

# Globalisation - crisis of capitalism

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The world is facing an economic crisis on a scale which dwarfs the economic “crash” in 1929 in the United States of America.

Millions are suffering from starvation, illnesses such as HIV/Aids, energy shortages, transport problems and a breakdown of both agriculture and manufacturing.

The responsibility for this world economic crisis is the capitalist system and its economic policy known as globalisation - - - - in Europe, the European Union (formerly the European Common Market) now consists of 27 countries who have adopted policies which are having a catastrophic effect not only on the underdeveloped nations of the world but also upon countries which have hitherto been regarded as economically stable.

We have witnessed riots in many countries because basic food supplies are no longer available. The mad economic policies of capitalism which always put profit before people is having a disastrous impact on the food chain and energy supplies.

We have been bombarded by scientists from Western countries arguing that global warming is being caused by increased pollution from using carbon-based fuels such as coal, oil and gas.

There is no doubt that global warming is occurring but for millions of years our planet has seen ice ages, massive warming of the earth and the rising and falling of sea levels.

The Socialist Labour Party is a party which wants to see a clean environment and a world where pollution becomes a thing of the past. However, to achieve this requires radical rethinking of the real cause of global warming and starvation and a lack of clean water. The destruction of rain forests the size of Europe has had a catastrophic impact and, as any child knows, trees and plants take in carbon dioxide and emit oxygen. The imbalance in the ecosystem caused by the capitalist system irresponsibly destroying rain forests and using valuable land to produce bio-fuels for petroleum is almost incalculable.

Countries such as Britain are beginning to feel the real impact of globalisation and the economic policies of the European Union. In Britain today, we have 14 million pensioners who have seen their State pensions slashed by 41% whilst food prices have increased by 10% within the last two years and energy prices have rocketed by 40%.

Ten million people in Britain live on or below the poverty line whilst over one million children do not have enough food and are categorised as “going hungry”. In addition, well over one hundred thousand people are estimated to be homeless and the housing market is in crisis.

We have seen over the course of the past 50 years a complete change in the economic policies in the United Kingdom. In 1958, Britain’s economy was based on 80% in manufacturing and 20% in the service and supply sector.

Today, Britain has turned the proverbial economic pyramid upside down and we have only 20% of our economy based in manufacturing whilst 80% of our economy is in service and supply, mainly in banking, insurance and international finance.

The result has been a massive increase in unemployment from virtual full employment in 1958 to a position where today - according to the Rowntree Foundation Trust - the number of people of employable age, i.e. between 16 and 65, without a job is over five million.

At the time of the 1945 - 51 Labour Government, Britain's economy was based on an 80% manufacturing base -- today Britain has a manufacturing base of less than 20% with over 80% based in service industries or services. It is no wonder we are no longer able to finance our Health Service, education system and pensions.

We have seen the systematic destruction of shipbuilding, engineering, car manufacture, steel and coal. We have in this country over 1000 years of coal reserves yet miners are thrown out of work whilst we import inferior quality coal from abroad at a cost of £5 billion per year on our balance of payments.

We now are importing gas from countries like Russia, Algeria and Norway because our natural gas supplies are virtually exhausted because the capitalist system used this valuable commodity to produce electricity despite the fact that this short-sighted policy reduced the supply of gas from 40 years to 10 years and now we are dependent on outside supply.

Two-thirds of our steel is now imported, while thousands of steel-workers' jobs in Britain have been lost. The once giant steel industry has been decimated and communities have been destroyed as a result of globalisation, the policies of the IMF, the World Bank and the European Union.

Our Party is an international party and committed to socialism and the abolition of capitalism and the exploitation of one human being by another.

We are also opposed to the domination by countries such as the United States of America and Britain who launch an unlawful war against countries such as Iraq and become involved in the internal affairs of countries such as Afghanistan with the result that thousands of innocent men, women and children have died or been injured and continue to die and continue to be injured by what can only be described as occupying powers.

We condemn the hypocrisy of the United States and all those countries who support the USA's constant attacks on countries such as North Korea, Iran and, of course, Cuba which has been blockaded by the Americans for nearly 50 years.

The United States speaks of democracy and constantly call on certain countries to cease occupation of other countries yet the United States continues to occupy Guantanamo Bay in Cuba against the will of the Cuban people.

The United States' hypocrisy is further highlighted by their refusal to take action against the state of Israel who day by day launch murderous attacks on the people of Palestine, killing thousands of people over the years.

We call for an end to the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and demand that all foreign troops should be withdrawn immediately.

We call upon all nations to renounce nuclear weapons, to stop using vast sums of money on weapons of war and use the money to feed the people of the world and help develop industries and bring the Third World and underdeveloped nations in to the twenty-first century.

## SOCIALISM

The policies I have outlined deal with the injustices and inequalities that people currently face in our society. They are not, and cannot be, a long-term or permanent solution to a system where a small section of society feeds off the majority - inevitably creating crisis after crisis with devastating effect on human lives.

The solution lies in abolishing capitalism and replacing it with a Socialist system whose institutions represent the people as a whole, and which are democratically controlled by and accountable to them.

We want to secure for the people a full return of all the wealth generated by Britain's industries and services on the basis of common and social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

We are committed to establishing the most equitable distribution of that wealth, ensuring a free health service at the time of need and upon demand, together with a free education system available to all.

Our Party is committed to freedom of assembly, movement, speech and association, and to promoting and protecting an environment in which the Earth's resources are properly used - not just for human beings but for all other forms of life.

The Socialist Labour Party wants to see a world that is truly at peace, with liberty, justice and prosperity for all: we want a Socialist world.

Our demands are not excessive. They are, in the words of the legendary socialist, James Connolly, most moderate. We only want the Earth.