



# SPEAK OUT NOW



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*The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie. – Karl Marx, from The Manifesto of the Communist Party (1848)*

## Donald Trump: Overflowing With Hate

Donald Trump continues to win in the primaries in spite of his racist and violent outbursts, including calling for the killing of family members of terrorists, the open use of torture, and refusing to distance himself from the Ku Klux Klan. But now the Republican Party leadership has openly denounced him. Following Trump's recent wins, 112 members of the Republican Party's national security community wrote a letter attacking Trump, saying that he would "make America less safe...diminish our standing in the world...[and] poses a distinct threat to civil liberty in the U.S." The same day, the 2012 Republican Nominee, Mitt Romney, denounced Trump in a speech shown all over cable news, calling him a "phony" and a "fraud," and saying that "Mr. Trump is directing our anger for less than noble purposes."

But how different are Trump's political positions than those the Republican Party has advocated for decades? Trump continuously blames immigrants for the economic problems in this country, referring to them as "criminals" and "rapists." But during the last presidential election, Mitt Romney repeatedly pointed to undocumented immigrants as the cause of unemployment and low wages, and he called on immigrants to leave the U.S. through "self deportation." It was also Romney who made his infamous rant about the so-called "47 percent," referring to half the population as lazy freeloaders "who think they are victims," who just need to "take personal responsibility and care for their lives."

The Republican Party has repeatedly used these racist politics of scapegoating to placate the anger that many in the working class feel towards the severe economic situation they find themselves in. Republican Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, blamed the poverty in inner city black neighborhoods on "a cultural problem," what he called "generations of men not even thinking about working or learning the value and the culture of work." And there have been many connections between Republican officials and known white supremacist groups, recently including former Mississippi Senator, Trent Lott, and Louisiana Congressman, Steve Scalise. It's no surprise that over a dozen leaders of white supremacist organizations have publicly endorsed Trump, calling him someone who "represents our interests," and is the "last hope for a president who would be good for white people."



Trump's rhetoric is only a more extreme version of the racist scapegoating that Republicans have continuously used to build their base over the years. But now the Republican Party has started to worry that Trump might win the nomination. Why are they speaking out against him? Their problem with Trump is less about what he says – it's that they are worried they might not be able to control him. Trump is an outsider to the Republican Party's political machine. His rhetoric may resonate with angry voters, but already top U.S. military officials have expressed unwillingness to follow the orders given by a Trump presidency. The Republican Party wants to guarantee a smoothly functioning government for its real constituency – the wealthy corporations who use the U.S. government to impose their will. Loose-cannon Trump is a danger to this goal.

The fact is, both parties carry out much of the same policies. Even without all the racist, anti-immigrant rhetoric, the Obama administration is responsible for the deportation

of the largest number of undocumented immigrants than under any president. Under the Obama administration, the U.S. has engaged in perpetual warfare all across the globe, has continued to justify assassinations via drone strikes, openly striking hospitals, weddings, funerals, and crowded city streets. All the while, the U.S. has seen high levels of long-term unemployment, attacks to education, increases in health care costs, and billions of dollars handed out to banks and corporations – not to mention it has repeatedly justified the largest surveillance operation known to human history.

It's true that Trump is a loudmouthed racist. But the reality is that both parties, Republicans and Democrats, serve the wealthy. They may not use the same kind of rhetoric to get elected, but once in office, they know who they serve. In order to bring about real changes in our lives, we can't rely on their politicians to fight for us. We do all the work to make society run and we can also use that power to fight for our own interests. None of their politicians will do it for us.

## Coal = Death! No Coal Trains to Oakland!

Burning coal is one of the most polluting forms of energy production and one of the greatest contributors to global warming. What could be more insane than destroying the environment with massive coal mining operations, and then loading the coal onto a mile-long string of open coal cars, then sending them more than 750 miles through densely populated areas, spewing coal dust all along the way, and then finally loading the coal on ships (also major polluters) only to send it more than 6000 miles to Asia to be burned?

Insane? Yes! Is it impossible? No. Unless the people of Oakland and everyone concerned decides to put an end to this madness. Developers have proposed to turn the former Oakland Army base into a coal export terminal that could export up to 10.5 million tons of coal per year to Asia. The trip from Utah will put an estimated 646 tons of coal dust in the air as the coal travels from Utah to Oakland each year.

These are trains of death – most harmful to the people of West Oakland who have one of the highest rates of asthma in the Bay Area. Inhaling coal dust is linked to respiratory problems, heart attacks, cardiovascular disease, and birth defects. Long-term exposure is linked to increased risk of cancer. And even worse is the impact on the planet, putting tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year.

The opposition to this insane plan is growing. Hundreds of people have turned out to Oakland City Council meetings. The ILWU 10 (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) – the union of the workers at the Port of Oakland, who load and unload the ships – have opposed the coal port, along with other unions. The mayor of Oakland has expressed her opposition, as well as city council members. Resolutions against coal trains have been passed by the City Councils of Richmond, Berkeley, San Leandro and others.



