

ELEMENTARY COURSE ON POLITICS & ECONOMICS

LECTURE No. 1 - CAPITALISM

1. WHAT DOES CAPITALISM MEAN?

- (a) In South Africa, as in other capitalist countries, the Capitalist Class own the MEANS OF PRODUCTION.
- (b) Means of Production are the land, the mines, the factories, the machines, the banks etc.
- (c) All these riches, forming almost the entire wealth of the country, are in the hands of a few persons.
- (d) This small class - known as the Capitalist class is, therefore, much richer than the rest of the people put together.
- (e) The Capitalist, of course, cannot work the mine, or farm or factory all on his own. He hires others to do the work for him and pays them a wage.
- (f) The workers produce or make goods which the Capitalist sells at a profit.
- (g) Capitalism can, therefore be said to be a system in which are found:-
 - (i) private ownership of the means of production;
 - (ii) employment of wage-labour;
 - (iii) production for private profit.

BEFORE CAPITALISM:

- (a) Before Capitalism came to South Africa the land, which was the chief "means of production," belonged to the people as a whole and every man had the right to a plot of land on which to grow food for himself and his family.
- (b) Every family had its cattle, and made its own tools, weapons, clothing and household goods. Because everyone could live by working for himself, there was no wage-labour. Because every family could satisfy most of his own needs, there were no shops and markets and people did not as a rule buy or sell.
- (c) All people, including the Europeans, lived like this at one time. That is to say, every family grew its own food and made its own things, men did not work for wages and CAPITAL was not known.

THE SOURCE OF PROFIT:

- (a) By CAPITAL we mean machinery, buildings, raw materials, like wood or iron, and all other things that one needed for the production of goods. Money is also capital if it is used to buy these things and to pay wages of the workers who produce.

BUT ALL THESE THINGS BECOME CAPITAL,
ONLY IF AND WHEN IT IS USED TO MAKE
PROFIT.

The African who dug his land, kept cattle and made tools, was his own master and did NOT produce for profit. None of his property was therefore capital.

- (b) Under capitalism, however, most people have to work for a wage because they do not own the means of production. They dig up gold, plough the land, make machines and clothing. But they are not rich enough to buy even a part of a gold mine, or a farm, or a factory. They must work for those who are the owners, in order that they, the workers, may earn wages to keep themselves and their families alive. That is why the workers are called "proletarians" - people who have nothing except their bodies and their strength to work.
- (c) Now the capitalist does not "give" jobs as though they are presents. Nor does he employ or hire workers because he is sorry for them, and wants to give them a chance to live. No, the employer is really buying something from the worker, and the wage is the price that he pays for what the worker sells. This thing that is bought and sold is the workers' labour power.
- (d) The capitalist buys the worker's strength and skill or training, because he wants to make money out of him. How does he do this? Well, if the worker is employed in a factory, for example, he uses his labour power to manufacture or make things for the boss, who sells them for a profit. What, then, is profit, and where does it come from?
- (e) Take the example of, say, a shirt factory. A worker makes, perhaps, 60 shirts in a week. Let us say that the cost of the materials he uses, such as the cloth, cotton and buttons, is £4, and that another £2 goes to the value of the machinery which is used up, and wear and tear of furniture and buildings. In addition, the worker gets, say, a wage of £2. per week. The shirts therefore cost the capitalist £8. He now sells them for 5s each, getting therefore £15 for the 60. The difference of £7 is his profit, or surplus value.
- (f) You see that the worker's labour power, when turned into labour on the raw materials having a value of £6 (including the machinery used up), produces goods worth £15. The worker has therefore added new value of £9 to the materials. Of this amount, £2 go to the worker and £7 to the boss.
- (g) It is out of his profits, coming from the labour power of his workers, that the capitalist builds his big houses, buys his motor cars, and gets his food and clothing. The capitalist may also work in the management of the factory; then he gets a salary as well as profit. But it is not necessary for him to work. Whether he is a shareholder or part owner of a company, or whether he employs a manager, he will get his profits just the same, because he is the owner of capital.

