue at this rate without creating huge problems. The Federal Reserve is set up to regulate this economic system. They have outlined their plans to try to reduce inflation, which includes further increases in the federal interest rate in order to get corporations to borrow less, and ultimately to invest less. This is then supposed to result in more layoffs and corporations lowering wages overall — as if workers will just accept lower wages. Their goal is for workers to have less money so we won't be able to buy as much, and then prices will supposedly start to come down.

What a strategy! Controlling inflation just means sacrificing people's lives through layoffs and wage cuts to guarantee profits. In their system, goods and services produced by working people are not produced to satisfy people's needs. They are produced for profit.

This isn't the only way to look at this. Those who own and control the wealth of this society need workers to produce. But those of us who produce don't need those who own the corporations. Wouldn't it make more sense if we organized the economy ourselves to produce what we need and eliminated their profiteering?