So what makes developer Phil Tagami think he can continue? His friendship with Governor Jerry Brown? The nearly \$250 million of state taxes the developers got for port development because of their lie that they had "no interest or involvement in the pursuit of coal-related operations?"

The disregard for the people of the Bay Area and the planet is only surpassed by the arrogance and racist attitudes of the developers. They've promised to give hundreds of thousands of dollars to Oakland churches, struggling to keep their programs alive. They've promised big money to environmental groups, and to create more than 1000 jobs at the port. Besides some construction jobs, the new port will employ fewer than 150 people. Their promises mean nothing!

So far most of the opposition to the port has been directed at city hall and the state legislature. But that isn't enough. We only have to look at the efforts of people in Seattle and Portland and other cities. City governments have taken a stand, but the coal companies pushed legislation to the state and federal levels. In Benicia, CA, the Planning Commission voted against allowing oil trains carrying crude oil to travel through the city. Valero Oil immediately appealed the decision, claiming Federal law overrules the decision.

Our efforts can't be limited to pressuring the system to respond. There is no need for discussion or further studies. If the coal and oil industries won't stop their murderous actions, it's up to us to bring this madness to a halt.

Working people are the ones who make this society run, and that is really where our power is. If the Longshore workers, the people of West Oakland, along with those who have expressed opposition to the coal port, organize their forces, it could put an end to this project. The Longshore workers have the power to shut down the port. And if other workers joined in who are concerned about the health of the city and of the planet, who work in Oakland, drive buses, operate BART, work in the health care field, it would put an end to this insanity. And just imagine where that might lead.

# The U.S. Supreme Court: Judicial Servants of the Ruling Class

Following the death of Supreme Court Justice, Antonin Scalia, on February 13, 2016, the empty Supreme Court seat has become a political battleground between Republicans and Democrats. This has been painted as a decisive struggle for civil rights. But most of the time the Supreme Court does little more than serve the interests of the elite. In cases of civil rights, most often it has ruled against protecting ordinary people. Most times, when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of civil rights, it was only in response to social movements happening in the country.

The Supreme Court upheld the legality of slavery until it was abolished by the U.S. Civil War. In the 1858 Dred Scott case, the Supreme Court ruled against a slave suing for his freedom because the court would not “deprive a slaveholder of his property, such as his slaves,” and that African Americans were “beings of an inferior order...unfit to associate with the white race...and had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” After the Civil War, when the ruling class in the South imposed policies to terrorize the former slave population, the Supreme Court ruled to protect these racist policies in 1896, leading to the Jim Crow laws.

When it came to the rights of workers, the Supreme Court was almost always on the side of the corporations. During the battles of the working class for union rights, the Supreme Court was used by the corporations to block strikes and attack workers’ organizations, and to defend the ability of the bosses to combat workers’ struggles with the police and the National Guard. In 1919, the Supreme Court was used to uphold the Alien and Sedition Act, which made it illegal to protest the government, and was used to target revolutionary activists across the country, breaking up meetings, destroying offices, imprisoning activists, and deporting many who were immigrants. When this law was used again during World War II to imprison Japanese Americans in concentration camps, the Supreme Court upheld the law then as well.

## The Exceptions That Prove the Rule

There are a few exceptions when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of rights for the working class, African Americans and women. But even in these cases, the Supreme Court was responding to the social movements of the time.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, there were massive working class struggles throughout the country, often shutting down workplaces for multiple days, and sometimes even shutting down whole cities. Workers waged their struggles, taking on the police, the National Guard, and even the army. In response to these struggles, the Roosevelt administration passed a series of laws known as the New Deal in order to give concessions to workers in an effort to curb their struggles. These included legal protection when organizing a union, unemployment compensation, social security and others. Even though the Supreme Court did strike down many parts of the New Deal, they calculated that it was too risky to strike all of them down.

Similarly, in 1954, the Supreme Court ended legalized racial segregation in public schools in the case of “Brown v. Board of Education.” This decision was not made simply because the Supreme Court changed its mind. The Supreme Court made this decision only when a movement was beginning to form once over one million African American soldiers returned from World War II. But afterwards, the Supreme Court did nothing to enforce its decision in the South. It took the continued struggle of millions of African Americans themselves, all over the South and throughout this country, to ultimately force an end to legal segregation.

And in 1973, women won the right to choose to have an abortion. Before then all abortions were illegal except in rare medical emergencies. Thousands of women died every year from abortions with inadequate medical care. Mostly this was the fate of poor women. Rich women could afford better services or to go to countries where abortion was legal. It wasn’t until the late 1960s that a movement for women’s rights grew all over the country, many of whom were veterans of the Civil Rights Movement. Demonstrations and campaigns spread across the U.S. and by 1973, 64 percent of Americans were convinced that abortion should be legal. The Supreme Court decided in the case of “Roe v. Wade” that abortion was a woman’s right up until the last three months of pregnancy. But because the movement ended, the legal protections of the court’s decision eventually began to be eroded, and have been continuously under attack to this day.