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LECTURE No. 2:WAGES UNDER CAPITALISM

Before beginning this lecture it is advisable to ask a few questions on the last lecture. The following questions are suggested:-

1. What do you understand by Capitalism ?
2. Where does profit come from?
3. What is "surplus value"?

1. Profit or surplus value, as we have seen in the last lecture is that part of the product of the worker's labour left to the capitalist after he has paid the costs of production (cost of the raw materials, wear and tear of machinery, and wages). The lower the costs, the bigger is the profit. It follows that the capitalist will gain when wages are low.

2. It is of course true that the general level of wages cannot for long fall below a bare living standard. For, if the worker gets less than the amount needed to keep himself and his family alive, they must fall sick and die at an early age. The supply of labour power, the source of profit, would then dry up.

3. Yet it happens often enough that the capitalist class pays a large number of workers less than a bare living wage. Millions of workers in Africa, India, Japan and even in the "rich" countries of Europe and America, cannot bring up a healthy family on their wages. To understand why this happens, let us look at South Africa.

4. In our cities, out of every 100 households of each race, 10 European, 45 to 60 Indian and 50 to 60 Coloured have such a low income that they cannot afford to buy as much food as they need for good health (Report of Social and Economic Planning Council, No. 2)

5. Most African families are in the same bad state. For example, it was shown in 1941 that although an African family of five could not be decently housed, fed and clothed in Johannesburg on less than £7.10.0. a month, 28,000 "unskilled" workers in 35 industries were being paid an average of only £5. 2.11d. a month (Report of Smit Committee on Urban Natives, 1942) Today with the rise in the cost of living the position is even worse.

6. The "Standard of Life" is not the same for all people at all times. When the African first began to work for the capitalists, he lived on a lower standard than the white worker, and was therefore willing to take a smaller wage. As he got used to the new life, he wanted better food and housing, more clothes and furniture; his standards went up. But employers, who in the past had paid low wages, fought against any attempt to raise the African wages.

7. Another reason for low wages in South Africa is the policy of keeping Africans in the reserves. In the past most African wage earners left their wives and children in the tribal areas, and went back to them as soon as they had earned money for taxes, debts to traders, and goods that they had to buy. Their families grew their own food, lived in their own homes, and made many of the things that they needed. The wage of the worker was not enough to keep their families in the towns, while it becomes harder every year for the families in the reserves to grow their own food. Yet wages are still based on the living costs, not of the whole family but of the worker alone.

8. an african surface worker on the mine, for example, earned in 1943 an average cash wages of £26. 15. 6. per year. The income from his land and cattle in the Transkei, including the value of food eaten by his family, was £17. 15. 2. for the year. His total income was therefore £44. 10. 8. But the bare living needs of the worker and his family cost £54.15.0. or £10. 4.4. more than what they in fact did have to live on. (Report of Witwatersrand Mine Natives' Wage Commission, 1943). This is true in varying degrees in most Industries where Africans are employed.

9. WHAT KEEPS WAGES LOW: Wages may also fall below the minimum living standard when the supply of labour is bigger than the demand. When there are more workers than jobs, the capitalist can pick and choose, and take on the man who will work for the lowest wage. On the other hand, the workers are in a weak bargaining position and some are likely to "undercut", or take less than the usual wage rate.

10. If the supply of workers is smaller than the demand, the workers are in a stronger position to bargain. Employers will compete with one another for labour, and it will be easier for the workers to force wages up. During the war, for example, when there was a shortage of labour, wages went up in many industries, though we must remember that the value of the £ fell because of the rise in prices. Fifty years ago, and more, when there was a shortage of skilled workers in South Africa, Europeans were brought out to do skilled work and were paid higher wages than what they got in their own countries. This is one reason why skilled wages are so much higher than unskilled in South Africa.

11. Under Capitalism, however, there are usually more workers than jobs. There is nearly always an "industrial reserve army" of unemployed. Workers must therefore find some way of strengthening their bargaining power in order to bring wages up to and above the level of subsistence. The weapon that they use is collective bargaining. They form trade unions, which come to an agreement with all the capitalists in an industry. In this way undercutting is prevented. If the capitalist does not want to give in to their demands, the workers may go on strike or refuse to work until they win their demands. In all countries workers have been able to force wages up by trade union organisation and strike action.

