



Speak Out Now

August 17, 2026 northcarolina@speakoutsocialists.org speakoutsocialists.org IG:@sontriangle

AI in The Capitalists' Hands Threatens Us All

Thousands of people around the country, in small towns and cities alike, have packed town meetings or demonstrated against the massive data centers being constructed or proposed in their communities. A Gallup survey found that seven out of ten Americans oppose these artificial intelligence (AI) data centers in their local area.

Meanwhile, the big tech corporations and the governments that serve their interests have been plowing forward with data center construction, destroying forests and farmland, to get these centers built as quickly as possible. Many of their permits include construction of new fossil fuel energy facilities, such as new coal or diesel plants. Many are proposed near large rivers or bodies of water, to supply the running fresh water needed to keep the high-powered data centers cool. And the projects are also being proposed along new rail lines or new power lines, to take advantage of the infrastructure construction for their own energy needs.

This massive rush to set up these noisy, water-guzzling, energy hoarders is driven by a huge speculation into AI as a profitable technology. For AI to become profitable for those in power, the technology requires insane amounts of data, energy, water, and rare earth minerals used for chips.

The capitalists are in a race to become the first and best at developing and implementing AI that is powerful enough to dominate future economic developments in the world's economy. There is a mounting competition between the capitalists of the U.S. and China. The Chinese economy and technological developments are surpassing the stagnating U.S. economy in many areas. There is increasing and open tension developing over the control of deposits of rare earth and other minerals. The mining of these minerals is devastating huge areas of South, Central, and North America and Africa.

The huge demand for energy to operate the massive data centers has accelerated fossil fuel extraction in all areas of the world. The current U.S./Israeli war on Iran is a direct result of these resource wars, and many more are assured to come. Energy grids will serve data centers rather than the people who live near them.

The disregard for anything that does not generate profits distorts the possibilities for AI to be used for beneficial purposes. AI in the hands of the capitalists will always be designed and implemented in the interests of profits and power. Their aim is to increase labor productivity, and control all of us via surveillance and policing, all while consuming massive amounts of the world's dwindling resources, which we need to live.

AI is being used to advance military technology around the world to target, track, and kill their declared enemies and thousands more in what they call collateral damage. It is used to collect every bit of information it can about us to train their data sets, to better exploit and monitor us. It is used in workplaces to track and increase the pace of work to maximize production. And those who work with computers are increasingly being required to use AI –training it to do their work. AI is also isolating us from each other when we're forced to interact with AI instead of one another. AI is being forced onto us, whether we consent or not.

We don't have to accept this. Just like other technological advances, AI could be used to meet the needs of the majority with a minimal impact on our ecosystems. AI can be used to help us with complex data analysis and logistical problems to ensure that resources are being used optimally to meet everyone's basic needs. It could guide possibilities for dealing with the complex challenges we face – from the impact of plastics on the health of living things to replacing monotonous work – giving people time to live life more fully.

This cannot and will not happen under the current system. But oppressive systems have been changed throughout history. Tens of millions of people are questioning the use of AI. Opposition to AI alone will not bring about the kind of society we need. But in the process of challenging the rights of the billionaires to destroy our environments and our lives, it can bring more people to think about the need for a different way to live. We can be a part of that. Our town hearings and demonstrations can be a place to start building the connections needed to take control of our future.

Reports From Speak Out Members Around the U.S.

Bay Area, California:

Bezos Startup Expands AI Robot Development to West Oakland

Project Prometheus, a startup AI firm founded by Jeff Bezos, has signed a lease for 100,000 square feet at a former American Steel building in West Oakland. The company focuses on bringing AI-directed autonomous robots into physical manufacturing. From Bezos's record of labor rights violations at Amazon, it's no wonder he'd want to build "workers" who can't demand fair pay or complain about being overworked!

AI projects are being pushed into many working class, majority Black and brown neighborhoods in the Bay Area. Another example is the planned data center in Pittsburg, CA, which residents have been organizing against for months. AI companies claim these developments will bring jobs to the community. But when AI agents and robots are used as excuses to speed up work and cut jobs, it's only the bosses who win.

Baltimore, Maryland:

Therapy Techs Strike for Fair Pay

Behavior technicians at Verbal Beginnings in Montgomery County, MD held a rally for living wages on Aug 14, joined by public school teachers and other supporters. The techs, who provide therapy to autistic children, have been on strike for three weeks due to low pay and no sick leave. In May 2025 they became the first behavioral techs in the U.S. to unionize; since then, management has refused to negotiate wages.

Meanwhile, at least 60 Baltimore City teachers have been underpaid or not paid at all since May. People who teach and care for our kids are crucial to our families, neighborhoods, and entire society, and they are right to demand what they deserve! In the words of striking Verbal Beginnings workers, "every child deserves a safe place to learn" and "the people providing care deserve to be valued."

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

Newark, New Jersey:

More Deaths By ICE:

Only the Working Class Can Stop This

In the first days of August a detainee at the Delaney Hall detention center died while in custody. A previously unreported death of a detainee also occurred in July, although the prisoner had been released for medical treatment just before his death. These deaths this summer, on top of the death of another just-released detainee in 2025, makes 3 people dead — most likely because of their detention in this for-profit camp.

Labor organizers are holding a monthly Labor Eyes on ICE picket. We call on all workers to join this picket to stand against ICE/CBP/DHS brutality. These attacks on the working class will continue and likely get worse — until we organize our forces to stop them.

The Triangle, North Carolina:

Hunger Will Increase in North Carolina

North Carolina has 110,129 less people receiving food stamps than last year, when about 1.35 million people were enrolled in SNAP — a drop of roughly 8 percent in under a year. The new federal law conditions benefits on increased work requirements for adults under 65. Children over 14 lose benefits if adult caregivers fail to qualify. The working poor of the state have had their food budgets cut by \$230 million.

Demand has skyrocketed at food pantries statewide, but contributions to these voluntary agencies are drying up. Because of drought, farmers who used to donate unsold produce to pantries no longer have a surplus to give. Making these trends even worse, in March of last year the U.S. Agriculture Department cancelled \$30 million in grants.

In the richest country in the world no one should go hungry.