And in 2015, the Supreme Court ruled to uphold the right of gay people to get married. But even in this case, the court only came to this 5 to 4 decision after decades of struggle around this issue.

## Future Struggles Won’t Be In the Supreme Court

Following the death of Antonin Scalia, we should expect more of the same. The court will mostly uphold the interests of the status quo, the interests of the banks and corporations over the interests of working people. The only people to fight to defend the interests of the working class will be the working class itself. The power to change society is not in the hands of judges and never will be. The power to change society is in the hands of the masses of working people. Our collective action is more powerful than any Supreme Court.

## Justice Scalia Leaves Some Big Shoes to Fill



## French Workers and Youth Prepare a Massive Fightback

This week in France, young people and workers are preparing a massive fight against attacks coming from the Socialist Party government of Francois Hollande. March 9<sup>th</sup> has been set in France as a day to take to the streets in strikes and demonstrations against the “Khomri Law,” named after Labor Minister Myriam El Khomri. The law is an attack on the majority of French workers, who are now preparing to fight all together to put a stop to this attack.

In France, many of the regulations regarding work are decided at the level of the national government. These laws cover the rules regarding hiring and firing, union representation, and many other aspects of work. The Socialist Party, much like the Democrats in this country, pretend to defend working people but instead support measures that attack workers and enrich their bosses.

The bosses say French companies need to compete with other corporations in the



world whose workers work for less. French workers have historically won a 35-hour work week. But just like in the U.S., with an official 40-hour work week, bosses can get around this. The average work week in France is about 40 hours, but this could increase to between 48 and 60 hours under the Khomri law. And even worse, the law gives corporations the right to bargain individually with the unions, so rather than setting up one set of rules at the national level, corporations can play divide and conquer against French workers.

When the Khomri law was announced, immediately people acted. They didn’t wait for politicians or union leaders to give the signal. Young people formed committees in their schools and workers started to organize in the workplace. An online petition called “We Are Worth More Than That!” has gathered over a million signatures. March 9<sup>th</sup> will be the day that millions of French youth and workers go into action.

Perhaps the bosses in France are right when they say that French workers should be more like workers in the rest of the world. As French workers go on strike, confront the government and the bosses in the streets, and push back against the attacks, maybe we should all be more like the French workers. Workers in the U.S. and around the world should fight like the French!

## Movie Review: “Where to Invade Next?”

If you’re looking for a good laugh and want to see what the quality of life for an average person is like in other countries, see Michael Moore’s new film: “Where to Invade Next?”

Slovenia, Tunisia, Finland and Portugal are some of the countries he visits. Once you see what’s normal for them, you realize just how crazy our lives in the U.S. really are.

How come an average worker in Italy gets over seven weeks of paid vacation per year while the U.S. does not even guarantee its workers any paid vacation? Italian workers also get two-hour lunch breaks while a lot of us in the U.S. get the half hour mad dash for fast food, scarf it down and then run back to work. Italian workers also get five months paid maternity leave, and a bonus pay of one whole month for their holidays. And we’re

the richest country in the world?

Moore’s movie busts many of the myths about the superiority of the U.S. Finland’s youth are among the world’s leaders in reading and math, but their schools have no standardized tests and almost no homework. All schooling, including universities, is paid for by the state.

If we legalized drugs everyone would be an addict, right? Portugal has decriminalized all drug use since 2001, and drug use has decreased. Prisoners need strict discipline and punishment if they’re going to return to society, right? In Norway the quality of life for prisoners looks better than life for many working people here. Norway’s prisoners are treated with respect, there’s no death penalty, and a life sentence is 21 years.

Moore shows that people in these countries got together and fought to make their lives better, and we could do the same. And just imagine if we got rid of capitalism and its exploitation completely – a ten-hour work week anyone? What a great world it could be.



### Where We Stand

The world we live in today is increasingly ruled by prejudice and fear, under a system of widespread violence and war, where exploitation and oppression are the rule, with the many dominated by the few. The name of this system is capitalism.

### The Force For Change Exists Today

Everywhere, working people’s labor makes society run. Working people have the power to bring this system to a halt and bring about the changes needed. Like slavery, feudalism and other systems that enriched the minority at the expense of the majority, capitalism’s removal is long over due. The time for socialism has come.

### We Stand For Socialism

- A world based on peaceful collaboration and international cooperation of working class people -- not the exploiters who rule today.
- The common ownership and sharing of the world’s resources and productive capacity.

- An egalitarian and democratic government, organized and controlled from the bottom up.
- Protection of the world’s ecological systems, putting science to work to sustain life, not destroy it.
- A society where human relations are based on respect, equality and dignity of all peoples, not racism, sexism or homophobia.

### Who We Are

Speak Out Now is a revolutionary socialist group. We believe the international working class is the social force that can transform society and create a new world. But to do so, revolutionary organizations must be built in the working class. For this reason our group aims its activity primarily at workplaces, where struggles have the most potential to transform the world. Our newsletters are a tool to begin this work. What a handful of people decide today can determine our future. Join us to work for a better future – that is both necessary and possible.

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