12. The right to organise trade unions and go on strike is a political right, which the working class won only after many years of hard struggle. Later we will deal in a special lecture the S.A. Government's new Bill to destroy this hard won right. In South Africa it was chiefly the white worker, with his knowledge of trade unionism overseas, who fought for and won this right, but non-European workers have also a long record of struggle. That fight has not yet been won, however, by the Africans. They may, it is true, form trade unions, but these cannot be registered under the Industrial Conciliation Act. Also, Africans who strike are often sent to jail. Colour bar laws of this kind remain only because non-Europeans do not have political power.

13. When talking about wage levels, we must remember that wage rates are not the same for all workers, but change from one industry to another and from one group of workers to another group even in the same industry. Several reasons can be found for such wage differences: trade union organisation by some workers and not by others, differences in supply or demand of workers, and the amount of skill or training needed for jobs. Let us take as an example the degree of skill required. A bricklayer, engineer or carpenter gets a higher wage than a man who works a shovel, for the same reason that a motor car costs more than a bicycle. More labour, in the form of education and training has been put into the production of the skilled worker. Also, we may add, skilled workers are more scarce than the unskilled, and therefore have a better chance of organising unions and preventing undercutting.

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14. In South Africa the trade union rule is "equal pay for equal work". All skilled workers, whether African, Coloured or European, must get the same wage rate. Colour bar does not work in such a way that a non-European gets less than a European for doing the same work, although there are exceptions in the railway and government services. But the colour bar does keep non-Europeans out of the skilled trades, partly because they have few technical schools, and partly because both employers and craft or skilled workers' unions make it almost impossible for them to learn the trade or get a job as a skilled worker.

15. Our wage policy should be firstly to do away with "Cheap Labour" system. Every worker, black, brown or white, must get more than a bare living wage for himself and his family. More and more workers must be organised into trade unions and lead the fight for higher wages, better wages, and full democracy. Secondly, we must fight for "equal opportunities for all workers." Every worker, no matter what his colour is, must have the right to learn and work at any trade or profession.

LECTURE No. 3.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND CRISIS

1. Before the world began to get ready for war every capitalist country had its army of workers without jobs. In America there were from 12 to 14 million unemployed, in Germany 6 million, in Britain 5 million. They formed the "reserve army of labour." Large-scale unemployment is one of the biggest problems and also weaknesses of the capitalist system - Why are there more workers than jobs under Capitalism?

2. For the answer we must look once again at the way in which the capitalist makes his profit. We have seen that it comes out of the unpaid labour of the worker, which the capitalist keeps for himself. But in order to turn this new value into money, the capitalist must sell the goods made by the worker. Things made or produced for sale on the market are called commodities.

2. Now, on the market there is competition between capitalists. When the owner of the shirt factory tries to sell his shirts to shopkeepers, he finds that other shirt-makers are doing the same thing. Each capitalist tries to get a bigger share of the market, that is to sell more shirts than his competitors. In order to do this, he must undersell, or offer the shirt to the shopkeeper at a lower price than the price of other shirts of the same kind. Other shirt-makers will, however, follow his example, until price fall to the lowest point at which they can make a profit that satisfies them.

4. The capitalist now finds another way of beating his competitors. He produces shirts more cheaply than they do, and so is able to bring prices down still further without losing profit. One way of producing more cheaply is to cut wages, another is to make the workers work more hours for the same wage, while a third is to speed-up the workers, and make them work twice as hard for the same time. By these methods the capitalist really gets a bigger "surplus value" out of the workers, and can therefore afford to bring down the prices of his commodities without losing profit.

5. As the workers organise themselves, however, it becomes more and more difficult for capitalists to use these methods. Between 1750 and 1850, for example, labourers in Europe had to work up to 17 and 18 hours a day. Through organisation, they were able to cut down these hours.

6. Yet another, and in these days the most important, method of getting more surplus value is to increase the productivity of labour. In other words, the capitalist makes the worker produce more goods although the working day remains the same. For example, if at one time it took three days to make a pair of boots, now only six hours are needed. Such an increase in the productivity of labour can be brought about by using more and better machines.

7. The capitalist who first uses a new and better machine will be able to produce goods more quickly and cheaply than his competitors and sell these goods at a lower price. Sooner or later, however, they will follow his example and also get the new machine. All of them will then be selling the goods at the lower price and once again they will look for some means of making the worker produce more.

