



Speak Out Now

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A Society Based on Inequality

Today we are living in a world with unprecedented levels of inequality. The richest eight billionaires have the same wealth as the bottom half of the world's population – that is, eight men have the combined wealth of 3,600,000,000 human beings. What makes this insanity possible? Capitalism, an economic system in which workers produce the wealth of the world but the ruling class gets to keep it.

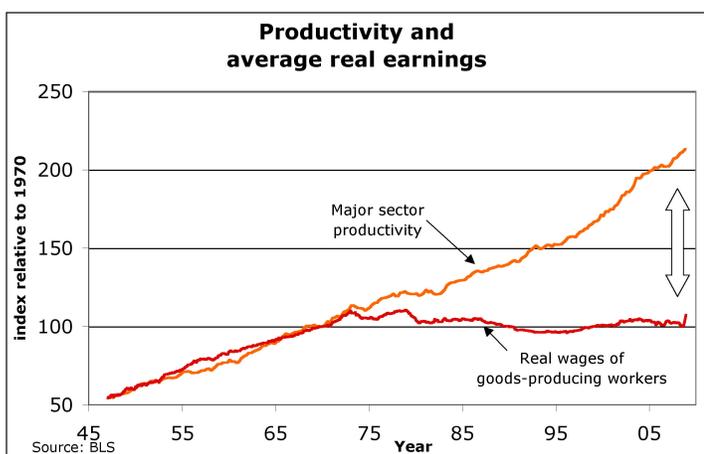
The Eight Richest People in the World

1. Bill Gates: \$75 billion
2. Amancio Ortega Gaona: \$67 billion
3. Warren Buffet: \$60.8 billion
4. Carlos Slim Helú: \$50 billion
5. Jeff Bezos: \$45.2 billion
6. Mark Zuckerberg: \$44.6 billion
7. Lawrence Ellison: \$43.6 billion
8. Michael Bloomberg: \$40 billion

Working More For Less

And what makes them so wealthy? As we do more work, they make more money.

From 1979 to 2013:



- While workers' productivity increased by 74%, wages for most workers either stagnated or declined by 5%.
- The benefits of all this extra work has gone to owners of the companies and the richest people in society. Wages for the one percent increased

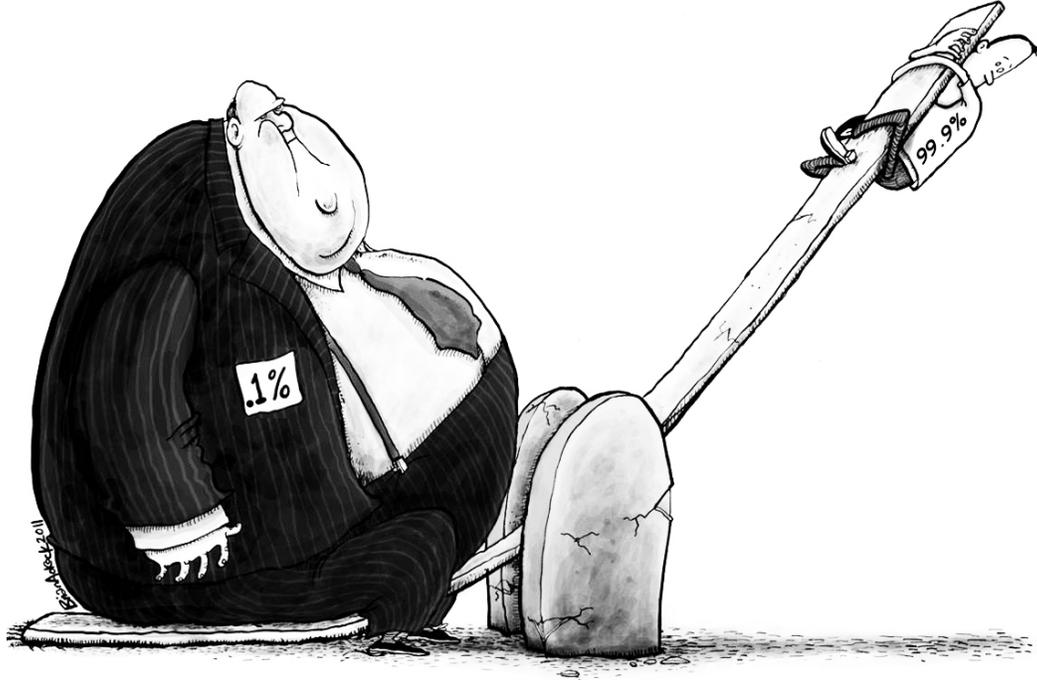
by 138% during this same period. For example, the average worker at Walmart must work 1,372 hours to earn one hour of the CEO's pay.

A Robbery Not A Recovery

When it comes to inequality, it does not matter which political party happens to be in the White House. The Democrats, under the Obama administration, were also a disaster for working people. In fact, 95 percent of the income gains in the first three years after the economic crisis of 2008 went to the top one percent. The so-called economic recovery was actually a robbery of the working class.

- While pensions were slashed, millions lost their homes, and public schools were desperately underfunded, an estimated \$16 trillion was given to Wall Street banks and other corporations.
- Corporate profits reached record highs as millions of jobs were slashed, and the workload for the average worker increased dramatically.
- While the majority of the jobs lost since 2008 were high-paying positions, almost 60% of the jobs created since then pay less than \$12 an hour, and the vast majority of new jobs are part-time, temporary, or independent-contracting positions. A recent study by Harvard economists indicates that 94% of the net job growth between 2005 and 2015 fell into one of these categories. As one example, GM earned a record profit of \$7.6 billion in 2011 after it slashed the wages of all new hires by 50%.
- In the midst of massive suffering, the super-rich stashed between \$21 and \$32 trillion in off-shore accounts in 2012, so much wealth that they don't even know what to do with it. For comparison, the GDP (value of all produced goods and services) of the entire U.S. economy that same year was \$16 trillion.

Living in a Two-Tier Society



We live in a two-tier society: those who can pay, and those who can't. This extends to all spheres of life: food, housing, health, and education.

- In the wealthiest nation in human history, somewhere between 21% and 42% of children grow up in poverty.
- Among industrialized nations, the U.S. has the highest infant mortality rate, obesity rate, consumption of anti-depressants, and the largest prison population.
- Nearly 42 million people experience food insecurity on a regular basis.
- In 81 percent of U.S. counties, the median income (\$52,000) is less than it was 15 years ago.
- The amount of money (\$28.5 billion) that was given out in bonuses on Wall Street in 2015 is twice the amount all minimum-wage workers earned in the country combined.
- The poorest Americans, the bottom 90%, have 73% of all household debt.
- The average college graduate has \$37,172 in student loan debt.
- A record 26% of all renters now spend more than half of their entire income on rent alone, as the price of rent has increased twice as quickly as wages.
- Since 2008, income for Black families decreased by 27%, and they suffered a foreclosure rate nearly twice that of white homeowners. Nearly one in four Blacks lived in poverty at the end of the Obama era, and 1 in 3 black men will spend some portion of their adult life in prison.

Capitalism only benefits one class of people – the ruling class of rich bankers and bosses. As we struggle to get by on less and less, the rich are the richest they have ever been. This is not an accident, but simply how their system functions on a daily basis. Their wealth only comes from what they can get away with taking from us. Just imagine how different the world might be if we used the wealth of society for the benefit of all humanity, not just a tiny class of people.