POVERTY IN THE MIDST OF PLENTY:

8. Capitalists, then, are driven to make greater and greater use of machines. Machines take the place of men. With the machine a smaller number of workers can produce more goods than workers without a machine. Therefore, the capitalists invest or spend less money on wages and more on machines. They "save" on human labour.

9. What is the result? Why, of course, men are sacked, and unemployment follows. But more than that: while machines make great piles of goods in a short time, the workers' wages remain the same and they cannot buy all that is produced. As for the capitalists, though they have the money, they cannot use more than a certain number of shirts, shoes and other things. And so the goods pile up in the shops; there is a "surplus" or over-production.

10. If the people cannot buy, the shopkeeper will not order more goods. If the factory owner cannot sell, he will not go on making goods. He sacks the workers, or puts them on short time. The number of unemployed grows and the people as a whole have even less money than before. Sales go down still further, production is cut even more, and unemployment keeps on going up. Capitalism has reached a crisis; it suffers from depression. This is what people say, and as their words show, they mean that the capitalist system is sick.

11. Crisis or depression comes every ten years or so. It passes away as the surplus of goods get smaller with the drop in production. In modern times also the capitalist have tried to stop depressions by destroying the surplus. In South Africa millions of bags of oranges have been buried and thrown away. In Brazil coffee was burnt instead of coal in railway engines. In America farmers were paid to plough corn under the ground. They did this at a time when all over the world millions of children were dying of hunger.

12. "Over-production" does not happen because people have enough but because they have too little. Here in South Africa farmers and other capitalist look for overseas markets because, they say, South Africans are too poor to buy local products. For the same reason, capitalists cut down production or destroy products so as to get rid of the surplus.

13. Why do they not pay the workers more and in this way raise the purchasing power of the people? For the simple reason that higher wages mean smaller profits. Capitalists would like people to buy their goods, but no one capitalist is willing to pay his workers a higher wage.

14. In the old days, when people did not have machines and made everything by hand, they could not produce much, but they used everything that was produced. They were poor, not because they destroyed their products, but because they did not have the knowledge to produce more. Today science and the machine have for the first time put into man's hands the means to do away with poverty. Today men can produce enough to feed, clothe and house every person. But Capitalism does not allow them to use this knowledge. It is not ignorance, but Capitalism, that causes poverty and unemployment.

15. We cannot blame the machine for unemployment. No, the machine can be used to lighten the burden of heavy labour and to supply man's needs. Machinery should be the servant of man and be used to build a better life. It is not the machine that is at fault, but the system in which it is used.

LECTURE No. 4.

IMPERIALISM

1. In the past 300 years Capitalism has spread all over the world. Big countries have made war on small countries and turned them into colonies. Millions of people are being governed, not by themselves, but by countries like Great Britain, France, Japan and the United States. This is the system that is called Imperialism. Why has it come into being? Why do big countries fight one another for colonies?

2. A short answer would be that "they want markets, raw materials and fields for investment." To explain why capitalists want all this, however, we must look more closely at the capitalists system.

3. We have already seen that capitalists cannot sell all their goods in their own country. There is a surplus, which they try to sell in other countries. In other words, they look for export markets. Farmers in South Africa, for example export butter, eggs, fruit and produce because our people are too poor to buy these things. In the same way, English, American and other capitalist export food, clothing and furniture and also more expensive goods such as machinery and engines.

4. Capitalists also export capital or money. They invest their capital in other countries in the hope of getting a bigger profit than they get in their own countries. An American or English capitalist will use his capital to open mines in Africa or India, or start up a factory in, say, South Africa. South African gold mines, for example, belong partly to Englishmen, who invested their money in these mines.

5. But why should capital in Africa bring a bigger profit than in England? Because in backward countries profits are usually high; for capital is scarce, the price of land is low, wages are low and raw materials are cheap. Wages are lower in Africa than in England, and African workers work longer hours, because their standard of living is low, and they are not organised to defend themselves against exploitation.

6. Another point to be noted is that capitalists need raw materials from overseas: cotton and palm oil from Africa; rubber from Malaya; petrol from Java. The country that buys these materials usually sells in return her own manufactured goods, so that the trade is profitable in two ways.

7. Now, just as capitalists compete for the home market, so they compete for export markets, the right to invest capital, and raw materials. Every capitalist country would like to have a monopoly, that is, to be the only country with the rights to sell and buy in other countries. No one country, of course, is strong enough to prevent anyone else from sharing in trade. But colonies do give a certain kind of monopoly to the country that owns them.

8. Britain, for example, manages things so that her colonies buy mainly British goods. Britain gets the first pick of raw materials produced in her colonies, and during a war, prevents her enemies from getting any colonial products. And British capital is invested in British colonies. In addition many thousands of Englishmen find work at good salaries in these colonies.

9. We now understand why capitalists want colonies and go to war for them. But what about the peoples in the colonies? What do they gain out of the system?

THE COST OF IMPERIALISM:

10. In Africa, Malaya and other colonies, imperialism has opened up the country by sinking mines, building railways and roads and making more use of the land than the people did. Imperialism has built schools and hospitals for some of the people and brought them into the stream of modern life. All this we can count as "progress".

11. But the capitalist does not conquer colonies in order to make the people happier. His aim is to get profits. And, so that he may get profits, the people must be made to work for him. So he turns them into wage-earners, using the same methods as were used in South Africa. They are taxed, recruited under contract, and in some colonies driven off the land. If the people are allowed to stay on their land they are forced to grow crops such as coffee and palm oil, which they sell to the capitalists at a fixed price.

12. Imperialism not only breaks up the old way of living; it also takes away the freedom of the colonial people and brings them under a foreign government. This government, whether it sits in London, America, Paris, or elsewhere, is there to look after the interests of the capitalists in its own country. These capitalists want cheap labour, and therefore the government will not follow a policy of raising the standard of living in the colonies. The colonial people will remain uneducated, poor, and badly housed as long as they do not rule themselves. (Lecturer: Quite, example of British Guiana.)

13. What is more, imperialism will not build industries in the colonies to compete with the industries of the imperialist country. The capitalist wants raw materials from the colony; he does not want to see it have its own factories and make its own goods, instead of buying them from him. His policy is to pay as little as possible for colonial products and to charge a high price for the goods he exports.

14. Imperialism must be opposed by us. We must demand that colonies should be given their freedom to govern themselves. The peoples in Africa and other colonies need help from more advanced nations to educate themselves and build their industries. But the price paid for this help must not be loss of their independence and exploitation by foreign masters.

LECTURE 5.

FASCIST DICTATORSHIP

1. From Imperialism to Fascism; from democracy to dictatorship. This is the road that capitalism is taking, and along which it will keep on going until the people stop it. What is fascism? Why has it arisen?

2. Fascist parties were formed after the 1914-1918 war, first in Italy, then in Germany, and then in many other capitalist countries. Under Hitler in Germany, Mussolini in Italy, Franco in Spain, in Portugal, Japan and elsewhere, fascist parties took over the Government and set up dictatorships, or parties took over the government and set up dictatorships, or government by one Party. They killed or imprisoned trade union leaders and all other people who fought against them; they destroyed the free trade unions and working class parties. They destroyed the National Movements; and they took the vote from the people and filled parliament with fascists. (Lecturer: quote trends in S.A. on same lines)

3. No man or party, however, can dictate or make laws for a whole nation unless he has the support of the ruling class. In fascist countries the capitalists remain the ruling class; it oppress the people. Fascism is therefore a form of capitalists dictatorship. Hitler and Mussolini were the servants, not the masters, of the capitalists.

4. It is, above all, the strongest section of the capitalist class, the monopolists and finance capitalists, that stand behind and govern through the fascist dictators. The finance capitalists are the banks and the big insurance companies. Controlling great sums of money, they lend capital to the owners of factories, farms, mines and shops and have big influence over governments. They are closely tied to the big industrial capitalists, such as iron and steel-makers, coal owners and the makers of motor car and machines, many of whom can be called monopolists.

5. Let us stop a moment to talk about capitalist monopoly, for it has much to do with the sickness that has overtaken Capitalism. In Lecture 3 we saw that competition and profit seeking lead to the use of bigger and more machines. These are expensive, and only capitalists with a great deal of capital can afford to use them. Big capitalists, using big machines, can produce more goods at a lower cost than the small capitalists, who are therefore driven out of the market and forced to close up or sell out to the big men. Companies are joined together, big ones swallow up the small, and in the place of hundreds of small capitalists fighting one another, there are now giants or groups of giant firms that control the market. An example in South Africa is De Beers, the monopoly diamond company.

6. Before the days of monopoly each capitalist tried to bring prices down in order to increase his sales. Monopolies, however, make more profits by cutting down on production and raising prices. In the past 15 years tin, copper, rubber, coffee, sugar and other commodities have been brought under the control of monopolists, who keep prices high by fixing "quotas", or putting a limit to the amount that each capitalist may produce.

7. Monopoly reduces competition, but does not do away with it. Competition takes on the form of a private war between big industrial giants, supported by finance capital, for the sole right to exploit new territories. In each country the big firms, with their great influence, use the government to drive out their competitors and to make wars for fresh markets. The State, or political force of the nation, becomes the open tool of the big capitalists in their fight for profits.

THE AIMS OF FASCISM:

8. This tool is used, in the first place, against the working class in the fascist country itself. In wiping out all opposition, the fascists destroy the workers' protection against over-exploitation. When trade unions are broken up and peoples' leaders are driven underground the capitalists have a free hand to cut wages and to bring down the workers' standard of living.

9. Thirdly, the monopolists use the State in order to make war on other countries: Italy on Abyssinia, Japan on China, Germany on Europe and recently America on Korea. Fascism tries not only to capture the colonies of other imperialist States, but also to turn capitalist States themselves into colonies. That is what the German fascists, or Nazis as they call themselves, tried to do in Europe. Where their troops conquered, factories were closed and machinery removed to Germany. Other countries, they said, would have to produce foodstuffs and raw materials for German industry, but they would not be allowed to build up industries to compete with German capitalists.

10. The Nazis claimed the right to enslave other peoples on the ground that the Germans were the "herrenvolk", or master race. One of the most evil sides of fascism, shared also by the Japanese, is its racial pride; its boast that all who are not Germans (or Japanese) belong to a lower breed and must be treated as inferiors. The Negro, said a Nazi spokesman, is a different and lower race; they must not be allowed to receive Western education, to become doctors, lawyers, engineers, or to become the equal of the whites.

11. Now we understand why many capitalists in South Africa, as in other countries, look with favour of fascism, and why fascist parties like the Nationalist and the Ossew-Brandwag (Oxwagon Guard) have arisen. These fascist groups promise to defend the capitalist against the non-white peoples and to wipe out the all opposition to their reactionary policy; they stand ready to destroy trade unionism and bring down the workers' wage; and they demand brutal oppression of the non-European peoples in order to prevent working class unity between all races.

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12. So long as Capitalism leads to Imperialism and monopolies, so long will fascism remain a danger to mankind.

LECTURE No.6.

THE RISE OF THE WORKING CLASS

1. We have seen what capitalism is, how it works, and why it leads to unemployment, poverty, fascism and war. From now on we are going to talk about the challenge of the working and oppressed class to the Capitalist system. To understand how this challenge came to be made, and the form that it takes, we must look back into the history of the Labour movement.

2. We could go far back, to the time when capitalists were unknown, when people lived in much the same way as did the Xhosa or Sotho before the white man came. In Europe, Asia, America and Australia they lived in clans or tribes. Every family had its own land, which it worked with the help of friends and neighbours. Every family built its own hut, made its clothing, tools and weapons. There was little trade and the men did not usually work for a wage.

3. But it would be too long a story to tell of how human society changed from those times through the ages until Capitalism, as we know it today, was born. It is a story of discoveries and inventions that gave man the knowledge to produce more food and things for his use of the movement of people, wars and conquests, of slavery and the growth of the property. Out of these changes grew the differences between the "haves" and the "have nots", between rich and poor between capitalist and worker.

4. There came a time when a worker, using better tools and methods of work, could produce a "surplus", or a bit more than he himself needed to live on. It was then that slavery came into being. For, if a man could buy, or in war capture, men and women and make them work for him, he would be able to live on the surplus that they produced.

HOW FEUDALISM WORKED:

5. Out of slavery, which was known in Egypt, Greece and Rome, the earliest class-societies probably grew. With the downfall of the Roman Empire in the 5th Century, the greatest and the last of the slave empires of Europe came to an end. Capitalism was to bring back slavery, many hundreds of years later, in America and other colonies. But in Europe slavery gave way to feudalism.

6. Feudal government was very much the same as the government of African tribes, with different names for the rulers. Instead of paramount chiefs, chiefs and headmen, feudal England had kings, barons or earls, and lords. The king, like the African chief, ruled with a council made up of the leading soldiers and priests. Only this Council could make laws and put taxes on the people, or declare war.

7. All the land was said to belong to the king. He gave areas to the barons and lords, who in turn bound themselves to supply a certain number of soldiers for the king's army in time of war. Each ~~lord, in turn, gave some of his land to his followers, and they also undertook to fight when called upon.~~ lord, in turn, gave some of his land to his followers, and they also undertook to fight when called upon.

8. Still lower in the scale came the majority of the people, known as serfs. They were the working people, but received no wages. Like the "labour tenant" on South African farms, the serf was given a small piece of land on which he worked for three or four days out of the week for his own benefit. On the other days he worked on the lands of the lord who, together with his "labour-dues", might also take a part of the crop grown on the serf's plot.

9. Serfs were not slaves; they could not be sold, and they could own property. On the other hand, a serf was not free to leave his lord, while if the land was sold, he went with it to the new owner. As time went on the labour-service was changed into a money rent, and the serf became a tenant who hired the land. But right up to 1500 or so in England, the lord could at any time turn the tenant off the land and he, the tenant, had no right to take his case to the King's Court, for he was the "lord's man."

10. In early feudal times there was little trade. Every manor or Estate of the lord supplied most of its own needs, the lord's servants including tailors, furniture makers and other workers. But there was some trade, both inside and between countries, and men began to make things, not only for their own use or that of their lords, but also for sale on the market. Towns grew, with people in them who lived by trade and handicrafts and who did not want to obey the feudal rule of following a lord to the wars. They bought themselves off, paying money instead of giving soldiers. Many of the smaller lords followed their example, and in time money payments took the place of military and labour service all down the scale.

11. These changes were spread over many hundreds of years, and they did not take place without much trouble and great social unrest. The towns had to fight the lords for their freedom, the kings fought the lords, who would not accept the authority of the crown, and both lords and church fought the serfs, who tried to free themselves from bondage. The big revolt of the peasants, small farmers and serfs, in the 14th century in England, Germany and elsewhere, was one of the milestones along this road out of feudalism. Out of the struggles came a stronger central government with the King at its head, having his own army, collecting taxes from the lords and able to enforce his will with a force that was stronger than theirs.

12. By about 1500, production for a market was going on all over Europe. In the towns were craftsmen, hiring two or three workers, called "journeymen" and "apprentices", who made goods for the markets. The master craftsmen in each trade came together and formed organisations called craft guilds, one for the blacksmiths, one for tailors, another for bakers, and so on. Later the journeymen, really the skilled workers, formed their own guilds, known as yeomen guilds, which had often to work in secret because the masters did not want the workers to organise.

13. Feudalism came to an end in the 16th and 17th centuries, though it was not finally swept away until the French Revolution of 1789. Out of feudalism grew Capitalism, and out of the serfs, free-men and journeymen with their peasant societies and guilds, grew the working class of to-day with its great trade unions and political organisations.

- 1 - 13
1. Workers there have always been. But it is only in the past 150 years that the working class has taken a leading part in the making of history. Before then, leadership was in the hands of the nobles, the kings and lords of high birth, or the big landowners or rich merchants, or the churches. At different times these classes fought one another, each side trying to win the support of the common people. So also, as Capitalism grew out of feudalism, the new capitalist class led the fight against the kings and nobles.
 2. This fight did not take the same form and it did not take place at the same time in all countries. It first took place in England, where it led up to the Revolution of 1640. The capitalist chopped off the head of King Charles in 1649 and set up a republic, or government without a king. More than 100 years later, in 1789, the French capitalists also led a revolution, and chopped off the head of their king. How is it that the capitalist class, which to-day used every possible means to prevent revolution, was at one time a revolutionary class? Let us see what happened in England, the first big capitalist country.
 3. By 1600 the economic basis of feudalism had largely disappeared. That is to say, a big change had taken place in the kind of work done, the methods of doing work, the way in which the land was owned and used, and the ties between master and servant, employer and worker. We have already seen what some of these changes were: the serf became a tenant, hiring the land, or a labourer working for a wage: the lord paid taxes to the king, instead of supplying soldiers for his armies: the handicraft worker became a master, with skilled workers under him: trade grew and men made things for sale on the market.
 4. In fact, a new world was taking shape. After the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492, English traders went there, and also to India, Turkey and Russia with woollen cloth, glass, soap and other goods. England supplied four-fifths of the coal to Europe by 1640, and produced tin and iron goods for overseas markets. On the land farmers kept big flocks of sheep and grew more food to supply the towns. Land, which used to pass from father to son, now became a thing to be bought or sold for a profit. Land values went up, rents were raised, and thousands of peasants or small farmers were turned off the land to make room for sheep and capitalist farmers.
 5. These changes were not favoured by many feudal landowners, who stood for the old order of things. They wanted to keep their rights and privileges, to prevent free trade in land, and to carry on the system of labour dues and control by the court of the manor over the tenants. On the other hand, in the towns the master craftsmen tried to keep their monopoly over the local market by putting a limit on output, fixing prices and controlling the journeymen. They fought the traders who wanted a free market, bigger output and cheaper goods.
 6. The king took the side of the feudal landowning class and the craft guilds against the rising capitalists. In order to bring industry and trade under control, and to get in money, he sold monopolies, giving the buyer the sole right to make or sell a certain article or to trade in a certain country. The feudalists looked to the Crown for jobs and protection, and therefore supported the system of monopolies, which covered a long list of things, such as butter, herrings, beer, salt, soap and clothing.
 7. A long struggle went on between the Royalists, or supporters of the king, and the rest of the people. The king put the leaders of the opposition in prison or had them killed, he taxed people against the law because the capitalists would not support him, and he tried

to build up a private army and rule by force. In the end civil war broke out and the capitalists, supported by the mass of the people and with Oliver Cromwell at their head, overthrew the monarchy, and took over the government. They did away with the feudal land system, monopolies and royal control over industry and trade and put all power in the hands of a Parliament elected by the rich.

"PATRIOTS" IN SOUTH AFRICA

8. Turn now from England of 1640 to South Africa of 1780. Here, too, did a capitalist class carry on a struggle against feudalism, represented by the monopolist Dutch East India Company. Influenced by the American Revolution of 1776, the ideas of French and English revolutionary writers and the democratic movement in Holland, the colonists at the Cape formed themselves into a party known as the Patriots and tried to bring about a change in the system of government.

9. They complained, in the first place, against the trade monopoly of the Company, which had the sole right to buy the farmers' produce at prices fixed by it, and to sell to ships that called at Cape Town. They attacked the company's policy of treating the Cape as a mere half-way station, where ships could restock with food, and preventing the growth of industry. Company officials, they said, were dishonest and robbed the colonists. They demanded economic freedom, to export produce. They wanted their land rights to be safeguarded. And, more than anything else, they demanded the right to elect their own representatives to the governing council, and the appointment of colonists to half the seats on the Council of Justice.

10. These colonists were also slave owners. They did not demand for the slaves any of the freedom they wanted for themselves. Without the support of workers their fight was bound to be weak, and they did not succeed in any great measure.

11. In Europe the capitalists did have the people behind them in the fight for democracy and freedom from feudal bonds. When this fight had been won, however, the capitalists became afraid that the people would grow too strong and want things for themselves. So they brought the revolution to an end, and, having become themselves the ruling class, continued the oppression of the people. Out of this oppression grew the class struggle between capitalists and workers that we find today.

12. At one time a progressive force, the capitalists made a revolution in order to be free and remove the brakes that feudalism placed on economic development. Today it is the capitalists who act as the brake and who prevent the people from being free, while it is the working class that has taken over the historical task of organising a struggle for freedom and economic progress.

LECTURE No. 8. CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY.

1. The Freedom for which the capitalist class fought in its revolutionary days was the freedom to exploit man and soil. Political power was to stay in the hands of the rich, for whom freedom would be a class monopoly. Not until the workers organised and struggled, did they gain political rights.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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